

中学生英汉对照小读物

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# 美国风情一览

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民主与建设出版社

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## Asian — Americans

Early this year, the Kuo family of New York City received good news. Sixteen — year — old David Kuo had won honors in the Westinghouse Science Talent Search — the most important science competition for young people in the United States. He had been chosen as one of the top forty young scientists in the country.

Winning in the Westinghouse competition had become a family tradition for the Kuos. David's oldest brother, John, had won top honors in nineteen eighty — five. His next oldest brother, Mark, had won in nineteen eighty — six.

David's prize marked the first time in the history of the competition that children from the same family had won three straight years. David's prize was considered a great success for another reason. The Kuos are immigrants to the United States. They came from Taiwan.

The Kuos are one example of what is often called the Asian — American success story. A great wave of Asian immigrants has arrived in the United States in the last twenty years. Many arrived without much money, and unable to speak English. Yet, as a group, they have done extremely well.

The earnings of Asian — American families are a little higher than those of most other American families. This is

partly because, in a larger percentage of Asian — American families, both the husband and wife have jobs.

A higher percent of Asian — Americans complete university study. Only two percent of the people in the United States are Asian. Yet as many as twenty percent of first — year students at some of the country's top universities are Asian.

Many Asian — Americans are successful partly because they already had good skills when they came here. They had completed university studies in science, medicine, law or engineering. And they had been successful in their jobs——sometimes for years——in their homelands. A number of Asians who became very successful arrived in the nineteen forties and nineteen fifties. Architect I. M. Pei and computer pioneer An Wang, both Chinese — Americans, are among this group.

Experts say three Asian traditions best explain the success of Asians in the United States, education, hard work, family.

Education is considered the key to success. Asian — American parents expect their children to be the best students. Recent research has found that Asian — American young people spend more time studying than other American students.

Asians are the fastest — growing minority group in the United States. In the last twenty — two years, their numbers have increased five times. Today, there are more than five — million Asian — Americans. Experts say that number may grow to tenmillion by the year two — thousand.

As architect I. M. Pei notes, however, there really is no

such person as an Asian—American. He says there are Chinese—Americans, Korean—Americans, Japanese—American, s Vietnamese—Americans and so on. Pei notes that cultural differences among Asian peoples are often great. He says other Americans should learn more about these different cultures.

Many people already feel thankful for the different ways in which Asian immigrants have enriched American culture. Asian artists, for example, are bringing new ideas and values to painting, sculpture, architecture and clothing design. And Chinese, Japanese, Thai and Vietnamese foods have gained wide popularity.

People from China were the first Asian immigrants to come to the United States in large numbers. They arrived more than one hundred years ago to help build the nation's railroads. The Chinese railroad workers were treated badly and lived poorly. But most of them stayed in the United States after the railroads were finished.

The next large group of Asian immigrants came from Japan and Korea. They, too, found life hard in the United States. Laws and unofficial restrictions made it difficult for Asians to become citizens or to own land.

Beginning in the late eighteen—hundreds, many Americans wanted to end Asian immigration. They feared and disliked Asians, because the Asians were a different race. Workers were afraid they would lose their jobs to Asian immigrants who would work for lower wages. So Congress passed laws

sharply restricting Asian immigration.

One of the worst periods for Asian—Americans was during World War Two, when the United States was at war with Japan. Then, hundreds of thousands of Japanese—Americans were forced to live in special camps.

In the early nineteen—sixties, the movement to guarantee civil rights for blacks made many Americans see that racial laws and beliefs were wrong. In nineteen sixty—five, Congress passed a reformed immigration law. The new law gave Asians the same rights as other people to immigrate to the United States. The new law resulted in two waves of Asian immigrants in the nineteen seventies.

Most of the first group were highly—skilled people from Japan, Korea, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Many had enough money to buy their own homes and open businesses immediately after arriving in the United States.

The second group of Asian immigrants were refugees from Indo—China. They had been farmers or fishermen. They had few skills and little knowledge of life in a modern, developed country. Social workers say many have had a very difficult time becoming settled. Even so, most of these Southeast Asian refugees use public aid only as a temporary measure.

Like other immigrant groups, most Asian refugees have settled in large cities. They form close communities where little English is spoken. The largest group of Asian—Americans, about thirty—five percent, lives in California. Many new im-

migrants have also settled in Texas, Louisiana and Massachusetts.

The growing numbers of new immigrants have caused some tensions. Asian—Americans are concerned about a number of anti—Asian incidents in the last five years. Some of the incidents involved racial insults. Some involved violence.

The United States Civil Rights Commission reported last autumn that anti—Asian violence is a national problem. Social experts say some Americans are looking for someone to blame for the country's economic problems. These people believe Japan is responsible for the trade imbalance and loss of industrial jobs. So they blame anyone who, to them, looks Japanese... or simply Asian. This feeling is strongest, experts say, among poorer Americans who are struggling for survival.

Partly because of this problem, Asian—Americans are becoming more politically active. They are speaking out against anti—Asian violence and against policies based on anti—Asian feelings.

Traditionally, Asians have taken little part in politics in the United States. They put their energy into hard work and taking care of their families. Now, a movement for more political power has begun.

Asian—American politicians say the reason is mainly the desire for political representation. They say all Asian—Americans do not share the same political goals, but share a desire to end all forms of racism. These political leaders would like to

see more Asian — Americans in *political life*. California politician Julie Tang believes that Asian — Americans will become a united political force with their own elected officials. Ms Tang says, “Asians want to be really part of the American system.”

by Carolyn Weaver

## 亚裔美国人

今年年初,纽约市的郭家接到喜讯。16岁的戴维·郭在美国青年最重要的科学竞赛——威斯汀豪斯科学天才发掘赛中得了奖。他已被选为美国最优秀的14位青年科学家中的一员。

在威斯汀豪斯科学竞赛中获胜已成了郭家的传统。戴维的大哥约翰在1985年赢得头奖。他的二哥马克则在1986年获奖。戴维的获奖,开创了这项竞赛史上,由同一家庭的孩子连续3年获胜的先例。他的获奖之所以被视为巨大的成功,还有另一个原因。郭家是移居美国的移民。他们原是台湾人。

郭家是人们常说的亚裔美国人的成功史中的一个范例。近20年来,大批的亚洲移民拥入美国。许多人刚来时,既没有多少钱,也不会说英语。然而,作为一个群体,他们干得极为出色。

亚裔美国人的家庭收入比大多数其他美国家庭要略高一些。这在一定程度上因为,亚裔美国人的家庭中,夫妇俩都工作的比例比较高。

亚裔美国人中,完成大学学业的比例也比较高。美国人口中,只有2%是亚洲人。然而,在美国的一些一流大学里,高达

20%的一年级学生是亚洲人。

许多亚裔美国人获得成功的原因之一，是他们来到美国时，已经掌握了熟练的技能。他们早已读完了自然科学、医学、法律或工程方面的大学课程。他们在本国已经干得很有成就——有的干了许多年。不少后来很有成就的亚洲人，是在20世纪40年代和50年代来到美国的。建筑师贝聿铭和计算机的先驱王安（两人都是美籍华人），就属于这一类。

专家们说，亚洲人有三个传统，最能说明亚洲人为什么在美国获得成功：即教育，苦干，家庭。

教育被视为成功的关键。亚裔美国人做父母的，都期望自己的孩子成为最成秀的学生。最近的调查表明，美国的亚裔青年在学习上的时间比其他美国学生要多。

在美国，亚裔人是增长最快的少数民族群体。在过去的22年中，他们的人数增加了5倍。如今，亚裔美国人已经超过500万。专家们说，到2000年，这个数字可能增加到1000万。

然而，正如建筑师贝聿铭所指出的，其实并不存在什么亚裔美国人。他说，只有美籍华人，美籍朝鲜人，美籍日本人，美籍越南人，等等。贝指出，亚洲各民族之间的文化差异往往很大。他说，其他美国人应该多了解这些不同的文化。

已有许多人感到应该感谢来自亚洲的移民，因为他们以种种方式丰富了美国的文化。比如，亚裔艺术家给绘画、雕刻、建筑、服装设计带来了新的观念和新的价值。中国、日本、泰国和越南的饭菜受到广泛的欢迎。

中国人大量移居美国的第一批亚洲移民。他们于100多年前就来到美国，帮助修筑美国的铁路。中国的筑路工人受尽虐待，生活非常艰苦。但是铁路修成以后，大多数中国人还

是留在了美国。

第二批大规模的亚洲移民来自日本和朝鲜。他们同样发觉,在美国谋生非常艰难。由于法律和种种非官方的限制,亚洲人很难成为美国公民或是拥有土地。

自 19 世纪末叶起,许多美国人想要终止从亚洲移民。他们惧怕亚洲人,讨厌亚洲人,因为他们属于不同的种族。面对给低工资也肯干活的亚洲移民,工人们担心失去自己的工作。于是,国会通过法令,严格限制来自亚洲的移民。

亚裔美国人经历过境况最坏的阶段,其中包括第二次世界大战期间。当时,美国在同日本交战,几十万美籍日本人被迫住在特别集中营里。

20 世纪 60 年代初,保障黑人公民权利的运动使许多美国人认识到,种族歧视的法令和种族歧视的信念是错误的。1965 年,国会通过了一项移民修订法。新法令使亚洲人像其他人一样,享有移民美国的同等权利。由于新法的问世,70 年代出现了两次亚洲移民的高潮。

头一批移民中的大多数人来自日本、朝鲜、台湾、香港,他们都有高度熟练的技能。许多人来到美国后,马上就能花钱购买住房,开业做生意。

第二批亚洲移民是来自印度支那的难民。他们过去都是农民或渔民,没有什么技术,也不了解现代发达国家的生活。社会福利人员说,许多人在定居过程中,遇到了很大的困难。即便如此,这些东南亚难民中的大多数人,也只是把政府救济当作临时措施。

同其他移民群体一样,亚洲难民大多定居在大城市里。他们结成一个个紧密的社团,彼此很少说英语。亚裔美国人的最

大群体(约占其总数的 35%)居住在加利福尼亚。还有许多新来的移民则定居在得克萨斯、路易斯安那、马萨诸塞等州。

新移民的日渐增多,造成了一些紧张气氛。使亚裔美国人感到不安的是,过去 5 年中,发生了一系列敌视亚洲人的事件。这些事件中,有的是进行种族凌辱,有的则使用了暴力。

去年秋天,美国公民权利委员会报告说,对亚裔人施行暴力是个全国性的问题。社会问题专家说,有些美国人想为国家的经济问题,找人出出气。这些人认为,日本应该对贸易上的不平衡和产业界许多人失业承担责任。因此,他们看谁像日本人,或者只是像亚洲人,他们就怪罪于谁。专家们说,在那些为生存而挣扎的比较贫困的美国人中间,这种情绪最为强烈。

在一定程度上,正是由于这个问题,亚裔美国人在政治上变得越发活跃了。他们大声疾呼,抗议对亚裔施行暴力,抗议以敌视亚裔为基点的各项政策。

亚裔一向很少参与美国的政治。他们把精力放在拼命干活和照料家庭上。而今,他们却展开了一场争取更多政治权利的运动。

亚裔美国人的政治家们说,所以会如此,主要是想争取政治上的代表权。他们说,亚裔美国人并非都有相同的政治目标,但是却怀着一个共同的愿望,要结束一切形式的种族歧视。这些政治领导人希望看到更多的亚裔美国人参与政治生活。加利福尼亚政治家朱莉·唐相信,亚裔美国人有了自己选举产生的官员,就会变成一股团结一致的政治力量。唐女士说:“亚裔人想真正成为美国体制的一部分。”

卡罗琳·韦弗撰稿

## The American Family

Many Americans formed their idea of family life in the nineteen fifties. Popular television programs—like *Ozzie and Harriet* and *Father Knows Best*—showed a family with two or three children. Mother stayed at home to cook, clean and raise the children. Father earned enough money at his job to provide for all of the family's needs. These television programs are still shown sometimes. But that kind of American family has become increasingly less common in the last thirty years.

Beginning in the late nineteen fifties, a wave of social change swept through American life. Almost every American family was affected. Historians say the American family has changed more rapidly in the last thirty years than in any other time period.

Social historians say the most far-reaching change in the family has resulted from changes in women's work. A majority of married women in the United States no longer stay home all day to cook, clean and raise children. They now have paid jobs outside the home. So their young children spend at least part of the day in a child-care home or center.

Changes in the family also resulted from changes in marriage traditions. During the nineteen-sixties, many young men and women began to live together without being legally married. Some had children. They were a family, but not in the

traditional sense. At the same time, more people ended their marriage if it was unhappy. The rate of divorce in the United States increased more than three times in about twenty years. And finally, birth control became more acceptable. Fewer babies were born. The birth rate fell to its lowest point ever in the history of the nation.

With divorce and fewer babies, American families got smaller. They began to look less and less like families in the television programs. Many more families were made up of only divorced mothers and children. More two-parent families contained children from a husband's or wife's earlier marriage. More families were made up of women who had never married, the children they had outside of marriage, and perhaps a grandmother or aunt.

By nineteen eighty-seven, the "traditional" family of the nineteen fifties had become rare. It described only four percent of American families.

Today's television programs show this change. Instead of Father Knows Best, there is Kate and Allie. This program is about two divorced women who live together with their children. The women go to work during the day while their children are in school.

Historians say these changes in the family are not really new. They have been growing in America for more than one-hundred years. What is new, historians say, is the speed of change. It was extremely rapid in the nineteen sixties and

nineteen seventies.

Andrew Cherlin, a professor of social science at Johns Hopkins University in Maryland, is a leading expert on families. Mister Cherlin says changes in the American family began with economic and population changes in the nineteenth century.

People began buying the thing they needed, instead of making them at home. The birth rate went down as the nation became more industrial. Then, after World War Two, the economy grew quickly. There were many jobs. Having less to do at home, married women went to work at those jobs. Their earnings helped pay for their family's clothes, education and holidays.

Social scientists say female employment also removed an important reason for marriage. In the past, women needed husbands to survive economically. And men needed wives to cook for them and make their clothes.

Today, women do not need husbands to survive economically. They can earn their own money. And men do not need wives. They can buy what they need in stores. Because of this, social scientists say, marriages today are based less on economics. Instead, they are based more on the desire for love and friendship, and the desire to create a family.

All these changes do not guarantee that a marriage will last. In fact, at present rates, half of all new marriages begun in the early nineteen eighties will end in divorce. The average