

外刊选粹 原汁原味

English Digest

英语活页文选

English Digest

2

Turning Fifty (I)

Peeling The Chinese Onion

Chinese - American Women in

American Culture

※ 第一夫人的天命之年

※ 窥视中国文化内涵

※ 身处美国文化中的

华裔女性

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Preface

Most Chinese learners of English are more or less handicapped by the lack of ready access to timely original readings in that language. In an attempt to find a way out, we have prepared this collection of well-written articles, which are selected from various latest American, British, Canadian and Australian publications. They will guide you through the colourful world of English, making learning not only a pleasant experience but a way to keep yourself in touch with both the past and the present.

Therefore, we believe that this collection and the ones to come, with handy compact knowledge, could well ~~increase~~ your needs for an enrichment of mind and a ~~rapid~~ improvement in English.

前 言

尽管当今英语书籍铺天盖地,但是,及时的、地地道道的英语资料还不是我们广大英语爱好者可以信手拈来的。鉴于此,我们策划出版了一套选自英美等国最新报刊的文章集粹。我们希望,它既能给您提供当今时代丰富的信息,又能使您保持良好的阅读习惯。因为源自英语母语国家的报刊文摘能展示给您最纯正的英语表达。

创刊伊始,希望我们努力的结果能满足您的要求;而未来,您的要求就是我们努力的方向。

编辑组

Turning Fifty (I)

Older and wiser, America's first * Baby Boom^① First Lady wrestles with career, family and how to leave a mark

On Oct. 26, 1997 Rodham Clinton Hillary turns 50, which is a birthday that compels almost any woman to step back and examine whether the *drape and line^② of her life fit the woman she once dreamed of becoming. The female Baby Boomers, of whom Hillary is the most famous, approached adulthood with a wild, subversive earnestness. These women would change the world, have careers, build strong marriages, raise good children and keep their sense of humor. Hillary has been a beneficiary of these expectations, and as First Lady also their most conspicuous victim. Her Wellesley^③ education and Yale law degree put her onstage (as the student speaker at the college commencement and later as one of the nation's "most influential" lawyers), but they also moved her to the side when her husband's Arkansas constituency chafed^④ at her insistence on being called Ms. Rodham. They put her in a new kind of spotlight as the victorious spouse of this nation's first Baby Boomer President, but she stepped off the stage again when her mishandling of health-care reform almost

① a period of increase in the birthrate, as that in America following World War I (婴儿潮); a person born in that period is called a baby boomer.

② the actual life experience 生活经历

③ 威尔斯利学院

④ to become annoyed 感到恼怒

crippled his presidency.

Now she is getting ready to come on stage again, into some treacherous politics. For the first time since her health-care debacle, the First Lady is preparing to assume a leading role on a policy issue that sweeps every corner of American life, opening questions of government's role, corporate responsibilities and even the very nature of family. As Hillary wrote in her best-selling book *It Takes a Village*, "If you want to open the floodgates of guilt and dissension anywhere in America, start talking about child care."

White House staff members say that after a two-year, self-imposed exile from the "West Wing"^⑤, Hillary is putting in an occasional appearance there again, expressing her views on every thing from race relations to an initiative grandly titled the Millennium Program, a series of events designed to celebrate the new millennium. The First Lady insists that there was no retreat and no comeback—and that her generation's ambivalence about her role has not changed her in the least. "I continue to do what I want to do and what I consider important," she told TIME.

But to some who have watched her in the past three years, her child-care initiative represents a new attempt at public redemption after wandering more or less by herself in the political wilderness. She tried "reflective meditation" sessions with New Age psychic philosopher Jean Houston, who persuaded her to enact conversations with "Eleanor Roosevelt"^⑥ and "Mahatma Gandhi"^⑦; she talked about tracking the progress of welfare reform for her husband but has done so only from the sidelines in an unofficial capacity; facing the empty nest, she thought of adopting a baby.

⑤ a part of White House 白宫西厅

⑥ wife of the 32nd US president, Franklin D. Roosevelt

⑦ Hindu religious leader and nationalist (1869—1948)

Hillary has learned the perverse Washington lesson that a First Lady succeeds in public at her husband's peril. Presidential power being a zero-sum equation, it was impossible for her to look strong without the President's looking weak. She learned the hard way what First Ladies before her had assumed; that her influence was better felt than seen. So late in 1994 she vanished from the West Wing. She sent her chief of staff at the time, Maggie Williams, to meetings. If she needed to make a point, she did it one on one with such trusted aides as deputy chief of staff Harold Ickes and political director Doug Sosnik. And she became the covert campaigner, keeping the national media off her plane as she stumped from city to city.

It was in her stealth phase, for instance, that she recruited political consultant Dick Morris to craft the move-to-the-center strategy that kept Bill Clinton in the White House. She and Morris were the earliest to press the President into adopting the consultant's campaign of family oriented initiatives. And after the election, she was one of the most important forces behind the first major decision of his second term: to balance the budget. She did not stay out of personnel decisions either. She backed Erskine Bowles as chief of staff, putting pragmatism over friendship by passing over her ally Ickes, and she put her old pal Ann Lewis in charge of White House communication operations.

But she cut back in the size of her public role. Her causes became *Gulf War syndrome^⑧, the need for more micro-lending by banks in poor areas, the troubles of American couples trying to adopt 90 babies from Paraguay, and *Naina Yeltsin's^⑨ crusade for Russian children suffering from a metabolic disorder called phenylketonuria^⑩. In the White House she moved back into the

⑧ 海湾战争综合症

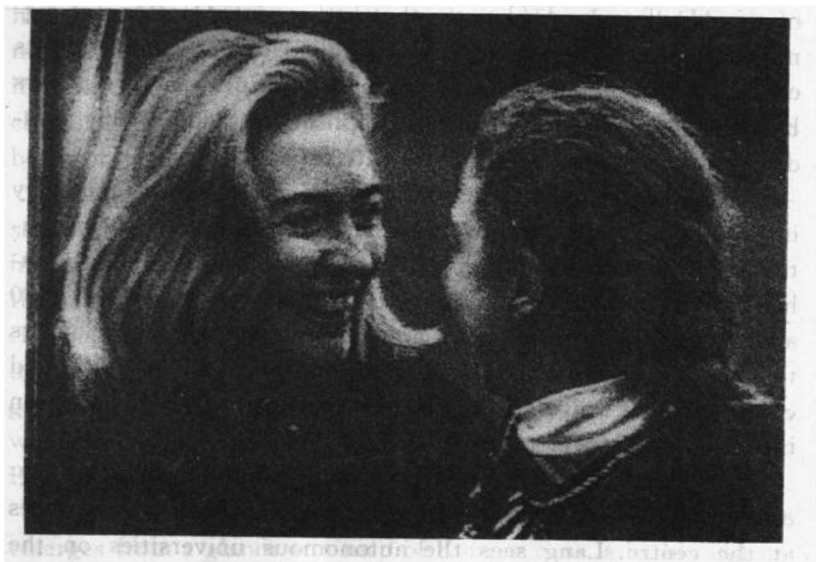
⑨ wife of the now Russian president, Boris Yeltsin

⑩ 苯酮尿

safety of a world that even its denizens call Hillaryland[®], a world made up of ferociously protective aides and a collection of friends from Arkansas like television producer Linda Bloodworth-Thomason.

Among her circle, a former top White House official says, the rehabilitation of Hillary became Topic A. They held meetings on the subject. "Unlike the President, Hillary is very disciplined," the former official says. "She kept the meetings on point, which was how to reposition her," But while Hillary Clinton may seek advice, says former Labor Secretary Robert Reich, "she feels her way by herself. Undoubtedly she did withdraw." (To be continued)

[From *Time*, Oct. 20, 1997.]



① 据 Disneyland(迪斯尼乐园)生造的词



Peeling the Chinese Onion

There are many explanations for the technological decline of China at the end of the mediaeval period, and the coincident technological rise of Europe. One, in a word, is geography.

In mediaeval times, the region that led the world in technological innovation was China. By contrast, Europe north and west of the Alps^① was a backwater that had invented nothing of significance except for improved watermills. How did China lose its enormous lead in science and technology to Europe? Two papers by Graeme Lang, rich with broad implications, address this paradox in terms of structural or ultimate causation.

Lang begins by pointing out that the rise of scientific inquiry in Europe developed within a peculiarly European institution; autonomous universities where critical inquiry was relatively uninhibited by governmental or religious authority. Between AD 1450 and 1650, 90% of Europeans now considered to be contributors to science received university educations, and half of them held career posts at universities. There was no comparable institution in China. Why not?

Historical causation is like an onion, whose concentric^② layers must be peeled back in sequence to reveal the ultimate causes at the centre. Lang sees the autonomous universities on the

① a mountain range in South Europe 阿尔卑斯山脉

② having a common center 同心的

onion's outer skin as springing from an underlying layer of European political fragmentation. Mediaeval Europe was still divided into a thousand independent statelets, whereas China was already unified in 221 BC. So it proved impossible to suppress critical thinking for long in Europe; a thinker persecuted in one statelet could (and often did) merely walk into the next. To take just one example, the astronomer * Johann Kepler^③ was always able to keep one step ahead of the authorities by moving away.

Technological innovations were as hard to suppress in Europe as was scientific inquiry. Competition between statelets provided a positive incentive for them to adopt innovations that might yield military or economic advantages over their rivals. (One such beneficiary was * Christopher Columbus^④, whose schemes for ocean exploration were rebuffed in five states before he received backing from the sixth, Spain.) In contrast, China's unity meant that the decision of a single emperor could block an innovation over the whole of China—the demise of China's clocks, ocean-going fleets and waterpowered spinning machines being only the most flagrant instances.

Thus, at the onion's core rests this question of ultimate causation: why was political unification easy in China but impossible in Europe? In partial explanation, Lang cites a contribution from the much-debated 'hydraulic hypothesis'. The potential for increasing agricultural productivity in the major river valleys of climatically dry north and central China by large-scale hydraulic engineering projects favoured the rise of centralized states there, whereas purely local control sufficed for maximal productivity of Europe's rainfall-based agriculture.

But the ultimate reason for Europe's political fragmentation emerges from a glance at a map of Europe. Seas, a highly indent-

③ 开普勒：德国天文学家、数学家(1571--1630)

④ (1446--1506) Italian explorer; discovered America in 1492

ed coastline, high mountains and dense forests divide Europe into many peninsulas, islands and geographical regions, each of which developed political, linguistic, ethnic and cultural autonomy. Each such region became one more natural experiment in the evolution of technology and scientific inquiry, competing against other regions. Conversely, China has a much less indented coastline, no islands large enough to achieve autonomy, and less formidable internal mountain barriers. China was linked from east to west by two parallel, long and navigable rivers, and was eventually linked from north to south by canals between those rivers. So once a unified Chinese state was founded, geography prevented any other state from gaining lasting autonomy in any part of China.

Lang's analysis obviously has broader implications, of which four may be mentioned briefly. First, China's Great Proletarian Cultural Revolution of 1966-76 illustrates Santayana's^⑤ famous dictum, "Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it". A disastrous decision by Chairman Mao Zedong shut down the entire educational system for one generation of the world's people.

Second, the advance of technology may be hindered not only by excessive unity but also by excessive geographical fragmentation (take, for instance, New Guinea, and possibly India). Some intermediate degree of fragmentation, with moderate connectedness between the fragments, may be optimal for science and technology. The problem of devising that optimal intermediate fragmentation is acute in Europe today. Current attempts to unify Europe appear to run counter to thousands of years of European history and to the source of Europe's strength.

Third, political unity and also technological innovativeness fluctuate with time within the same geographical region. These two types of variation may be correlated in time as they are in

⑤ 桑塔亚那：西班牙哲学家、作家（1863—1952）

space; for example, that ups and downs in China's technological progress arose from temporal fluctuations in China's political unity.

Finally, Lang's broadest message is that historians need to think more in terms of ultimate causes, and less in terms of culture as an arbitrary independent variable whose local idiosyncracies^⑥ defy understanding.

[From *Nature*, Feb. 1998; by Jared M. Diamond]

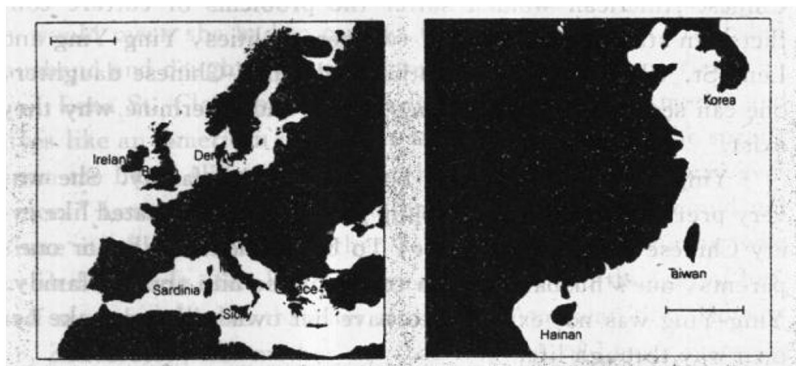


Figure 1 Sketch maps of Europe and China. Europe's coastline is much more indented and includes more peninsulas; the continent also has internal mountain chains, such as the Pyrenees, Alps and Carpathians, and two large islands. Graeme Lang argues^{1,2} that it is this comparative geographical fragmentation in Europe that resulted in the persistence of many independent states, as compared with the long-standing political unity of China. Competition between states, he proposes, permitted and fuelled the wave of scientific and technological innovation that began in Europe from the mid-fifteenth century AD. Scale bars are 500 miles.

⑥ a particular way of behaving, thinking, etc. 特性、特征

Chinese-American Women in American Culture

Living with their traditional culture in American society, Chinese-American women suffer the problems of culture conflicts. In studying the lives of two personalities, Ying-Ying and Lena St. Clair, a Chinese mother and a half-Chinese daughter, one can see these conflicts more clearly and determine why they exist.

Ying-Ying St. Clair was born into a rich family. She was very pretty when she was a young girl. She was educated like every Chinese woman used to be: To be obedient, to honor one's parents, one's husband and to try to please him and his family. Ying-Ying was not expected to have her own will and make her own way through life.

The result of this education was a disaster. She was married to a bad man who left her after a short time to follow other women. Her love for him turned to hate, and she killed her unborn baby. This act gave her remorse for all her life since she considered it a murder. Tortured by this incident, she had a mental breakdown, for a period of time, when her second son — with her second husband, St. Clair — died at birth. She saw it as a punishment for her previous behavior.

After leaving her first husband's house and returning home, she abandoned herself to whatever life offered her. She lived like a shadow, letting other people or events to decide for her. When she met St. Clair, she passively let him believe that she was from a poor family. Ying Ying also let him think that he married

her to save her from some catastrophe, since she seemed to be in a desperate state of mind when she married him. She could not tell her husband, and later, her daughter Lena, that the catastrophe they imagined was only the news of the death of her bad and unloving former husband, and the emptiness she felt after hearing that news. She let St. Clair make all decisions for her, since she wanted to give up her "chi" — her spirit or her strong will — because the only time she exerted it was to do a bad thing in her eyes: killing her unborn first son. Ying Ying did not want to let her husband and daughter know more about herself, since it would mean she had to confess her shameful secret. Both her husband and daughter did not know about her first marriage.

Lena St. Clair, on the other hand, was born in America and lives like an American girl, "But when she was born, she sprang from me like a slippery fish, and had been swimming away ever since." Lena knew that her mother kept a secret and could not share it. She saw her mother as a weak-minded woman who needed her help. She learned American ways and thought of herself as more suitable than her mother to American life. However, conversely, her mother saw the fragility of Lena's marriage and happiness.

For all her life, Ying Ying lived on a superficial level with St. Clair, her husband. Lena inherited this attitude from her mother. In St. Clair's family, they never had real communication. They only tried to be good to each other. The relationship between YingYing and St. Clair was superficial, so is that of Lena and Harold, her husband. Lena never questioned her mother about Chinese tradition, or about her parents' relationship.

Despite the exterior resemblance between the two marriages, Harold is very different from his father-in-law. While St. Clair was an honest man who courted Ying Ying for four years before marrying her, and he did not abandon her when she had her breakdown, Harold seems to be more egotistical and uncar-

ing.

Chinese traditional culture was based partly on Confucius's^① teachings, partly on *Taoism and Buddhism^②. Confucius taught that every woman had to follow three persons during her whole life: At home, she had to follow her father, married, she had to follow her husband, and when her husband died, she had to follow her son. Normally, in the case of Ying Ying, she had to give birth to her first son and stay forever in her in-law's house, waiting for her husband to come back. Ying Ying went against tradition by doing what she did. She chose not to stay in her husband's house, and to do every possible thing to return to her father's house.

On the other hand, *Lao Tzu^③ said that "the wise man is like water or like a springy twig; he is soft and flexible. The soft one wins over the hard one, and the weak one wins over the strong one." From that principle sprang *Tai Chi, Judo and Aikido^④. The art to use this principle is the art to rule over people. However, in order to be a good leader, one has to learn other rules also. For example, one need to meditate to have intuition, to make decision accurately, to inspire people to make the most of themselves and aspire to goodness. Tao is not merely an attitude of "laissez-faire" like it is misunderstood sometimes, or a fatalistic way of thinking that induces people not to save a situation when there is still time. Lena was very peaceful when she lived with Harold. She let him do whatever he wanted to do, but he did not become the best of himself in this relationship, since she did not communicate to him all of her true feelings.

The third source of inspiration for Chinese culture is Buddhism. The Buddha taught that one has to detach from one's

① Chinese philosopher and teacher (511? —478? B.C.) 孔子

② 道家思想和佛教思想

③ Chinese philosopher; reputed founder of Taoism (6th century B.C.) 老子

④ 太极、柔道、合气道

richness to earn Nirvana^⑤, or peace of mind. One has to get rid of one's desire and greed to be happy. Without knowing the teaching of the Buddha, and by the example of her mother only, Lena let Harold have his ways. Lena thought she was right in doing this, until her mother brought up his miserly ways toward their money. Now she sees that there is something wrong with her marriage, and its foundation is not as solid as she thought. This money accounting between them is like proof of lack of love, sharing and trust. It says that they could leave each other any time, without worrying about dividing their fortune. This was not the case for St. Clair and Ying Ying.

In looking back on her life, Ying Ying sees that it was broken up by the unhappiness of her first marriage and the things that ensued. She sees the gap in the education she received, and how she had rebelled against it. She also sees how it confused her and made her feel guilty for so long. Now she sees something else, she sees that instead of that feeling, she must feel guilty for not having a strong will, for wasting her life and her husband's life, and giving a bad example for her daughter with her lack of vitality and self-confidence, and lack of communication with her family's members. Ying Ying decides to tell her daughter about her life and induce Lena to take responsibility for her own fate, not to rely on someone else, and not to live in the shadow of anybody.

Although they were born in America, they cannot assimilate American culture and sacrifice their own culture without harm to their happiness and their balance. They need to know about their original culture to understand themselves and to deal with their weaknesses and convert them to become their strengths.

⑤ (佛教)涅槃

The Planet's Players

Both climate change and policies to minimize its effects have enormous environmental and economic implications. The costs of climate change will vary widely from country to country. Developed countries are responsible for over two thirds of past emissions and some 75 per cent of current emissions, but they are best positioned to protect themselves from damage. Developing countries tend to have low per capita^① emissions, are in great need of economic development and more vulnerable to climate-change impacts. These differences have helped to shape the positions that Governments take in international talks. The key players are:

◆ **The European Union.** In general, EU supported binding targets and timetables for emissions reduction. Other countries did not agree. The European Union also supported allowing countries to adhere to joint targets. This now affects the internal discussion between the EU's poorer members, who argue for higher emissions quotas within any future overall EU target, and the richer members, who would have to reduce their emissions further to compensate for this.

◆ **The JUSSCANZ countries—the non-EU developed countries** — including Japan, the United States, Switzerland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and Norway. The non-European mem-

① by each person 人均