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Oral Presentation

Today, I'm going to presents you with a closer look at the parenting method in the Dragonwings. To be more specific, I will focus only on the parenting of Uncle Bright Star and Wind Rider who represents two generations of Chinese Americans. I will discuss the difference in their parenting methods to understand the change in the view of Chinese American Identities.

The Uncle's parenting focuses more on the family's interests. Uncle tries to convey the traditional idea of the Chinese family to the next generation by teaching them to strictly follow the Family Hierarchical Rules.

According to a research by Jeffery Mar, the traditional Chinese Family hierarchy is built on **respect for family elders and parental authority** (146). For the first one, at the welcoming dinner, Moonshadow has already noticed that the order family member toasts matter. This convention is commonly seen in a traditional Chinese family which is also considered as a part of table manners. For the second one, Uncle Brightstar strengthens his parental authority through the metaphor of his throne. Interestingly, the description of his throne repeated throughout the novel. Even when they had moved away from their company to live in a tent. As is described on page 245, it says "he sat down on an old crate instead; but he did it just as majestically as if it were his throne" (Yep). The throne here is not just referring to the heavy and expensive chair, it is an indicator of Uncle's undoubtable authority in this family. For those who are against his will, just like what he did to Blackdog: punishing or even threatening.

This type of parenting indicates his conservative view of Chinese American Identity. He regards "remembering who you are and where you are from" matter. On page 121, when Uncle is going to see Windrider off, he presents Windrider a cup of soil. It says, "For Uncle the soil was very special, being a bit of the Middle Kingdom and home, and more: part of the land which his fathers and their fathers had worked before him" (Yep). This cup of soil is intended to teach Windrider **not to lose his identity as a pure Tang man**.

By comparison, the Windrider's parenting method focuses more on **individual accomplishment and self-esteem**. Unlike the conservative Uncle Brightstar, Windrider himself is dedicated to realizing his flying dream. Windrider respects and listen to Moonshadow instead of scolding him whenever he disobeys. For example, on page 207-208, after the earthquake, Windrider asked Moonshadow twice to leave the hill of rubbles to find a safe place. While Moonshadow **rejected** and **proposed his own idea**: he said, "The faster we can clear this stuff away, the sooner we can leave this mound. Maybe we can even get away before the wall collapses" (Yep). Windrider **listen to him** grinned affectionately and slapped Moonshadow's back to went back work together. In Windrider's parenting methods, he respects the younger generation and encourages the young to have their own voice. On page 255, when Uncle and Windrider are arguing about the flying machine. Moonshadow proposed a strong statement concerning individual accomplishment: He said, "A superior man can only do what he's meant to do" (Yep). Uncle and Windrider hold a totally different attitude toward it. Uncle said, "Don't give me that nonsense" while father replied, "He's the only one I hear talking sense".

The purpose Windrider takes this encouraging parenting is that he tries to teach the next generation **how to be well adapted to the white-dominated society as an individual instead of becoming a pure Tang man who relies on the family power.**

In conclusion, Uncle holds conservative parenting, trying to convey the idea of the traditional Chinese family to the next generation. He hopes the young Chinese to treat their identity as a pure Tang man. However, Windrider's parenting is more encouraging, intended to develop the next generation's individual power to adapt to American society.

Works Cited

1. Mar, Jeffrey B. "Chinese Caucasian interracial parenting and ethnic identity." (1988).
2. Yep, Laurence. Dragonwings. Dramatists Play Service Inc, 1993.