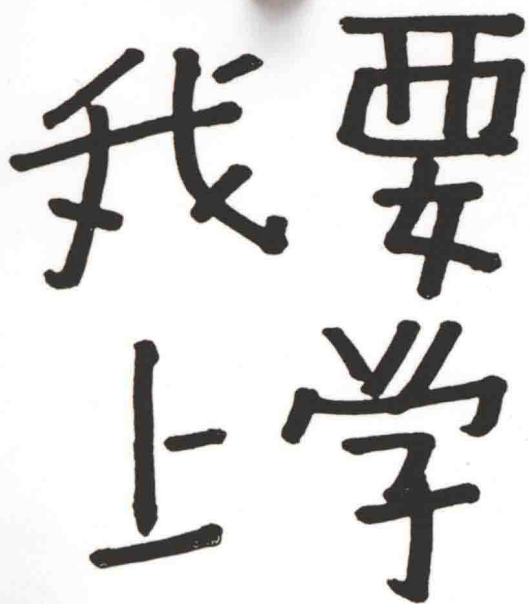


FROM INSIDE CHINA

· 中国报告系列 ·



我要上学

I WANT TO GO
TO SCHOOL

为了那渴望的目光

黄传会 著 Wen Min 译

中国出版集团
中译出版社

FROM INSIDE CHINA

I WANT TO GO TO SCHOOL

黄传会 著

[澳] Wen Min 译



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I WANT TO
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Foreword

THIS YEAR HAS BEEN the twentieth year since Project Hope was launched.

Project Hope is a social public welfare undertaking set up by the China Youth Development Foundation in 1989. The purpose is: to aid and support all the future generations of farmers to receive education.

Project Hope has been the public welfare undertaking with the most extensive social participation, the greatest influences and the most outstanding achievements.

By the end of 2008, Project Hope had raised more than 4 billion yuan in total, sponsored 3.3 million disadvantaged students, succored the construction of 15,000 Hope Primary Schools, donated more than 14,000 sets of Hope books and trained more than 4,000 rural primary school teachers.

Rather than the simple numbers above, the record of Project Hope is about fate, education and culture, love and morality, ideals and innovation, and more precisely, about the story of human beings . . .

For the past twenty years, I have used my eyes, my heart and my pen to follow Project Hope.



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Chapter 1

Raising up Tomorrow's Sun

AN AGE OLD QUESTION is always lingering in people's mind — what is fate?

Those who are born in apartments in Beijing are called Beijing kids while those who are born on the *kang* in Shanbei cave dwellings are called Shanbei kids. Kids in Beijing have sufficient food and clothes; but Shanbei kids have to worry about dozens of yuan for tuition fees every semester. Could it be said that this is the explanation of fate?

At the beginning of the winter in 1991, I was watching TV with a secretary of County Communist Youth League Committee in a guest house in an impoverished county in Guangxi. On TV a nutrition expert was talking about the trophic structure of urban people. Suddenly the secretary commented with sigh, "Hardly can people here have enough corn porridge to eat while urban people are afraid of getting fat from eating too much meat. What an unfair life . . ."

The aim of Project Hope is to give those with unfair lives more fairness and send a happy childhood to those children born in poverty-stricken areas.

1. Zhang Shengli: Holding up the Olympic Torch Twice

The torch “Xiangyun” was lighted — on July 31, the relay running with torches of 2008 Olympic Games was going on in Tangshan, the last stop of the relay within Hebei Province.

The fifth torch bearer — the first child sponsored by Project Hope as it just started, Zhang Shengli, Deputy Principal of Central Primary School in Dongtuanbao Township, Laiyuan County, Hebei Province, lifted the Olympic torch high with a brilliant smile on his face. “Today is the eighth day of the countdown to the opening ceremony of Beijing Olympic Games; I am filled with the joy of taking part in the torch relay and the blessing for the Beijing Olympic Games as well. I hope the five-star red flag will rise more times during the Games. May Beijing Olympic Games gain a great success!”

In the shouts of joy, Zhang Shengli ran through his section of this sacred relay.

This scene easily reminded us of the similar moment twelve years ago. On June 12, 1996, in the torch relay of the United States Atlanta Olympic Games, three Chinese children holding holy Olympic torches came to the spotlight of the whole world. The three children were the representatives of 1.25 million students sponsored by Project Hope and Zhang Shengli was one of them.

In front of the beautiful Niagara Falls, the last Chinese torch relay runner, Zhang Shengli ran along the alien road. Whilst running on the road in this forest city, he felt as if he was in a dream. More and more overseas Chinese with yellow skin and black eyes were gathering along the track, waving the five-star red flag and yelling

“Come on!”

The moment Zhang Shengli saw the national flag, he was moved to tears. After completing his 1000-meter section, he went on running along the falls while waving a national flag and his heart pondered over the meaning of “national honor”. No words could he employ to express his feelings at that moment. He only knew that on that day, he ran a lot but felt no fatigue.

After returning to China, Zhang Shengli and two other companions donated the three Olympic torches to the China Youth Development Foundation. In the letter they wrote to the 1.25 million students sponsored by Project Hope. They said, “We solemnly donated these three valuable and meaningful torches to the China Youth Development Foundation in order to express our appreciation for people’s solicitude and support for Project Hope. What’s more, we do hope the torches can inspire all students sponsored by Project Hope to grow healthily and strongly.”

Project Hope renders Zhang Shengli be the Olympic torchbearer twice;

Project Hope changes Zhang Shengli’s fate!

There was such a scene in the past . . .

Zhang Shengli was crying broken-heartedly. Tears were running down from his face, a sallow and emaciated face—he dropped out of school due to a shortage of money.

Taomugeda Village was located in Jiucai Mountain. The climate was harsh since on the high mountains, there were eighty days of frost out of one year. People there had no choice but to plant oats and potatoes and the grain they harvested a year could only support them for half a year. Generations of mountain people there had a profound impression for the word—poverty! There were