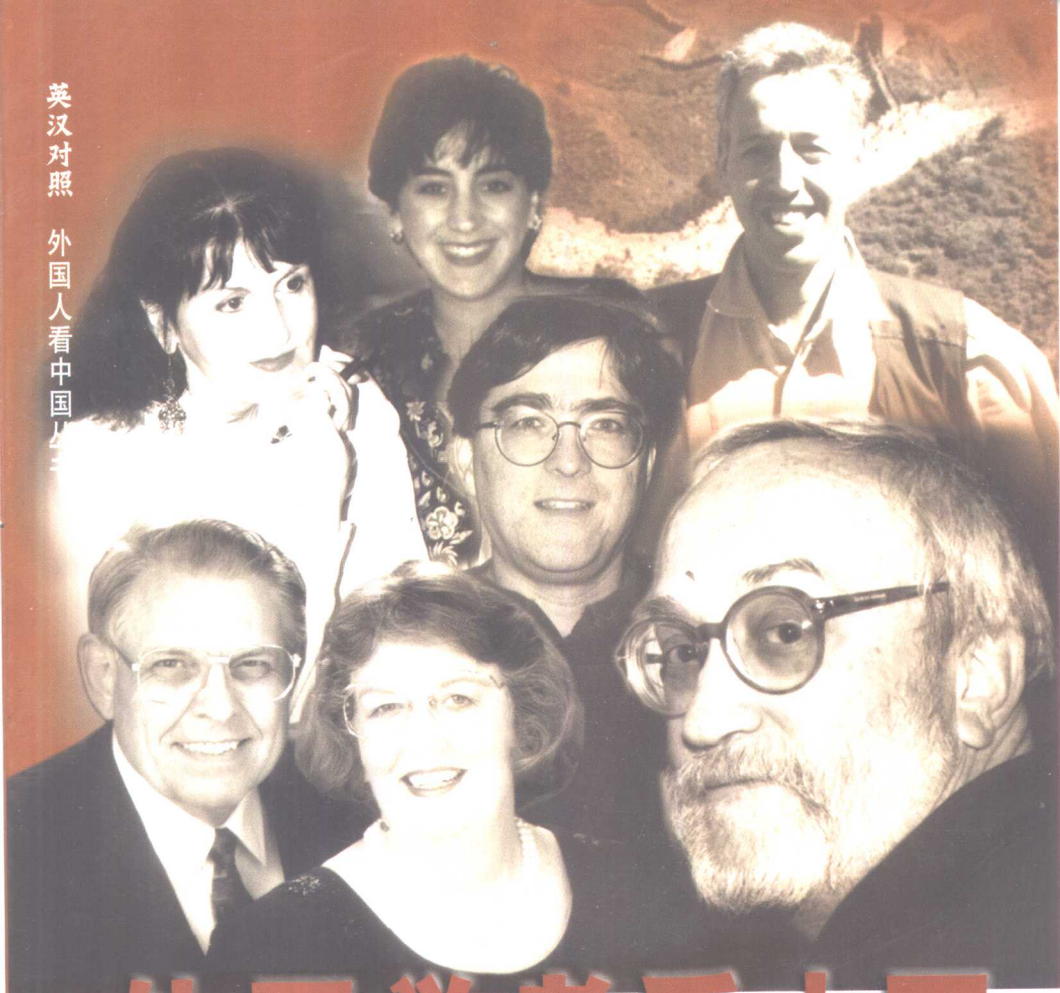


英汉对照
外国人看中国



外国学者看中国

FOREIGN SCHOLAR'S
PERSPECTIVE ON
CHINA

王镇平 编译

外语教学与研究出版社

FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING AND RESEARCH PRESS

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王镇平 编译

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前 言

这本书收集了在北京的外籍教师和留学生的英文文章 20 篇。这些文章中有特别应约而写的,也有不少以前曾经在报纸或刊物上发表过的,其中大多数是近 10 年的内容;也有如 Beverly Hong Fincher 女士写在 1972 年中美恢复往来之际的文章,该文当时曾在《华盛顿邮报》等多家美国大报上发表或转载。

外国人看中国,看到的总不过是一些侧面和小环境。然而透过这些文字,你可以看到他们对中国历史、文化的敬仰,对中国和这里的人们寄予的真实情感。

以外教和留学生的视角,应该不同于一般的游客或商人。他们在中国的生活更接近于普通平常的百姓,时间上也来得及沉淀,按说也就更容易见到这里的本色。

考虑到部分读者的需要,本书为每篇文章提供了参考译文、作者简介和作者在中国的照片,以帮助阅读和正确理解文章的内容,拉近读者和作者之间的距离。

今天,当人们兴冲冲跨过 21 世纪门槛的时候,读者如能通过本书在阅读英语之外,看到几分人类沟通与理解的意义,将是本书编者的一份慰藉。

编 者

1999 年 3 月

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Rick Epting

He teaches oral and written English at Beijing Foreign Studies University. The 1998--1999 school year marks his third time teaching at BFSU since 1991 and his fifth trip to China since 1985. He lives in Mount Vernon, Washington (about halfway between Seattle and Vancouver, Canada), where he is the arts and entertainment editor for a local newspaper and teaches journalism at Skagit Valley College. He is also a singer-songwriter who has his own bands both here in Beijing and in the United States.

BFSU and SVC are currently in the 11th year of a faculty exchange program between the two schools.



艾力克

在北京外国语大学教授英语口语和写作。1998—1999 学年是他自 1991 年以来第三次任教于北外,也是他自 1985 年以来第五次来到中国。他居住在华盛顿弗农山(约在西雅图和加拿大温哥华中间),是当地的一家报纸的艺术娱乐版编辑,同时在斯卡吉特山谷学院讲授新闻学。他是歌手也是作曲家,在北京和美国都拥有自己的乐队。

北京外国语大学与斯卡吉特山谷学院的教师交流项目目前已进行了 11 年。



1. China: The Elusive Dragon Approaches a New Millennium

By Rick Epting (American) Nov. 1998

There is an old cliché among Westerners who live here in China that goes something like this: "If you come for a couple of weeks, you can write a book. If you stay for a month, you can write a magazine article. If you're here for a year, you can't think of anything to write."

Well, sure, one can always utter a few generalizations, but those first awestruck certainties that are felt by short-time visitors soon seem as imprecise as reading yesterday's tea leaves. Quick assumptions about intimidating perplexities can be both comforting and deceiving.

Take, for example, the notion many Americans have that China is an "inscrutable" land that is steeped in Confucianism and filled with Buddhists and Taoists who work in rice paddies, drink nothing but tea, eat "chow mein" and "chop suey", have fortune cookies for dessert, and go to bed in silk pajamas. Leisure time is devoted to playing mah-jong and ping pong or practicing tai chi or kung fu.

While there may be elements of truth in any stereotype, generalizations still tend to give a false picture of the reality. The overworked assertion about the Middle Kingdom being "inscrutable", however, is, nonetheless, still true. But, like DNA, just because it is difficult to comprehend doesn't make it impossible to assimilate.

1. 中国：神龙腾向新千年

艾力克(美国)写于1998年11月

居住在中国的西方人有这样一种说法：“如果你在中国呆两三周，便可以写本书；如果你呆上一个月，只能为杂志写篇文章；如果你呆上一年，就什么也写不出来了。”

当然，每个人总能作出一些论断，但那些短期来访者起初得出的肯定结论却令人敬畏，听起来就像辨认隔夜的茶叶那般不精确。对于令人害怕、困惑的事物匆忙作出的论断，则能起到安慰、掩饰的作用。

举例来说，许多美国人有这样的印象：中国是一片浸润于儒家思想，像谜一样的土地，到处是佛教徒和道教徒。他们在稻田里干活，除茶以外什么也不喝，吃“炒面”和“炒杂碎”，以喜饼为甜食，穿着丝绸睡衣睡觉，业余时间用来打麻将、打乒乓球或是练太极或武术。

尽管这些说法中有真实的成份，但论断仍然倾向于错误地反映现实。然而“不可知的中央之国”之类的过火的断言仍有其正确的地方。就像DNA，并没有因为它难以理解而不被接受。



Understanding that China is no single, monolithic culture is a good first step. And, while one can always find a few common threads in the collective fabric of even the most complex of societies, categorizing an entire civilization in "soundbytes" is both presumptuous and naive.

There may be tens of millions of Buddhists and Taoists (along with a surprising number of Muslims), but to most of the country's 1.2 billion inhabitants religion plays little or no role in their day-to-day lives. If indeed there is something worshiped in China today it is money and the preoccupation with acquiring it. Yet, it is undeniable that Confucian values centering around family and fealty still hold as much influence as the desire to get ahead.

As for chop suey and fortune cookies, they are Chinese-American creations that are almost unheard of here on the mainland. And silk pajamas are more for export than actual use by the ordinary Chinese. Mah-jong is still somewhat popular, however, especially when the younger generations spend time with grandparents.

The martial arts certainly have their place, but discos and ballroom dancing have been the rage for about ten years. Beijing night spots are packed on weekends. Many young Chinese professionals—and students who can afford it—have acquired a taste for Western-style nightlife, music, and dancing. Even the old can be seen in many city parks practicing ballroom dancing and Latin American steps like the cha cha and tango, as well as traditional folk dances.

Notwithstanding the Chinese disposition for modesty in matters of romance and sex, a new mind-set is emerging in some big

承认中国并非是单一的、铁板一块的文化是很好的开端。一个人能在各社会的最为复杂的事物中从整体找到一些共同的线索,但要把整个文明以“音节”来归类是自以为是,太过天真的。

中国可能有几千万的佛教徒和道教徒(以及数量惊人的穆斯林),但对于中国 12 亿居民中的大多数人来说,宗教在他们的日常生活中只起着微不足道的作用,甚至可以说不起作用。如果说当今中国人仍然崇拜某些东西,那就是钱以及赚钱的机会。但是,儒家思想注重以家庭为核心的事实是不可否认的,孝道仍像期望的那样有很大影响力。

炒杂碎、喜饼是美籍华人创造的,在大陆几乎从未听说过。丝绸睡衣更多的是用于出口而并非被普通中国人所用。但麻将仍然较受欢迎,尤其是年轻人与长辈们在一起的时候。

武术当然有它们的地位,但迪斯科和交际舞也已风靡了十多年。周末北京的夜生活场所人头攒动。中国的许多年轻职业人士以及消费得起的学生,已迷上了西式的夜生活、音乐和舞蹈。甚至在许多城市公园里可以看到老年人在跳舞,有传统的民间舞蹈,有交际舞,还有拉丁舞,像恰恰、探戈等。

尽管中国人在恋爱、性方面生性内敛,一些大城市中已涌现了新的思想观念。在公共场所约

外国学者看中国

cities. Dating and showing affection by holding hands--and occasionally kissing--in public is now far more commonplace than it was a decade ago.

For every assumption made about China, however, there are numerous exceptions. Given the fact that there are 56 diverse nationalities, a majority of the populace still living in backward rural areas, and many old-guard Chinese who think things are moving too fast, it would be frivolous to attempt to stereotype contemporary China at the end of this century.

A city run on cabbages and coal

After I first came to Beijing in late October of 1985 I wrote in an article for a US magazine that "this capital of the Middle Kingdom seems to be a city run on cabbages and coal."

Although there were a number of Western hotels, much new construction under way, and a newly-opened Parisian night spot called Maxim's, it still had a rather bleak "Third-World" feel. As the chilly winter approached, the skies became increasingly filled with the gray, sooty residue that comes from burning low-grade coal. And everywhere one looked massive stacks of Chinese cabbages (*baicai*), the primary--and often only--vegetable readily available then to Beijingers in the winter, lined the streets and window ledges in preparation for the harsh winter ahead.

Except for small, often colorfully dressed children, just about everyone wore the same drab green, blue, or gray "Mao Zedong/Sun Yat Sen jackets" (*zhongshanzhuang*). In fact, it was so unusual to see a Chinese person in anything else that I once found myself taking a picture of two women wearing Western-style pants suits adorned with bright-colored scarves.

Down on the north side of Jianguomenwai Avenue an experi-

会、牵手以示亲热——偶尔亲吻——比之十年前已经普遍多了。

然而，对中国所作的每一个论断，有着无数的例外。中国有着 56 个不同的民族，大多数人口仍生活在落后的农村地区，而且许多守旧的中国人仍认为世界变化得太快。因此，试图在这世纪末把当代中国定型是毫无意义的。

靠白菜和煤炭运转的城市

1985 年 10 月下旬我第一次来到北京后，曾为美国的一家杂志写了一篇文章，提到“‘中央之国’的首都似乎是靠白菜和煤炭运转的城市”。

虽然当时有一些西式宾馆，许多正在施工的建筑以及一家新开张的巴黎式“马克西姆”夜总会，北京仍给人灰暗的第三世界的感觉。当严冬临近，天空中渐渐布满由燃烧低质煤产生的煤灰。随处可见大堆大堆的大白菜，这是主要的——经常是惟一的——北京的冬天有供应的蔬菜，被堆放在街道旁和窗沿下为将至的寒冬作准备。

除了一些小孩子常穿得五颜六色，其他人几乎都穿着同样的黄绿色、蓝色或灰色的中山装。实际上，那时候看见中国人穿其他服装真是很难得，我有幸看见过两位女子身穿西式长裤套装，配戴亮丽的围巾，赶紧举起相机把她们拍了下来。

在建国门外大街的北侧，一个试验性的自由



mental free-enterprise market was just getting established with about a dozen privately-operated stalls. This was later to become the now world-famous shopping area known as "Silk Alley."

Foreigners dealt with three kinds of money then: the currency of their own nation, a special money for foreigners only, called "foreign exchange certificates" (FEC), and the ordinary Chinese "people's money" (*Renminbi*). Black market demand for US dollars was rampant. Some things, it seemed, could be purchased only with those dollars. But no matter how many US dollars—or FEC—a Chinese citizen had, places like the Friendship Store, where many foreigners shopped for Chinese and Western goods alike, were still off limits to the locals.

By 1985 an increasing number of urban Chinese were beginning to benefit from the rapidly expanding economy. Workers who had endured decades of frugality were now purchasing "luxury" consumer goods like new refrigerators, stereos, and television sets, although the latter was certain to be viewed in black and white only. Everywhere one looked there were "tricycles" (not the kind of little tricycles used by children in America, but adult-size, cargo-hauling three wheelers) carrying home these newly affordable—and available—goods. And city dwellers were also bicycling home with more fresh fruit, vegetables, and meat than would have been imaginable a mere five years earlier.

Changes in traffic, construction, and fashion

Just six years after our first trip to China, my wife and I came back, this time to teach English for the 1991—1992 school year at Beijing Foreign Studies University. We were on the faculty exchange program between BFSU and Skagit Valley College (near Seattle, Washington), where I work part time as a journal-

市场逐渐形成,约有十几家个体经营摊位。后来这条街成了现在世界闻名的购物区“秀水街”。

外国人那时持有三种货币:本国货币、外国人独有的“外汇券”及普通中国人使用的人民币。黑市对美元的需求极大,有些物品似乎只能用美元才能购得。但无论一个中国人有多少美元或外汇券,外国人购物的友谊商店——内有中国商品也有外国商品——这类地方是不准普通中国人进入的。

到1985年,越来越多的中国城市居民从迅速增长的经济中获益。熬过了几十年节衣缩食的日子,工人开始购买“奢侈”的消费品,如冰箱、音响、电视机等,虽然当时电视机只有黑白的。到处可见“三轮车”(不是美国儿童用的小三轮车,而是成人用的,运货物的三轮平板车)正往家搬运这些买得到,而且买得起的商品。城市居民骑车回家,车筐内满载着新鲜水果、蔬菜和肉。这些在五年前是不可企及的。

外国学者看中国

Foreign Scholars' Perspectives on China

城市交通、城市建设及时装的变化

第一次来中国的6年后,我和妻子再次来到北京。这次是在北京外国语大学任教,负责1991—1992学年的英语教学。这是北京外国语大学和斯卡吉特峡谷学院(在华盛顿州西雅图附近)教师交流项目。在斯卡吉特,我是兼职新闻学老