

英语文化系列读物

2

A Reader of Culture in English

丛书主编 / 杨敏 李敏

# 世界风云

World Wind

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石油大学出版社

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本书主编: 杨 彬 孙厌舒 孙国瑾

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### 图书在版编目(CIP)数据

英语文化读物/杨敏主编.-东营:石油大学出版社,  
1999.11

ISBN 7-5636-1285-8

I.英… II.杨… III.英语-语言读物 IV.H319.4

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(1999)第 68150 号

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## 世界风云

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出版者:石油大学出版社(山东 东营,邮编 257062)

网 址:<http://suncetr.hdpu.edu.cn/~upcpress>

印刷者:山东省东营新华印刷厂

发行者:石油大学出版社(电话 0546—8392563)

开 本:850×1168 1/32 印张:3.75 字数:83 千字

版 次:1999 年 11 月第 1 版 1999 年 11 月第 1 次印刷

印 数:1—3000 册

定 价:5.00 元 (全九册) 45.00 元

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**The Changing World**

变化中的世界



## Migrant Control System in China

【导读：为了防止农村人口大量涌入城市，中国已经形成了一套户口控制政策。这一政策在实行的 40 年中，也历经变化。】

**E**ditor's note: China's 40-year-old residency system is slowly being **dismantled** with the **State Council** calling on local governments to allow divided family members to unite and investors to get local residency. While such steps are hailed by many as groundbreaking, some experts say that there is still a long way to go before the country's internal passport system can come to a complete end.

For a better understanding of the issue, the following is a brief history of the residency system.

An important function of the system is to regulate migration, especially from rural to urban areas and from smaller cities to bigger ones. Before 1955, Chinese citizens could move freely within the country. As a result of this the urban population increased by 31.5 million within six years of the Liberation. Two thirds of the migrants were from rural areas.

In 1955, the Ministry of Public Security tried for the first time to control migration. According to one of its **stipu-**



**lations**, urban residency could be granted only to people whose spouses, parents or children were city dwellers. Those who had regular jobs in cities or were enrolled in schools could also get residency cards.

The regulation was given legal enforcement in 1958, when the National People's Congress formally passed a law on migration to urban areas. Under the law, people had to go through complicated procedures to become city residents.

The new law was like a **sluice gate** erected between the city and village. Its positive function was obvious: By controlling the size of the urban population, the government could concentrate the nation's limited resources on speeding up industrialization. By tying peasants to the land the law helped to guarantee enough grain output to feed the whole country.

However, the residency card was not simply a label stating your address. It was a valuable document in other ways. Holding an urban residency card meant you could get preferential treatment in food rations, employment, education and housing. With such benefits attached to their status, city dwellers were virtually protected by the government from having to compete on an equal **footing** with those from out of town.

The residency system began to **unwind** in 1984 when a State Council document made it clear that peasants could leave the land and do business in cities. By that time, China's economic reform had already loosened restrictions

## Migrant Control System in China

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on commerce and opened up the cities to migrant workers. As peasants moved in to help build cities, farmers' markets sprang up enabling migrants to buy their own food. Before, food supply in cities was limited to official residents. By the time the grain market was completely opened in 1993, millions of peasants had already settled in cities.

Not all migrants are peasants, though. Every year, hundreds of thousands of the country's college graduates struggle to stay in big cities and only a small number of them finally get the chance. The majority has to choose between going back to their assigned places and staying in cities as *heihu*, people without urban residency.

Those who stay usually find more appealing jobs than conventional migrant workers, but compared with their peers who hold residency permits, they are greatly disadvantaged. In most cases, they cannot receive overtime pay, health insurance or housing benefits. Their status also prevents them from working for big foreign companies, all of which are required by local governments to ask for residency permits before they employ staff. Such restraints have made it difficult for "illegal residents" to advance professionally.

In view of the social problems caused by the strict residency system, some coastal cities have recently lifted the curtain to let the rich and talented in. In 1995, Shenzhen municipal government decided to issue temporary residency cards to high school degree holders who had lived in the city for more than four years and to bachelor degree holders who

had been in Shenzhen for more than three years. Private businessmen with annual tax returns of more than 100 000 yuan could also get temporary residency.

Since then, similar policies have been passed in other cities including Shanghai and Guangzhou. Temporary residency card holders are like **interns** to the city. While enjoying the same rights in schooling, employment and medical care as local people, they are burdened with more responsibilities. In Shenzhen, for example, a temporary residency card holder has to turn in 2,000 yuan each year to the municipal government for the public services they receive from the city. This continues for 10 years, after which they are supposed to get permanent residency.

But without a residency, migrants were still denied the right to free education, **subsidized** housing and pensions. By inheriting the mother's residency, children of migrant workers usually ended up boarding with relatives in the mother's hometown.

**Notes:**

1. **dismantle** [dis'mænt(ə)l]: 拆散。
2. **State Council** : 国务院。
3. **stipulation** [ˌstɪpjʊ'leɪʃən]: 规定, 条款。
4. **sluice (gate)** [slu:s]: 水门, 水闸。
5. **footing** ['fʊtɪŋ]: 社会地位; 团体中的地位。
6. **unwind** [ʌn'waɪnd]: 解开, 展开。
7. **intern** [in'tə:n]: 被拘留于某地的人。
8. **subsidize** ['sʌbsaɪz]: 给予辅助金, 资助。

## A Prediction of Britain's Social Framework

【导读：空间上的距离已经随着时代的发展再也不能成为人们交流的障碍了，于是有时我们也去猜想地球上其他的人是怎样生活的，例如，英国人？】

### Housing and the Environment

A growing proportion of households, about 60 per cent, own or are buying their own homes, **owner-occupation** being higher among married couples than for single, divorced or widowed household heads. The number of owner-occupied dwellings rose from over 4 million in 1951 to 13.5 million in 1984. Four British households out of five live in houses rather than flats.

Nearly half of Britain's housing has been built since 1945. Recent housing developments have been concentrated in suburban areas. Many families now live in houses grouped in small **terraces**, or semi-detached or detached, usually of two storeys with gardens, and providing two main ground-floor living rooms, a kitchen, from two to four bedrooms, a bathroom and one or two lavatories. Originally, many houses were located in '**ribbon development**' along main roads, but in recent years housing estates have

nearly always been sited away from main roads. In inner urban areas **slum clearance** and redevelopment have been major features of post-1945 public housing programmes. While high-rise flats were popular in the 1960s and 1970s, the emphasis in new building is now on low-rise, high-density designs, often incorporating gardens or **patios**.

Housing standards are continually improving; some 97 per cent of households in Great Britain have exclusive use of a bath or shower.

An important influence on the planning of housing and services has been the growth of car ownership; about 61 per cent of households have the use of at least one car (or van), including 17 per cent with the use of two or more. Greater access to motorised transport and the construction of a network of modern trunk roads and motorways have resulted in a considerable increase in personal mobility and changed leisure patterns, and have influenced the design of housing estates and shopping areas. Most detached or semi-detached houses in new suburban estates have garages, and out-of-town shopping centres, which normally include large supermarkets, are usually planned for the motorist.

The growth in car ownership has brought very great benefits but also a number of problems, notably, in many towns and cities, increased **congestion**, noise and air pollution arising from motor vehicle **emissions**. Public transport, too, has been affected, and many services have been reduced or withdrawn, especially local bus and train services in rural

areas. However, greater competition in express coach services has resulted in more long distance and commuter coach services being provided.

There has been a steady reduction of the main atmospheric and freshwater pollutants that have been of concern in the past, producing dramatic improvements in, for example, the quality of the air in cities and the condition of major rivers, although various forms of pollution from traffic and industrial processes remain a problem in some areas.

### Living Standards

Marked improvements in the standard of living have taken place during the twentieth century, but generally at a slower rate than in some other major industrialised countries. Although gross domestic product (GDP) per head fell in the early 1980s, Britain has experienced an economic recovery in the mid-1980s, and GDP is now at **a record level**, having risen by 3.6 per cent in 1985. Another feature of the economic improvement has been a substantial reduction in inflation, which from 1983 to 1985 ranged between about 4 and 7 per cent a year, compared with an average annual increase of 14.2 per cent between 1973 and the end of 1982, and was down to 2.4 per cent in mid-1986, the lowest rate since 1968.

Long-term trends in the pattern of expenditure show a substantial rise in expenditure on housing, televisions, telephones, electrical and some other durable goods, motor ve-

hicles and entertainment, and in expenditure overseas. As real incomes have risen, the **share** of expenditure on food has fallen. Unlike in many other countries, the share devoted to tobacco continues to decline; an increasing number of people have stopped smoking for health reasons.

The general level of nutrition remains high. Over the last 20 years there have been substantial rises in the consumption of poultry, instant coffee, pork, margarine and processed (including frozen) vegetables, while home consumption per person of mutton and lamb, beef and veal, bread, potatoes, eggs, milk, butter, sugar, tea and some other foods has fallen. However, another feature has been an increase in the number of meals eaten away from home, either at work or in restaurants, and a growth in the consumption of food from **'take-away'** and **'fast-food'** shops.

Alcohol consumption has risen substantially since the 1950s and **alcohol abuse** has become a growing problem although the level is well below that in some other European Community countries. Beer remains much the most popular alcoholic drink. A high proportion of beer is drunk in public houses (**'pubs'**), which are a traditional social centre for many people, and in clubs. A notable development has been the increase in consumption of **lager**, now estimated to account for about two-fifths of the beer consumed. Consumption of light(table) wine has increased considerably in recent years, although there has been little change in the consumption of higher strength wines such as sherry and port. The

pattern of spirits consumption has also been changing, with a decline in the consumption of whisky and **gin**, and higher consumption of some other spirits.

Ownership of many durable goods has been increasing and some goods, such as televisions, vacuum cleaners and refrigerators, are available in more than 90 per cent of households. Of durable goods ownership of telephones, freezers and central heating systems is growing most rapidly; other durable goods which have grown in popularity include music centres and other audio equipment, video recorders and home computers.

### Notes:

1. **housing** ['hauzɪŋ]: (总称) 住房。
2. **owner-occupation**: 对住房享有所有权。
3. **terraces** ['terɪs]: 斜坡上(或高出街道的)一排排房屋。
4. **ribbon development**: (由市区到郊区)沿干道修建的一系列建筑。
5. **slum clearance**: 清除贫民窟。
6. **patio** ['pætiəu]: 院子。
7. **congestion** [kən'dʒestʃ(ə)n]: 拥塞; 密集。
8. **emission** [i'mɪʃ(ə)n]: 散发。
9. **GDP**: 国内生产总值。
10. **a record level**: 最高水平。
11. **share** [ʃeə(r)]: (此处)一份钱。
12. **take-away**: 外卖。
13. **alcohol abuse**: 酗酒。
14. **lager** ['la:gə(r)]: 啤酒的一种。
15. **gin** [dʒɪn]: 杜松子酒。



## What's inside

【导读：五角大楼是在媒体中频频被提到的美国政府部门之一，普通人感到好奇的是：五角大楼里面究竟是什么样子呢？】

**T**he Pentagon is almost always used by the press to refer to the **US War Department**, which is managed by a **civilian Secretary of Defense** appointed by the Commander-in-Chief of the US Armed Forces—the president of the United States of America.

The Pentagon, or the headquarters of the US Department of Defense, is one of the largest office buildings in the world, taking up a total land area of 583 acres. The five-sided structure itself occupies an area of 29 acres. Each of its five outside walls is 921 feet long. It has three times the **floor space** as the Empire State Building or half again as much space as either of the New York's **World Trade Center towers**. The **National Capitol** could easily fit into any one of its **five wedge-shaped sections**. Working inside this huge building are over 25 000 employees, one half of them being civilians and the other half members of the US armed forces. During the last years of the Second World War there were 37 000 people, both military and civilian, working inside the Pentagon. In the Korean and Vietnam war periods,