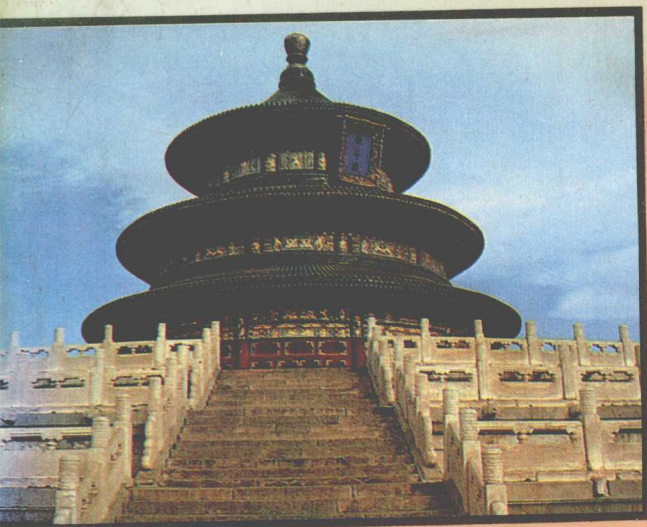


ASPECTS OF CHINESE CULTURE

中国文化概要



马振铃 主编

南开大学出版社

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出版说明

《中国文化概要》(英文)是南开大学旅游系开设的“中国文化”课教材。本教材侧重中国文化中的精神文化方面,如教育、文学、传统戏剧、国画、中医、气功等,旨在使学生对于这些方面的知识有概括性的了解并学会用规范的英语对其进行表述和探讨,以便他们走上旅游业工作岗位后能满足工作的需要。

《中国文化概要》的读者对象是英语专业二年级以上的学生或具有同等英语水平的其他专业的学生以及社会上对“中国文化”感兴趣的中外人士。

本教材共分十四个单元。每个单元为一专题,由数篇文章组成。各篇文章互相补充又独立成文;既有概括的介绍,又有对具体文化结晶的描述,以求知识性和趣味性的统一。在文字方面力求深入浅出、流畅易懂、符合英语的习惯用法。英国专家 Patrick Sowle 教授对本书的文字和内容提出了不少宝贵的意见和建议,并为本书作序,英语教师 Barbara Woodward 女士也对本书的部分内容提出了修改意见,谨在此表示衷心的感谢。

本书根据大量中英文书刊资料编写而成,名目较多,不及一一

列举。本书由南开大学旅游系马振铃副教授任主编。参加编写的有马振铃、李娟、陶丽、于建军、王玉屏、吴耘。由于编写人员水平有限,一定会有不妥和错误之处,恳请读者不吝指正。

编者

一九九一年七月

PREFACE

I have pleasure in supporting, and contributing in a small way to, *Aspects of Chinese Culture*, edited by Professor Ma Zhenling. I believe this book represents a significant new advance in teaching materials for Chinese students of English. It will be an invaluable resource for students training to become English language tour guides.

When I came to Nankai two years ago I tried to learn about the university and the Department of Tourism. I discovered that the course in Chinese culture is taught in English. It seemed odd, and I put it among the little mysteries that I would never understand. Months later, when I taught oral English, I realized that some of the most fluent students can conduct a high level, abstract conversation in English, but they are sometimes unfamiliar with the most common English words, phrases and constructions for things in their Chinese environment and culture. I recall the precise circumstances; no one in the class recognized the phrase "Terracotta Army" which is the basic English description for China's most celebrated archaeological treasure. In English, yes, it is, but not in the Chinese language. After that day I tried to teach the English words and phrases that have a special application to China, and I felt good recently when one of my young scholars described pale green, so loved in China, as "celadon." I

know now that it is both wise and sensible to offer the course in Chinese culture in English because many of the students will become tour guides. They must be trained to explain in fluent, understandable English all aspects of China to foreigners who know not one word of Chinese.

In the book *Aspects of Chinese Culture*, I especially like the way Professor Ma Zhenling and her colleagues have organized and presented the material. They have succeeded in conveying the facts about the most important aspects of Chinese life and culture. In each unit or chapter they have combined a general discussion with a specific, detailed addenda. Each section of the book stands on its own as an independent article. The various chapters constitute a general survey, but they are followed by detailed highlights which illustrate and deepen the discussion. For example, a short biography of Mei Lanfang is used to illustrate the artistry of Beijing opera, and who can forget Mei's triumphant performances in London and New York so long ago?

Aspects of Chinese Culture is designed as a basic textbook for students in training in tourism. It carefully explains some of the most complex aspects of Chinese culture. The language of the book blends structures, grammar, and idioms which are already largely familiar to more advanced students of English. But, these things need to be reinforced, especially within the framework of Chinese culture which will be the students' professional working environment. The book includes a wide range of useful new vocabulary, some of it specialized but of particular value to students of tourism. The grammar, literary style, and language of the book have been reviewed for accuracy by native speakers to provide a

model of fluency and usage for the students. It is clear that the authors of this book have given their students an outstanding example of how fluent and graceful Chinese writers of English can become.

Several teachers in the Nankai Department of Tourism have contributed to this book. In reviewing the text, I tried to make the English uniform and to assure clarity. My job was not difficult for all sections of the manuscript were well written and researched. I learned much about China while working on the manuscript. Obviously, a much longer book could have been produced; it could have become a small encyclopaedia. I am confident that *Aspects of Chinese Culture* fulfils its objective of explaining Chinese civilization and culture in English to undergraduates who will, we hope, continue later to enhance their fluency in English, to deepen their understanding of the rich culture of the homeland, and to convey an appreciation of this culture to foreign visitors to China.

Patrick Sowle

Nankai University

June, 1991

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Unit I

POPULATION

1. THE PRESENT STATE OF CHINA'S POPULATION

The population of the thirty provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities directly under the administration of the central government of the Chinese mainland (not including Jinmen,¹ Mazu² and other islands of Fujian Province), comes to 1,133,682,501. This figure was compiled in China's fourth national census which counted all persons with the nationality of the People's Republic of China and who lived permanently in the country as of July 1, 1990.

According to statistics released by the Taiwan provincial authorities at the end of March, 1990, the population of Taiwan Province and Fujian's Jinmen, Mazu and some other islands is 20,204,880. The population of Chinese compatriots in Hong Kong and Macao is 6,130,000, according to statistics announced respectively by the British Hong Kong government and the Portuguese Macao government at the end of 1989.

Taken together, the four sets of figures total 1,160,017,381—an increase of 125 million since the last census conducted in 1982.

Of the total mainland population, 1,042,482,187 people are of the Han nationality, 91.96 per cent of the total. The number of ethnic minorities is 91,200,314, accounting for 8.04 per cent of the total. Compared with the 1982 census, the population of the ethnic minorities has increased 35.52 per cent, while the population of the Han nationality has increased only 10.8 per cent. The ethnic minorities have posed a faster population growth over the

past eight years, and eighteen of them now number more than one million members.

In the mainland population, 16,124,678 people have a college background, 91,131,539 people have been educated in senior high, 264,648,676 in junior high, and 420,106,604 in primary schools. China's efforts to spread basic education have brought literacy to over fifty million illiterates or semi-illiterates since the last census. The rate of illiteracy or semi-illiteracy among the total population has decreased from 22.81 per cent in 1982 to the present 15.88 per cent.

The People's Daily published an editorial on the fourth national census. It says that China has achieved fruitful results in controlling population growth and in raising the people's living standard. However, it continues to say, China's population still increases at an annual rate of seventeen million, and population control remains an arduous task for China.

2. FAMILY PLANNING

When the People's Republic of China was founded in 1949, China had a population of 540 million. By July 1, 1987, the population had almost doubled. This rapid population increase has hampered the country's economic development and brought about problems in employment, housing, education and other areas.

Realizing the importance of a controlled population growth rate for economic development, the Chinese government has set itself the task of increasing the country's gross annual value of industrial and agricultural production from 710 billion *yuan* in 1980 to 2,800 billion *yuan* in the year 2000, while trying to keep the population within 1.2 billion. If this population target is attained, the gross value of industrial and agricultural production per capita will be more than tripled. People's incomes will increase several times over, and the Chinese people will be comparatively well off.

Family planning is an important part of China's population

policy. This decision was made after analyzing the problems caused by the rapid population increase in the thirty years following the founding of New China. The basic requirements of family planning are: late marriage, late childbirth, fewer births, and better childcare.³ Since 1979, China has been advocating a policy of "one couple, one child."⁴ In special circumstances (for example, in the case of a handicapped child) a couple may be allowed to have a second child. The policy is not applied as strictly to minority nationalities, but their birth rate must also be within the family planning quota.

Since China began to carry out its population control policies, great efforts have been made to popularize family planning through both mass media and the work of family planning workers at all levels. People are told of the advantages of controlling population growth in building socialism, developing the economy, and improving the standard of living. Apart from educational efforts, people's governments throughout the country adopt economic measures to encourage family planning. These measures are based on the principle of rewards and penalties, with stress on the former. For example, couples who have only one child are given a monthly subsidy until their child is fourteen. The only child enjoys preferential treatment in matters like admission into a nursery or school, medical treatment, and employment.

Throughout the country, medical personnel provide birth control advice to young married couples. Contraception is the main method of birth control. The state supplies contraceptives and provides abortion and sterilization services free of charge. As a result of these efforts, China has successfully brought its population growth under control. The growth rate dropped from 2.6 per cent in 1970 to 1.4 per cent in 1987.

China's population control efforts have received international acknowledgement. On the "Day of 5 Billion," Manfred Kulesa, United Nations' representative to China, spoke highly of China's family planning programme. He pointed out that China's population control efforts partly brought about the overall decrease in the world population growth rate. He urged governments of all nations in the world, especially those of developing countries, to

try hard to control their population growth in a planned way. Kulesa asked; "Will there be enough food, clothing, housing, schools, health clinics and other services for the children yet to be born and will the Earth's resources and environment be able to sustain a much larger family of mankind?"

Because the Chinese government is determined to continue its family planning policies and because the policies have won full backing of the people, China will surely achieve more in population control.

3. ONE-CHILD POLICY⁵

A frequent sight in China today is a happy, carefree family group; father, mother, and one child. This sight is the result of the successful implementation in recent years of the one-child policy. In 1988, the proportion of one-child families increased 1.5 times compared with the figure for 1970, whereas the number of families with large numbers of children dropped by 75 per cent. In 1989, over 34 million couples in the country received certificates to show that they were "one-child" families.

The one-child policy is one of the major measures of family planning which is an important part of China's population policy. It means only one child for each couple under most circumstances, but it is flexible in the countryside, mountainous areas, and minority regions.

Measures have been worked out to reward those who practise family planning and penalize those who do not. For instance, in cities and towns, one-child parents are given monthly health stipends for their children until they are fourteen years old; one-child mothers can have paid maternity leave for as long as three months instead of the usual leave of fifty-six days. Some factories give only-children such benefits as free admission to a nursery, kindergarten, or primary school, and free medical services. In rural areas there are other sorts of rewards. Conversely, in most cities, parents who, against all persuasion, insist on having more

children are docked a certain proportion of their earnings, or in the cases of peasants, they have to pay a fine.

The one-child policy was first advanced in the early 1970's. Since then it has been generally welcomed and widely followed in the cities and most of the rural areas. Why has it won the support of the people? Because they have realized that it is beneficial both to the nation and to individuals. In the eighteen years from 1971 to 1988 there would have been two hundred million more births if the nation had not waged a campaign to control its population. The result was a saving of three thousand billion *yuan* (\$ 802 billion) in child-raising expenses, which was equal to 2.15 times the country's gross national product in 1988 and enough to support one thousand institutions of higher learning for fifty years. The policy of late marriage and late childbirth plus the one-child policy has encouraged more women to go to school and to work in society. It has also helped to relieve women of heavy domestic burdens. Family planning has contributed a great deal to the improvement of medical conditions and people's livelihood. China's average mortality rate dropped from 14.77 per thousand in the 1950's to 6.62 per thousand in 1988. The infant mortality rate fell from 107.64 per thousand in the 1950's to 38.28 per thousand in 1988. The average life expectancy rose from 35 years in 1949 to 69.05 years in 1987. Now people all over the country enjoy a better livelihood than before. According to the book *Changes and Development in China (1949-1989)*, the annual per capita income of workers and staff in 1988 averaged 1,747 *yuan*, an increase of about 52 per cent over 1985. Net annual income per capita in the rural areas increased from 497.6 *yuan* in 1985 to 544.9 *yuan* in 1988.

NOTES

1. Jinmen: 金门

2. Mazu: 马祖

3. late marriage, late childbirth, fewer births, and better childcare: 晚婚、晚

育、少生、优生优育

4. One couple, one child: 一对夫妻只生一个孩子

5. one-child policy: 独生子女政策