

*Stories
Of America*

滚滚红尘

美利坚

[美] 张咏霞(Carol Cheung) 著



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图书在版编目 (CIP) 数据

滚滚红尘美利坚 = Stories of America/ (美) 张咏霞著. —北京: 中国财政经济出版社, 2009. 8

ISBN 978 - 7 - 5095 - 1406 - 1

I. 滚… II. 美… III. 美国—概况—通俗读物 IV. K971. 2 - 49

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2009)第 134185 号

责任编辑: 王 颀

责任校对: 张 凡

封面设计: 九洲设计

中国财政经济出版社出版

URL: <http://www.cfeph.cn>

E-mail: cfeph@cfeph.cn

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社址: 北京市海淀区阜成路甲 28 号 邮政编码: 100142

发行处电话: 88190406 财经书店电话: 64033436

北京富生印刷厂印刷 各地新华书店经销

787 × 1092 毫米 16 开 19 印张 300 000 字

2009 年 8 月第 1 版 2009 年 8 月北京第 1 次印刷

印数: 1—8 060 定价: 28.00 元

ISBN 978 - 7 - 5095 - 1406 - 1/F · 1201

(图书出现印装问题, 本社负责调换)

本社质量投诉电话: 010 - 88190744



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“三倒”奇翁以芭蕾舞演员的舞姿倒写的“舞”字



作者（中）被册封为尼日利亚埃邦伊州历史上第一位女酋长



尼日利亚山区部落的女人与她们居住的草房

序一

浩瀚宇宙星回斗转，滚滚红尘变化万千。踏着滚滚红尘，有人梦圆，有人梦碎。然而，“美国梦”在红尘滚滚的世界里，有着难以抗拒的诱惑！

当你选择离开故土踏进美利坚的大地时，你就要准备面对更大的人生挑战，同时要有承受更大生活压力的本领。

你试过用四年的时间去做一件事吗？你试过用四年的时间去专心地做一件事吗？如果你是科学家、专业人士，或者是进入清修的宗教人士，答案可能是肯定的。但是如果你只是普通的凡人，每天要面对滚滚红尘世界里复杂的人生百态和生活中的种种压力，这就变得不太可能了。除非有一种强大的精神力量在背后支持你、推动你、鞭策你，否则就很难啊！

当此书脱稿后，我有一种前所未有的轻松感，因为四年的写作基本上是断断续续的。在毫无干扰的环境下专心写作的时候非常少，一种力不从心的感觉时常困扰着我，我曾经不止一次地想过放弃，因为在美国生活，写作是一种非常奢侈的享受。写作者除了要不断清理脑海中那种中西文化碰撞带来的干扰外，还要应付日常生活中的种种问题。我虽然已经不用像新移民时期那样为糊口奔波，为生存而朝九晚五甚至披星戴月地工作，但是现在生活的另一种忙碌和应酬也没有让我感到生活过得很轻松，另一种压力来自更高的层次。但是这个压力后来成为动力，这动力竟然又让我不知天高地厚地将之理解成是我们华人社会的历史使命和国内外的同胞大众所需！

究竟是什么压力可以变成动力后又让我觉得是使命？是一群华人，

在美国数量非常庞大的华人群体，他们生活在我的周边。这些华人是真正意义上的“竹升”一族，本来“竹升”一词是很久以前的第一代美国老华侨用来形容他们在美国土生土长的后代的，意思是形容这些华裔后代像一根粗竹那样两头不通，既不了解自己祖籍国的文化，又因为那永远不能改变的黄皮肤黑眼睛而无法成为真正意义上的白人一族，不能像其他族裔那样去融入美国主流文化社会。整整150年，“竹升”这个名词就套在这一群在美国出生长大的华裔头上。但是我经过多年的观察，发现了一个很可笑的现象，就是其实所谓的“竹升”现象应该是第一代移民，包括我本人，因为生活环境的转变，第一代移民脱离了原来的文化背景而生活，时间久了会因淡忘而脱节，甚至有些人为了要达到所谓的融入主流社会的目的而刻意强迫自己忘记原来的文化基础，刻意让自己的“原来”变得空白。然而，在我们的现实生活中，因为过去的生活经历和文化基因所带来的影响和干扰，很难完全适应另一种生活方式。如果要深入了解美国的社会结构和总体大环境，就会有很大的难度，加上为生活、为儿女而奔波忙碌，要老大一把年纪来静心学习，谈何容易！因此，很多中国人尽管在美国生活了几十年，但对美国的情况，例如历史、政治、政府结构、商业环境、法律常识等等主流社会的问题知之甚少。这种情况产生的结果就是，遇到问题不知如何处理，加之语言表达上存在或多或少的障碍，往往就容易吃亏。还有一个大问题是无法同下一代好好沟通，两代人的隔阂越来越严重，这一群华人脱离了自己原来的文化，又无法完全适应和理解美国文化。这种处于中西文化夹缝中的边缘人，才是真正的“竹升”族。

因此我想，如果有人将美国的各方面知识，包括社会结构、政治见闻、法律常识、人生百态、发生在异国他乡的爱恨情仇、移民的生活感受等等，用生动的语言表达出来，写成一本带有丰富文学色彩的作品的同时又有丰富的生活知识且具有保留价值，相信这样的著作一定可以成为一本很有品味的“在美国生活的工具书”。因为，通常带有常识性的知识类文章，多少都会令读者感到枯燥无味；纯文学作品，有时又太超离现实生活；一些翻译作品或文章，又是太纯粹的外国人观点角度。假如有一本著作是以一个中国人的观点角度，用中国人的眼光和感受去体会和认识美国，是否会是一番风景呢？当我把这个想法告诉我身边的朋友时，他们异口同声地对我说：“你是写这本书的最佳人选！”就



在我考虑是否要接受朋友们的提议，以一个中国人的眼光和感受来写一本关于美国人生百态的作品时，我很幸运地被美国国会商业咨询委员会任命为代表纽约州的荣誉主席，我是唯一的一名亚裔代表，不久更获得全美国商业女性奖，2006年又获得了美国国会的嘉奖令。由于一连串这样的事情出现在我的生命中，改变了我很多的想法，随着接触面的更加广泛，我又偶然地发现，原来很多中国企业对美国的商业文化了解很有限，哪怕是大企业的一些主管对美国的商业运作也是了解得不够深入，他们由于不太清楚美国商业社会的结构，因而导致了很多误会和片面的决定。因为不了解，所以不理解，最终影响了大局。因此，我认为不但生活在海外的华人要深入一点了解美国的方方面面，生活在国内的或者是其他国家的同胞，也都需要多方面了解美国这个国家，需要以一个中国人的观点和角度去纵观美国，需要在图书架上关于美国的五花八门的介绍中寻找这另一道的风景线。所以我又不知天高地厚地向这个难度挑战。后来在2005—2009年整整四年时间里，压力、动力就不断地在我的生命中交替出现，我经历了很多干扰、很多困难、很多矛盾后，终于下定决心一步一步地完成了这部作品！在《滚滚红尘美利坚》的写作进入最后阶段的时候，我获得了纽约州参议院颁发的“2008年度十大杰出亚裔大奖”。这是社会对我的认同和肯定。

在写作的最初阶段，我首先出了一本简介小册子，最初的书名叫《纵观美国》，我送给我的朋友和《星岛日报》的读者，令我意想不到的是，在短短的几个星期内就有五百多位我完全不认识的读者寄来回邮信封索取。因为报纸发行覆盖面的局限，看到那几期《星岛日报》的读者们主要是美东地区的居民，他们之中有老有少、有刚来美国的新移民、有刚进大学的新移民大学生，但最令我想不到的是有更多的读者是来美国已经几十年的老移民，这样的群体反应是非常令人满意的结果。单单一个纽约地区，就有这样的回响，这只是一个缩影，足以证明这个需要是很大的，这些来信索取的人包括来自中国大陆、香港、台湾地区和东南亚国家的中国人。他们普遍在美国已经有很好的经济基础，但对美国的主流文化了解还是很贫乏，所以尽管经历了几十年的美国生活，依然有很多无奈、很多遗憾、很多空白点！其中有一位姓陈的老先生最令我感动，他写信给我的时候已经87岁高龄了，信中说 he 是一位来自缅甸的华侨，在美国摸爬滚打了大半辈子，现在已经退休，但对美国的

主流社会依然了解不深，希望我的关于美国的这本书能够尽快完成。这是一封令我很感动的信，是对我的支持和信任，我无以为报，只有默默地祝福他！

这五百多位读者是促使我要将《滚滚红尘美利坚》（原名《纵观美国》）这本书尽快完成的最大精神力量，从他们的身上我知道更多异乡华人的精神需要，我看到他们另一面的积极性，是他们令我觉得有使命感，是他们给我最后冲刺的动力。因为他们在我的书还没有面世时对我的信任和支持，这一份支持和厚爱是非常难得的，我作为一个作者能够得到这一切是幸运的。所以，我在此由衷地感激这五百多位《滚滚红尘美利坚》的最早期、最原始的读者朋友，非常非常真心地感谢您们！

当然还少不了我的家人——我弟弟和我女儿、我身边的朋友、特别是我很多年的搭档许伟文以及好朋友崔维德、崔维征两兄弟，他们给我的支持和鼓励是无私的，我会一生铭记的！

值此机会，我还要感谢中国财政经济出版社。同时我衷心地感谢负责《滚滚红尘美利坚》一书出版编辑工作的党海鹏主任和责任编辑王颀女士及编辑部的其他工作人员。因为有了他/她们的努力和支持，我四年的心血结晶才能面世。在与他们相处的一年多时间里，他们非常关心我的写作进展，不停地给我提建议，我们大家曾经为了“书名”一起“绞尽脑汁”，从最初的书名《纵观美国》到现在的《滚滚红尘美利坚》，在这中间我们一起想了近二十个名字，数次修改封面设计图纸和海报。从他们这些专业人士的身上，我学到了更多的人生道理，他们严谨认真的态度、对广大读者真诚负责的责任感，使我领悟到世事瞬息万变、人生风风雨雨，我们不要去捕捉海市蜃楼的幻象，要实实在在地过好每一天，我们只有不断地增加自己生活的常识、增强面对困难和压力的信心和能力，才能在这个红尘滚滚的世界里活得充实些、洒脱些。不管遇到多大的困难，都要珍惜生命、珍惜光阴、珍惜每一份机遇、珍惜每一份情缘，把握生命的每一寸时光！

最后，希望《滚滚红尘美利坚》这本书可以对各位读者在了解美国的时候有所帮助，这是我写这本书的最大心愿！

张咏霞

2009年6月3日写于美国

FORWARD ONE

In the vastness of the universe, the Big Dipper stars turn, life is ever – changing. What will we make of our life? What is the “American Dream”?

The “American Dream” billowing in the world, makes it difficult to resist its temptations. However, once you have decided to leave your native country and live in America, you should be prepared to face greater challenges in life. Have you tried to concentrate and accomplish a single thing for four years? If you are scientists, professionals, or those who entered religious living, the answer is certainly possible. However, if you are just an ordinary person still trying to face the world of complex phenomena and pressures of life, it becomes very difficult, unless there is a strong spiritual force behind you, pushing you, whipping you. When I completed this book, I had an intellect that I never experienced before, because the four years of writing was intermittent. There must be no interference in the environment to continue to concentrate on writing. Sometimes feelings haunt me to give up because writing is such a luxury enjoyment. Because writers must be able to keep a clear mind, away from interference with the collision of Chinese and Western culture, but also try to cope with the problems of everyday life. Fortunately I no longer have to face these daily pressures, unlike new immigrants whom still have to earn a living to survive. I felt that I had a mission to accomplish and duty to the Chinese community. This became a driving force behind *Stories of America*.

Majority of the Chinese community in America live in my peripherals. “Bamboo – stars” has been used for years to refer to the first generation of Chinese born in America. They use this proverb because people felt this generation was lost in between their nationalities and racial culture from the bar-

riers of cultural understanding. They were not completely accepted into either of the social realms in America. For over a hundred years this “bamboo stars” was used to describe these first generation American born Chinese. But through years of observation, I discovered a very funny phenomenon, that is, in fact, the so – called “bamboo – stars” should be referred to the first generation of immigrants, including myself. Due to the changes in their living environment, first – generation immigrants through time begin to forget and become out of touch with their true racial cultural background, and even some so – called in order to achieve the purpose of integration into the mainstream American society deliberately force themselves to forget the basis of their original culture and become blank. However, in real life, because of past life experiences and cultural impact of genes and up bring, it is difficult to completely adapt to another way of life and culture. Therefore, even though a lot of Chinese people have been living in the United States for decades, the understanding about the Country, such as its history, politics, government structures, business culture, legal knowledge and mainstream society is very little known. The result of this situation is that most people do not know how to deal with the problem, coupled with language barriers, more or less often; it is easy to get lost. There is also a bigger problem; trying to communicate with the next generation, the gap between the two generations of people more and more serious, this group of Chinese can not come out of their original culture, yet can not fully adapt to the American culture. This is in Chinese and Western culture; the narrow living edge of every person is the real “bamboo – star” assembly.

Therefore, I began to think that if someone knowledge about all aspects of the United States, including social structure, political structure, legal knowledge, attitudes of life, there’s love in a foreign country – his concubine, the feelings of immigrants living and so on, using lively language to express, written with a wealth of literary works with the same time color and rich knowledge of such life in a book would be much useful. I believe such a book would become a great choice as a living tool in the United States. If there could be a book based on the Chinese point of view, trying to make understanding of America for immigrants, it could be very useful. When I told my friends of such an idea, they suggested that I would be the best candidate for the Author.

As I was considering their proposal I was very fortunate to be the receiver of title from the U. S. Congress Business Advisory Council, representing New York and appointed by the President; I was the only Asian –



American representative. I was later awarded Business Woman of the Year in 2004 by the Council. These events changed a lot of my thinking and through extensive and deeper contacts with these networks; I discovered that many Chinese enterprises are limited in their understanding of the American business culture. They lack understanding of how its structure is formed and such ignorance has resulted in a lot of wrong and bias decision makings.

For four years, from 2005 – 2009, I spent a lot of time writing this book. I experienced a lot of interference, a lot of difficulties, many contradictions and after the collision, finally was determined enough to complete this book. While I was finishing the end, I was awarded by New York State Senate, 2008 Ten Outstanding Asian Award. This is the community's recognition and concordance of my efforts.

When I started writing this book, originally called: *A Vertical View of America*; I printed an introductory publication. These prints were available to *Sing Tao Daily* newspaper readers from the North – Eastern U. S. regions. Astonishingly within a few weeks, I had received over 500 requests for a copy. They included men, women, children, elders, new immigrants just arriving to America, overseas university students and immigrants that have lived here for decades. I was most surprised that the majority of the requests came from the Chinese that have immigrated to America decades ago. They were still confused and puzzled about what the American culture was and what the mainstream social structure was like. I was most touched when I received a feedback letter from an 87 years old elder. He wrote that if he had read my book earlier in life he would not have so much regrets and frustrations in life while living in America. I was very touched by his words.

Finally I would like to thank the feedbacks from my readers of the introductory publication. As well as the many people whom supported me spiritually and emotionally while I was completing this book. They include my family, my brother, my daughter, my friends, my partner (Raymond Xu), as well as a very good friend cui wei zheng, cui wei de two brothers, they gave me noble support and encouragement. Of course I must thank China Financial and Economic Publishing House, and its staff: dang Haipeng, Miss Wang Yang Editor, and other editorial staff. I have been working with them for over a year now and their ever caring love is so appreciated. Their hard work and dedication in help me make this a wonderful book; like trying to pick the best title from over 20 different ones, re – editing many times the cover, design and drawings, and so much more work I must thank them for doing. Thank you very much from the bottom of my heart.

Lastly, I have learned that things are ever - changing, time keeps moving forward, there are ups and downs in life, but most importantly we must live each day to its fullest. We must enhance our knowledge, we must enhance our abilities in facing the obstacles in live, and we must try the impossible and do the miracles. No matter difficulties life encounters, we should cherish life, treasure the time and cherish every opportunity, every love one, and grasp every second!

My greatest desire is that the readers of *Stories of America* will find something that is useful and helpful to their life.

Carol Cheng