



陳林瑞玲

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連接華人與加拿大社會的橋樑

幸運餅、酸甜雞肉丸，這些北美中餐的食品，常常是熟悉中國美食的人揶揄的對象。在他們看來，這些為了迎合西方人口味而改版過的食物，不能和地道中餐美食相提並論。然而在陳林瑞玲看來，這些食品的意義遠遠超過了它本身，因為它們曾經是“連接華人與加拿大主流社會最早的橋樑”。

加拿大中餐的“前世今生”

陳林瑞玲是第三代華裔，她的外祖父於1899年繳納了人頭稅來到加拿大，母親林黃彩珍在加拿大出生，父親林進寧也是繳納了人頭稅才來到加拿大。他們都經歷了華人被制度性歧視、隔離和排斥的歲月。

在那段晦暗日子裏，一般人都不願涉足唐人街。中餐館服務的對象也多是經濟拮据的華人單身漢，提供的食物和店面一樣簡陋。

二戰後，排華法案被廢除，華人開始融入當地社會，華人傳統文化包括美食、民俗和文學藝術開始“被看見”。最早讓加拿大主流社會認識中餐的，當屬上世紀40年代末至50年代多倫多的“四大中餐廳”：南京、荔枝園、西湖和廣州，其中廣州餐廳就是陳林瑞玲父母開設的。

陳林瑞玲說，酸甜雞肉丸等菜餚確實是根據西方人口味偏好改版而來。當年多倫多華人人口僅有兩仟多，要想把餐廳生

意做好，必須吸引其他族裔，菜餚不得不迎合他們的口味。四大中餐廳店面寬敞氣派，甚至有現場樂隊，它們吸引了名流政要前來光顧，加拿大主流社會因此開始認識中餐並了解中餐所代表的豐富文化，中華文化由此成為加拿大多元文化的重要組成部分。這些融合中西口味的菜餚可謂功不可沒。

沿著母親努力的方向前行

對陳林瑞玲而言，華人融入加拿大本地社會的奮鬥史並不是印在紙上的陌生名字及事件，而是曾經真切觸碰過的鮮活記憶。她不僅是歷史的見證者，也是歷史締造者的傳承人。

她母親林黃彩珍曾創造了加拿大歷史上的多個第一：她是首位獲得加拿大勳章的華裔女性，首位獲得多倫多餐飲業傑出成就Fran Deck獎的中餐東主和女性餐飲企業家，以及婦女專科醫院、惠仁醫院等機構的理事會首位女性成員等等。多倫多市政府和教育局分別以她的名字命名了一條街道和一所小學。

有這樣一位赫赫有名的母親是什麼感覺？陳林瑞玲說，小時候常跟著母親去參加各種活動，也常聽母親講她經歷的各種事，那時覺得母親是天生的演說家，她很有親和力，無論走到哪裏都會吸引一群人圍繞著她。但直到陳林瑞玲成年後，特別是開始寫作關於母親的書籍之後，“從另一個角度去了解母親，才真正開始欽佩母親的成就以及她所作出的努力。”

林黃彩珍一生都在為爭取華人平等權利和打破華人與加拿大社會間的隔閡而奮鬥，她生前常說，身為加拿大人感到很驕

傲。陳林瑞玲也為自己的華裔加人身份而自豪。“我從沒放棄過一次選舉投票的機會，”陳林瑞玲說：“我們今天擁有的這些〔平等和多元〕來之不易，它們不是理所當然得來的，所以我們要珍惜，要用行動去爭取。”

講述華人自己的故事

年少時，陳林瑞玲也經歷過身份認同困惑，她常問自己，“讓我成為華裔加人的是什麼與他人一樣或不一樣的特點嗎？”她喜歡閱讀，可是找遍多倫多的圖書館，也沒有講述中華文化和加拿大華人史的書籍。她只能從報紙和雜誌中去搜集散落的點點滴滴的記述。

上世紀90年代，有出版商想要出一本介紹林黃彩珍事跡的兒童圖書，因為最初約稿的作者進展不順，出版商詢問林黃彩珍能否讓她在圖書館工作的女兒陳林瑞玲來寫這部書。林黃彩珍原本回絕了，因她知道女兒在全職工作之餘還有兩個孩子要照顧，恐怕忙不過來。陳林瑞玲得知後，卻很有興趣一試。她和出版商聯系，表示願意先寫一個章節，若後者滿意則繼續完成全書。後來的事正如所料，這本書籍開啟了陳林瑞玲的作家之路，也讓她投入到講述華人故事的事業中。

雖然寫的是自己母親，但在寫作中，陳林瑞玲還是專門採訪了母親，這讓她對母親從事的社會活動的意義有了更深的理解。這本名為《龍之精神：一位驕傲的加拿大人林黃彩珍的故事》的書後來入選加拿大兒童圖書中心的特別推薦書單。

在此之後，陳林瑞玲又寫作了多部書籍，其中有向加拿大的多元讀者介紹中秋節、龍舟賽等中華傳統文化的，也有關於多倫多唐人街變遷和加拿大華人歷史的。

寫作與實踐的交融

和關在象牙塔裏寫作的人不一樣，陳林瑞玲的寫作總是和她的親身經歷和體驗密切相關，她也常把寫作的內容帶回實際生活中。

她寫加拿大華人史，那些從唐人街走出來的締造歷史的人物，多是她小時候稱呼“叔叔”、“阿姨”的人。查閱資料時，她常有那種“頓悟時刻”。她通過寫作和演講記錄講述歷史，又積極參與各種保存和傳揚歷史文化傳統的活動，因此於2017年獲得多倫多文化遺產委員會的“特別成就獎”，2022年獲得“社區電影藝術變革作為獎”。她長期担任多倫多博物館 Museum 和多倫多公立圖書館華人檔案館的顧問，還為皮克斯的影片《熊抱青春記》担任了文化顧問。

她寫介紹賽龍舟的書，不滿足於僅從紙上了解這項運動，於是央求一位龍舟隊的朋友允許她在他們練習時坐到船尾體驗一下。這一體驗，竟然開啟了她龍舟運動員的生涯。她說，那次體驗徹底刷新了她對賽龍舟的認知，以至於她把之前寫的全部刪掉重寫，並且從此愛上這項運動。她後來入選加拿大國家隊，且兩度在國際龍舟錦標賽上奪冠。

她猶記得2011年在佛州坦帕奪冠和2013年在匈牙利奪冠後頒獎的場景。加拿大國歌響起時，她激動得淚眼盈眶。那一刻，她為自己能夠代表加拿大並為她贏得金牌而驕傲。華裔加人這一身份的榮耀，是經過幾代人努力得來的，彌足珍貴。

鼓勵年輕一代續寫傳奇

陳林瑞玲常應邀去小學向孩子們介紹賽龍舟這項有趣的運動。她會把小朋友們分成幾支隊伍，教他們模仿划龍舟的動作，在運動館裏開展模擬龍舟賽。“比賽”結束後，她還把自己多年積攢的獎牌送給獲勝隊伍。各族裔的孩子們就在這樣有趣的活動中認識和了解中華文化。

陳林瑞玲亦擔任了林黃彩珍基金會主席。林黃彩珍年少時因為經濟大蕭條不得不早早輟學打工，但她格外重視後代的教育。她在世時，多倫多華人社區就以她的名義設立了獎學金，每年向華裔高中生頒發獎金，鼓勵年輕一代在各個領域取得優異成績和作出貢獻。今年是林黃彩珍獎學金項目設立25周年，基金會將首次在林黃彩珍小學舉行頒獎儀式，陳林瑞玲覺得此舉意義深遠。她由衷希望母親的傳奇能被更多年輕人續寫下去，不僅以各種不同的方式講述華人的故事，也積極參與加拿大美好未來的建設。



林家母女—Jing, Arlene,
Ping 和媽媽 (林黃彩珍)
Lumb Family – Jing,
Arlene, Ping, mom



廣州茶樓外觀
Kwong Chow Restaurant



林家大家庭合影
Lumb Family photo



健兒英姿
Paddler



「好久不見 - 唐人街」
Long Time No See -
Chinatown



林黃彩珍小學2020
JL Public School entrance 2020



到澳門參加龍舟世界錦標賽
Macau World Championship



2001年林黃彩珍獎學金頒獎禮
Jean Lumb Awards event 2001



與家人在卡薩羅馬城堡前合影
Chans-Casa Loma



2018年多倫多文化遺產局的唐人街遊覽活動
Chinatown Tour, Heritage Toronto 2018



安省青年志願者顧問委員會 Ontario Youth Volunteers Advisory Committee



多倫多博物館 Museum - 播客2019



CBC 早間節目 CBC Metro Morning



安省美術館 Lawren Harris 展覽 Ontario AGO-Lawren Harris Exhibit



華裔加拿大人檔案-梅花展 Chinese Canadian Archive- Plum Blossom Exhibit



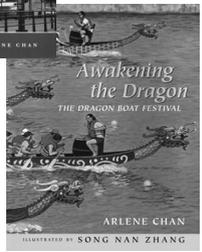
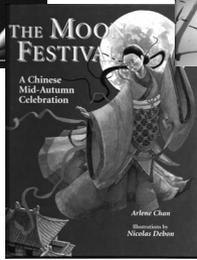
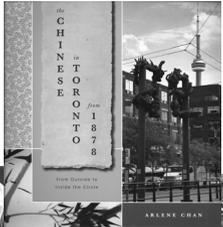
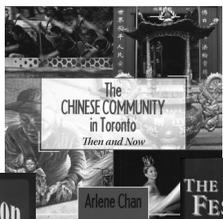
Bowmanville圖書館, 2018年 Bowmanville Library 2018



2018年多倫多大學唐人街遊覽活動 Chinatown Tour, U of T 2018



匈牙利 - 龍舟賽奪冠 Hungary - Gold Medal



陳林瑞玲的著作 Publications by Arlene Chan

Bridging Chinese and Canadian Society —Arlene Chan

Fortune Cookies, sweet and sour chicken balls - these are common North American Chinese dishes, often ridiculed by those who know Chinese cuisine. For them, these westernized dishes are a far cry from authentic Chinese cuisine. But for Arlene Chan, their value surpasses the food, because they are the bridge that connects the Chinese community with the larger Canadian society.

The Past and Present of Chinese Canadian Food

Arlene Chan is a third generation Chinese Canadian. Her maternal grandfather paid the Chinese Head Tax in 1899 when he came to Canada, where her mother, Jean Lumb, was born. Arlene's father Doyle Lumb also paid the Head Tax in order to enter Canada. They lived through systemic racial discrimination, segregation and exclusion.

In those dark days, Chinatown was a place to be avoided. Chinese restaurants were mostly patronized by Chinese bachelors looking for simple, reasonable food.

After the Second World War, with the repeal of the Chinese Immigration Act, Chinese began to integrate into local communities, and Chinese traditional culture including cuisine, customs and arts began to “be noticed”. The first restaurants to bring Chinese cuisine to the mainstream society in the 1940s and 50s were “The Big Four”: Nanking, Lichee Garden, Sai Woo and Kwong Chow, the latter owned by Arlene's parents.

Arlene acknowledges that food like sweet and sour chicken balls were indeed dishes adapted for the western tastes. There were only about two thousand Chinese in Toronto, so for a business to survive, they had to cater to other groups, so naturally the menu had to be acceptable to the broader community. The Big Four restaurants were spacious and one of them even offered live music, attracting celebrities and politicians, thereby introducing Chinese cuisine to Canada's mainstream society. Chinese culture became a key part of Canada's multicultural society. These westernized dishes played an important role.

Continuing Her Mother's Hard Working Journey

Arlene did not just read about the Chinese struggle in Canada, she was a witness to the living history. She experienced it first hand and the memories are still fresh and vivid. In fact, she is more than a witness to history, she has inherited the legacy of those who made history.

Arlene's mother, Jean Lumb, forged many firsts in Canadian history: She was the first woman of Chinese descent to receive the Order of Canada, first female Chinese restaurateur to receive the Fran Deck Award for outstanding achievement in Toronto's restaurant industry, and first Chinese Canadian woman on the boards of Women's College Hospital and other institutions. A City of Toronto street and an elementary school are named after her.

How does it feel to have such a distinguished mother? Arlene says she used to accompany her to many events, often listened to her mother recount her experiences and thought her mother was a natural public speaker. Wherever she went, people were drawn to her. It wasn't until years later, when Arlene started to write about her

mother that she came to understand and admire the hard work that went into those accomplishments.

Jean Lumb dedicated her life to fight for equal rights for the Chinese community, to bridge the gap between the Chinese community and the larger Canadian society. She used to say she was proud to be Canadian. Arlene is equally proud to be a Chinese Canadian. “I never miss one election.” She says, “The equality and multiculturalism that we have today did not come easily, they cannot be taken for granted. So we must cherish them and take steps to make things happen.”

Telling Our Own Story

In her youth, Arlene had struggled with identity confusion. She would ask herself: “What makes me a Chinese Canadian?” She liked to read, but she couldn’t find any books on Chinese culture and Chinese Canadians in the library. She could only find bits and pieces of narrative in newspapers or magazines.

In the 1990s, a publisher planned for a children’s book on Jean Lumb’s life story. But when the author originally hired to write the book was not making progress, the publisher asked Jean if her librarian daughter might be interested in writing the story. At first Jean declined, thinking that working full time and raising two young children were more than enough for Arlene. When Arlene heard about it, she was quite interested to give it a try. She discussed with the publisher that she would write one chapter and if the publisher was happy with her work, then she would write the book. This book started Arlene’s journey as an author, and the business of telling the Chinese story.

Although she was writing about her own mother, Arlene still took time to interview Jean, giving her a deeper understanding of her mother's community work. This first book, "Spirit of the Dragon: The Story of Jean Lumb, a Proud Chinese-Canadian" would later be selected as a Choice Book by the Canadian Children's Book Centre.

Since then Arlene has written several more books, including ones that introduce Canadians to Chinese traditional culture such as the Mid-Autumn Festival and Dragon Boat Festival, and the history of Chinese in Canada and Toronto's Chinatown.

Writing and Life

Unlike people who write from an ivory tower, Arlene's writing is based on her own personal experience, and she often brings what she's written into her life.

When writing about the history of Chinese in Canada, those people who made history were people she called "uncle" and "auntie" when she was a child. While doing research for the books, she often had "ah-ha" moments. Arlene's writing and presentations about this history are both documenting the history and bringing it into today's conversations. Her active participation in preserving and promoting history and traditions has culminated in a 2017 Special Achievement Award from Heritage Toronto and the Community Film and Arts Festival Making a Difference Award in 2022. She has been an advisor for Museum of Toronto, the Chinese Canadian Archive at the Toronto Public Library, and a cultural consultant for the Pixar film *Turning Red*.

Not satisfied to just read about dragon boat racing, she asked a friend who competed in dragon boat races to let her sit in on

practices. This experience spawned her career as a dragon boat racer. She said the observation completely changed her understanding of the sport, to the point where she rewrote everything about it, and also fell in love with it. She subsequently joined the Canadian national team and won gold medals at two IDBF World Dragon Boat Championships.

She recalls the medal ceremonies at the 2011 championship in Tampa and the 2013 championship in Hungary - when the Canadian national anthem was played, she was moved to tears. In those moments, she was proud to represent Canada and win gold medals. This honour for Chinese Canadians has been hard won, over several generations, and should be valued.

Encouraging the Next Generation to Continue the Legacy

Arlene is often invited to schools to introduce dragon boat racing to elementary school students. She divides the students into several teams, teaches them the team work involved in racing as well as doing simulation dragon boat racing in the school gym. After the “race” she presents the winning team with a medal from her own collection. Children of all ethnicities learn about Chinese culture through these fun activities.

Arlene is the chair of the Jean Lumb Foundation. Jean Lumb had to quit school at a young age to start earning an income, but she recognized the importance of education for future generations. Before her passing, Toronto’s Chinese community established an awards program in her name. Every year, high school students of Chinese descent from across Canada are given scholarships to encourage academic excellence and contribution to the community. This year is the 25th anniversary of the Jean Lumb Awards. The

awards ceremony will take place for the first time at the Jean Lumb Public School. Arlene finds this particularly meaningful and sincerely wishes that her mother's legacy will continue through these young people, not only to carry on the narrative of the Chinese story, but also to build a better future for Canada.