

Preface to Part II

Again, I had a lot of fun writing this paper. Sadly, given the time constraints and other academic pressures as the semester is drawing to a close, I could not include all the insightful anecdotes I found in my reading. This paper will mostly bring out the few highlights that I felt shaped Lin YuTang's life.

While reading for this paper, I had the delightful pleasure of discovering an interesting coincidence. It came about when I began researching Lin YuTang's Chinese typewriter. As it turns out, he signed a contract with a Mergenthaler Linotype Company. This company was founded by a German immigrant named Ottmar Mergenthaler, who later died in 1899 in Baltimore, MD. He left behind a widow and a son, who would continue his legacy and contribute a substantial donation to build Mergenthaler Hall, right here at Johns Hopkins University! Incidentally, his son's name was Eugene.

As if that weren't enough, I also happened upon a book titled Chinese Gastronomy while researching for my presentation on Chinese food. This book was written by HsiangRu Lin and TsuiFeng Liao, the 3rd daughter and the wife of Lin YuTang. The book made numerous references to Su Tungpo Pork. Having now heard about Su TungPo Pork in almost every Lin YuTang work I've read, I will be sure to order the dish the next time I see it in a Chinese restaurant.

But, with all happy stories come some disheartening news. Such is the yin and yang of life. I had planned to finish Lin YuTang's biography by the end of this semester, but as it now stands, I have written just up through 1954, as Dr. Lin prepares to head Nanyang University. I do plan, however, to finish within the next month, if time allows. Lord knows I will have little motivation to continue after graduation. For now, though, I hope this portion suffices for my final paper.

Eugene Wu 吳至鈞
May 2006

TO AMERICA, AND THE IMPORTANCE OF LIVING

In the mid-1930s, America was coming out of the Great Depression, and war was brewing in Europe. The world was itching for a change. Lin YuTang could not sit still either. He was 40 years old, and had just published his first major work. My Country and My People was bringing him fame, and no less importantly, a sizable income. In 1936, Lin YuTang decided to immigrate to America, at Pearl's invitation. At first, the Lins stayed with Pearl and her husband Richard Walsh in their Pennsylvania home. To say "home" though, would have been an understatement—Pearl and Richard lived on an estate. In fact, they were well-off enough to accommodate Lin YuTang, TsuiFeng, Adet, Anor, and HsiangRu in a separate guest house on their property. Anor recalls there were so many apple trees that one could not pick them fast enough.

After a short while, Lin YuTang moved his family to New York City. They found an apartment on the west side of Central Park. Now the family settled into a pleasant rhythm. TsuiFeng cooked and cleaned, and hired an African-American housekeeper to come once a week to help out. Adet, the oldest daughter, entered middle school. Anor and HsiangRu, at the benefit of their father's connections, enrolled at a private elementary school called Ethical Culture School.

None of Lin YuTang's daughters were fluent in English. On their first day of American school, each was surrounded by tall, athletic, white girls. And where they had been used to young teachers in China, the classrooms here were headed by old, white ladies. As described by Anor, 「這裡的老師是白髮蒼蒼的老小姐，一副兇樣，其實她們都很仁慈，很同情我這個不大會說英語的中國孩子。」 Nevertheless, Anor, being the smallest and shortest girl in the class, was always picked last whenever the girls played ball in PE class.

At home, Lin YuTang tutored his daughters in Chinese, intent on expanding their grasp of the mother tongue. He was strict, but never scolded. And like most parents, he expected much of his children. When his daughters returned home with straight-A report cards, he felt certain there was no other way it could have possibly turned out. Being the scholar he was, how could his daughters have *not* gotten straight A's? 「..(這)是理所當然，難道她的女兒不會讀書嗎？」 Still, though, he felt the grading system used in the American schools was faulty. Teachers assigned reading and then tested whether you had read the material within those pages. They then wrote down a number grade based on your answers. Lin YuTang felt this system forced students to study in order to pass tests, instead of reading for understanding and enjoyment.

Lin YuTang had many other opinions, on anything and everything in life. His daughter Anor muses, had her father not been a writer, he must certainly have exploded from all his uncontainable thoughts and philosophies. Even if you had asked him, "How was the stir-fry beef and vegetable you had for lunch?", he would have enthusiastically articulated his opinions on the taste, proper cooking conditions, optimal oil temperatures to seal in the juiciness of the meat, and so on. In this way, his mind was never idle.

In New York, Lin YuTang acquainted himself with a number of well-known people, among which were playwright and soon-to-be Nobel Laureate Eugene O'Neill, poet Robert Frost, German writer and 1929 Nobel Laureate Thomas Mann, American dancer Isadora Duncan, poet Edna St. Vincent Millay, actress Lillian Gish, drama critic George Jean Nathan, critic Carl Van Doren and his poet brother Mark Van Doren, photographer Carl Van

Vechten, and Chinese actress Anna May Wong. Anna frequented the Lin home as a guest, and chattered endlessly, like any other typical housewife.

Initially through his work My Country and My People, and then through his social and literary ties, Lin YuTang influenced the Western view of the Chinese. His growing renown allowed him to seed thoughts into the minds of Americans and Europeans, earning a newfound respect and admiration for the Chinese people. His spunk, and particularly, his sense of humor, gave the Westerners a fresh sense of discovering the Chinese culture for the first time.

Meanwhile, Lin YuTang had begun writing his second major work, to be titled The Importance of Living (生活的藝術). The idea came to Lin YuTang when he considered translating several works on the intricacies of Chinese living. Richard Walsh, as his publisher, interjected and pointed out the Western audience would be completely lost without a guide to the Chinese art of living. Thus the book began, but it was not easy. After the first 260 pages, Lin YuTang threw out the entire draft and started over. He threw out another 700 pages before finally settling on what would become the final draft. However, this was not the only disruption in the course of his writing.

On July 7, 1937, the Japanese attacked China at the Marco Polo Bridge (七七事變). This marked the beginning of the Second Sino-Japanese War. Owing to his eminence in literary circles, Lin YuTang was asked to write several articles for newspapers and magazines, including an article for *Time Magazine* (時代週刊). Lin YuTang also added a tenth chapter to My Country and My People, now in its thirteenth printing, regarding the changes going on in China (新中國的誕生). Despite this, things were not going so well for Lin YuTang. His family's plans to return to China were put off indefinitely due to the war. Not only that, but living in America was expensive, and even with his publishing success, Lin YuTang was barely able to afford living expenses. His only hope lay in his new book. Typically, Chinese authors despised editors and refused to change even one word or one punctuation mark. Working closely with his publishers and editors Pearl and Richard Walsh, Lin YuTang listened to their sound advice and constantly revised his work.

When The Importance of Living came out at the end of 1937, it was immediately selected to be the December Book of the Month. Being selected by the Book-of-the-Month Club (每月讀書會) was no small potatoes. The popularizing influence of the club promised incredible readership, and similarly incredible sales. TsuiFeng had been quite surprised when the public so eagerly consumed Lin YuTang's first book, and now she had even more reason to be surprised and happy at her husband's apparent success. The Importance of Living won critical acclaim from the *New York Times* and numerous other book reviews, retaining a spot on the national bestseller list through the next year.

Amidst the hustle and bustle of his success, Lin YuTang felt the need again to relocate. He wanted someplace quieter, in order to concentrate on his writing, as well as to lower living expenses. Besides, his tourist visa only let him stay in America for so long at a time. Lin YuTang and TsuiFeng decided in early 1938 to move back to Europe.

BEGINNINGS OF A NOVEL

The Lin family moved their home to Menton (蒙頓), a quaint little town in southern France on the border of Italy. Although Lin YuTang knew some French from his previous stay with the YMCA, the Lin daughters were completely foreign to the language. Lin YuTang educated his daughters rigorously in Chinese at home, again urging them not to read

for study, but to read for pleasure and personal enjoyment. A dictionary in hand was a necessary prerequisite for any reading, so they could learn any words they did not understand. From personal enjoyment of books, they would attain personal enrichment. His teaching method for his daughters no doubt was affected by his own mode of education, which had come primarily through his own hard work and dedication to books and language.

Just one month later, the Lins moved to Paris (巴黎). TsuiFeng had felt the countryside was too quiet. She had no friends, didn't understand French, and, despite her husband's PhD degree and numerous professorships, she felt her daughters should be properly schooled.

Adet, Anor, and HsiangRu spent their mornings in a French language tutoring program tailored to foreign students. Afternoons, the Lin daughters continued the rigorous Chinese curriculum set forth by their father. In addition, they had to keep up the English they had learned back in America. Lin YuTang often reminded his daughters, 「文章可幽默，做事要認真。」

Although Lin YuTang certainly made sure his children were learning, he had traveled to Europe to concentrate on writing. At the moment, he was working on a book titled The Wisdom of Confucius (孔子的智慧), for the Random House "Modern Library" series (藍登書屋的「現代叢書」). Lin YuTang would be receiving only \$600 USD for the work, but he considered it an honor to be invited to write for the "Modern Library", so he did not mind the money. At the same time, Lin YuTang had begun planning for his first novel, which would be titled Moment in Peking (瞬息京華 or 京華煙雲). Lin YuTang's inspiration for writing this novel is best expressed in his own words: 「以前在哈佛上小說演化一門科目，白教授 (Professor Bliss Perry) 有一句話打動我心，就是西方有幾位作家，再四十以上才開始寫小說。我認為長篇小說之寫作，非世事人情，經閱頗深，不可輕易嘗試。因此素來雖未著筆於小說一門，卻久蓄志願，在四十以上之時，來試一部長篇小說。而且不寫則已，要寫必寫一部人物繁雜，場面寬廣，篇幅浩大的長篇。所以這回著手撰《瞬息京華》，也非意出偶然。」

Lin YuTang began work on Moment in Peking in March of 1938. He spent the first five months extensively researching the time period, planning the setting, developing the characters, and shaping the plot before he even picked up a pen to start a draft. Owing to his intense admiration for Red Chamber Dream (紅樓夢), Lin YuTang pored through the classic and analyzed it from head to tail. Later, when his own novel was finished, it would reflect the nuances of Red Chamber Dream.

Lin YuTang immersed himself in the writing of his novel. One time, his daughter Anor ran home from school, eager to find out the new developments in the plot. Without knocking, she burst into her father's room, to find her father buried in tears.

「爸，你怎麼啦？」 She asked.

Lin YuTang looked up, and replied, 「我在寫一段非常傷心的故事。」

As a writer, he was exquisitely sensitive to his surroundings, and intensely interested in his environment. He felt changes more deeply and understood the world more intimately than others. And now, with The Importance of Living having stayed on the bestseller list for 52 straight weeks, earning the admiration of all America as the most-read and most-appreciated book of 1938, and with the *New York Times* even holding a "Lin YuTang competition" at its National Book Convention, Lin YuTang was basking in fame. However, he never considered himself as anyone famous. Once, an old colleague from Peking

National University came to visit, and jokingly remarked, 「語堂，我是來看看你變了沒有？」, which upset Lin YuTang for several days afterwards.

In Paris, Lin YuTang was no less active than he was in New York. He became familiar with an American writer who was the catalyzing force in the development of "colloquial impressionism", Gertrude Stein, and her lover Alice B. Toklas. Gertrude was a central hub in the discussions on American literature, but her own works were harshly criticized, and Lin YuTang found them difficult to appreciate as well. Back in America, Lin YuTang was friends with Dagmar Godowsky, daughter of the famous composer Leopold Godowsky. Dagmar was in Paris now, seeing her lover Igor Stravinsky, the composer. She once brought Lin YuTang to one of Stravinsky's concerts, but Lin YuTang found the discordant music difficult to appreciate. Instead, Lin YuTang became good friends with Charles Lindbergh, known for his 1927 non-stop solo flight across the Atlantic, and his wife Anne Morrow Lindbergh.

FANS

Lin YuTang's stay in Europe was short-lived. With war breaking out in 1939, Lin YuTang decided to return to the US. Lindbergh was on the same boat, and came down from his first-class cabin to chat. Lin YuTang's plan was to first go to America, watch the development of the Sino-Japanese crisis in China, and hopefully return to China eventually. Despite the political and social unrest there, Lin YuTang had much faith in his homeland. He actively invested in Chinese banks, putting some \$40,000 USD into long term accounts, mostly for the sake of his daughters' futures. Besides, with an annual income of about \$36,000 USD, he was actively providing for not only his own family but TsuiFeng's family back in China. The Liao family, after a series of unfortunate deaths, had essentially no income, and depended heavily on Lin YuTang.

Upon returning to New York City, the Lins moved into an apartment on the East side of Manhattan. Lin YuTang's popularity had not diminished while he was overseas, and he was swamped by requests for lectures, talks, and more writing. At the International Association of Poets, Playwrights, Editors, and Novelists Convention (世界筆會大會), Lin YuTang lectured alongside German Nobel Laureate Thomas Mann, and French author André Maurois. Lin YuTang also wrote a short piece for Clifton Fadiman's book I Believe: The Personal Philosophies of Certain Eminent Men and Women of Our Time. Only nineteen people were accepted for this publication, among them Einstein, H.G. Wells, Pearl S. Buck, Thomas Mann, John Dewey, George Santayana, Bertrand Russell, Beatrice Webb, and others. There were only two Chinese fellows on the list: Lin YuTang, and his old QingHua colleague HuShi, the friend who had come to Lin YuTang's aid when he was in dire financial straits years ago.



Lin YuTang, portrait photograph by Carl Van Vechten, 1939.

On top of his professional life, Lin YuTang now had to address a steady stream of fan mail arriving at his home every day. Like many beleaguered popular figures, he asked one of his daughters, Anor, to look through the mail, picking out the more interesting ones for him to read later. On other occasions, he would dictate his response while Anor typed away.

Lin YuTang's fans came not only in written form but in person as well. One time, a woman the Lins had made acquaintance with in Shanghai came to visit. While TsuiFeng went out to buy groceries, the woman prostituted herself to Lin YuTang on his writing desk. Lin YuTang was disgusted, and the woman, sufficiently embarrassed, was gone when TsuiFeng returned. Another time, as the Lins were outdoors rowing a boat, a fan on the shore stripped naked and jumped into the stream, swimming alongside their boat.

Amid all the hubbub of the city and his popularity, Lin YuTang could find no peace to work on his novel, Moment in Peking. That summer, he decided again to seek solace in a rural setting, this time in the quiet state of Vermont. The family moved to a secluded summer cabin enclosed by a forest of pine trees. Finally Lin YuTang could concentrate on finishing his work. So involved was he in his writing and critical thoughts, that it was impossible to make conversation with him at all. Draft after draft he sent to Richard Walsh. TsuiFeng tried to persuade him to go to the barber, but Lin YuTang refused to go until the novel was finished, and his hair grew long. Everyone grew a bit nervous as he approached the final chapter. Finally, on August 8, he announced to his family that he would finish by six-thirty that evening. When he finished the last sentence and threw down his pen, they all clapped, danced, and sang happily, rejoicing around his writing desk. That night, the Lins drove down to a local town and celebrated at a Chinese restaurant. The next day, Lin YuTang got a haircut.

As with his past works, Moment in Peking was a great success. Again, it was chosen by the Book-of-the-Month Club, and praised in *Time Magazine*. It was a momentous accomplishment for Lin YuTang, and he felt this was one of the books he was most proud of in his career, 「我寫過幾本好書，尤其以寫《京華煙雲》自豪。」 As the novel became more widely read, many considered it a modern equivalent of the Chinese classic, Red Chamber Dream.

At the same time, war grew ever more serious in Europe. Lin YuTang stayed in New York City for a few months, and wrote an article in November for *The New York Times* titled, "The Real Threat: Not Bombs But Ideas", later circulated in Reader's Digest (讀者文摘). After some time, perhaps deterred by the ongoing war across the Atlantic, Lin YuTang decided to return to China.

POLITICS AND WAR

For the Chinese, Lin YuTang's homecoming was a monumental event, for he had not set foot on Chinese soil since 1936, the year after My Country and My People had first made him famous. Due to Japanese occupation of China, most of the Chinese eastern seaboard was under enemy control. Lin YuTang's welcome party in 1940 took place in the new provincial capital of the Republic of China, Chongqing (重慶), situated inland near the upper Yangtze River. The first day he arrived, crowds of journalists and reporters marauded him. The second day, Lin YuTang paid a visit to Chiang Kai-Shek and Madame Chiang. As he had written in the addendum to My Country and My People, Lin YuTang firmly believed

Chiang Kai-Shek was a great leader who would counter the Japanese invasion and resolve the country's internal disputes through his wisdom and morals.



Lin YuTang, New York, 1940, after returning from China.

The Lin family first lived in Beibei (北碚) near Chongqing, and then moved to the mountain shelters to try and escape the Japanese air raids. Eventually, Lin YuTang and TsuiFeng discussed and felt he might better serve China from the outside, rather than running for shelter at the constant sounding of air raid alerts. Lin YuTang wrote a letter to Madame Chiang, who replied and agreed. Before the Lin family left Chongqing, Chiang Kai-Shek and Madame Chiang entertained them at their official mansion. Lin YuTang was also granted an Official Visa, relieving the inconvenience of having to apply for re-entry to America every six months. Anor clarifies here that the visa was established only for convenience's sake, and her father never accepted a penny from the Chinese government.

From the initial onset of the Sino-Japanese conflict, America had taken no official sides, though through international trading, it was evident the US seemingly supported the Japanese efforts. Returning to America, Lin YuTang furiously enlightened public opinion on Chinese interests. He accepted a personal interview from *The New York Times*, wrote several letters to the editor, and published numerous articles in *The New Republic* (新民國), *The Atlantic* (大西洋), *The American* (美國人), *The Nation* (國家), and *Asia* (亞洲), among others. The Americans were willing to listen to Lin YuTang.

1941, Pearl Harbor. Whatever aid the US had come to offer China, it was too little, too late. The Americans had to finally admit they had made a mistake. The year before, while Lin YuTang had been in China, The John Day Company came out with With Love and Irony (諷頌集), a collection of his earlier works. In the opening article, titled *The English and the Chinese*, Lin YuTang had written playfully in acclamation of the English. The second and third articles, *The Americans* and *What I Like About America*, wittily poked at the American stereotypes, but engendered a positive and warm attitude. These opinions were to change. In his 1943 book, Between Tears and Laughter (啼笑皆非), Lin YuTang criticized the English and the Americans, and pushed for Asian values as a way for peace.

During these war years, Lin YuTang remained active on the political and social fronts for China. At the same time, he held a number of respectable professorships at schools in the US: Elmira College (紐約艾邁拉大學) in 1940, after he had returned from China to the US, Rutgers University (新澤西州若特格斯大學) in 1942, and Beloit College (威斯康辛州貝路艾特大學) in 1946. Lin YuTang never ceased to write, either. He wrote another short novel, Leaf in the Storm (風聲鶴唳) in 1941, compiled a lengthy book for Random House in 1942, The Wisdom of China and India (中國印度之智慧), the aforementioned Between Tears and Laughter in 1943, and wrote The Vigil of a Nation (枕

戈待旦) in 1944, the same year that he returned to China again, visiting several cities and meeting up with Chiang Kai Shek to discuss the future of the country.

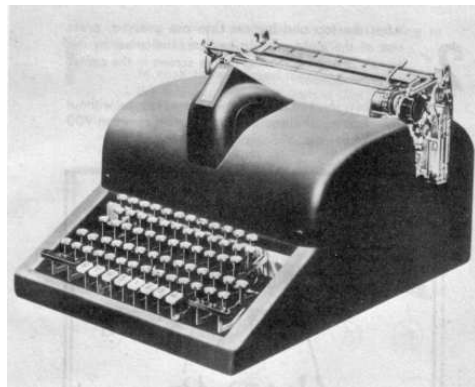
With all the proceeds from his writing and professorships, Lin YuTang finally bought a two-story apartment on 81st Street in East Manhattan, where the Lins could settle and live more normal lives. Lin YuTang was 47 then. Two years later, in 1944, his second daughter Anor graduated secondary school. With a little pushing and a little introduction from her father, Anor became a teaching assistant for Chinese studies at Yale University at the age of 18. Indeed, of Lin YuTang's three daughters, Anor would be the one to most closely follow in her father's footsteps. The older daughter, Adet, was always a bit rebellious. She felt her family received too much special treatment, and she always yearned to return to China to commiserate with her fellow Chinese. After studying at Columbia University, she went back to China to work in a medical ward. There she met a young doctor, and they planned to get married. Days before the wedding invitations were sent out from the Lin home, however, Adet eloped with a white friend, named Dick. Lin YuTang and TsuiFeng would never really grasp her reasons behind the change. HsiangRu, the youngest daughter, did do a little writing, and in one instance co-authored a Chinese cookbook of sorts with her mother TsuiFeng, titled Chinese Gastronomy.

THE CHINESE TYPEWRITER

Life was pleasant in East Manhattan, and in 1945, Lin YuTang began working on The Gay Genius: The Life and Times of Su Tungpo (蘇東坡傳). On top of that, he also resumed his obsession with inventing a Chinese typewriter. The dream of inventing an easy-to-use Chinese typewriter had festered in his mind for decades. With the slew of books he had recently published, he now had some \$10,000 USD in extra cash. Thus, he felt, it was time to bring his dream to fruition. Lin YuTang still had his blueprints he used on his trip to England from 1931, and he now set forth in earnest to create a working prototype. The fact was, though, with his influence, he could easily have obtained substantial funding from investors, but Lin YuTang liked to do things on his own.

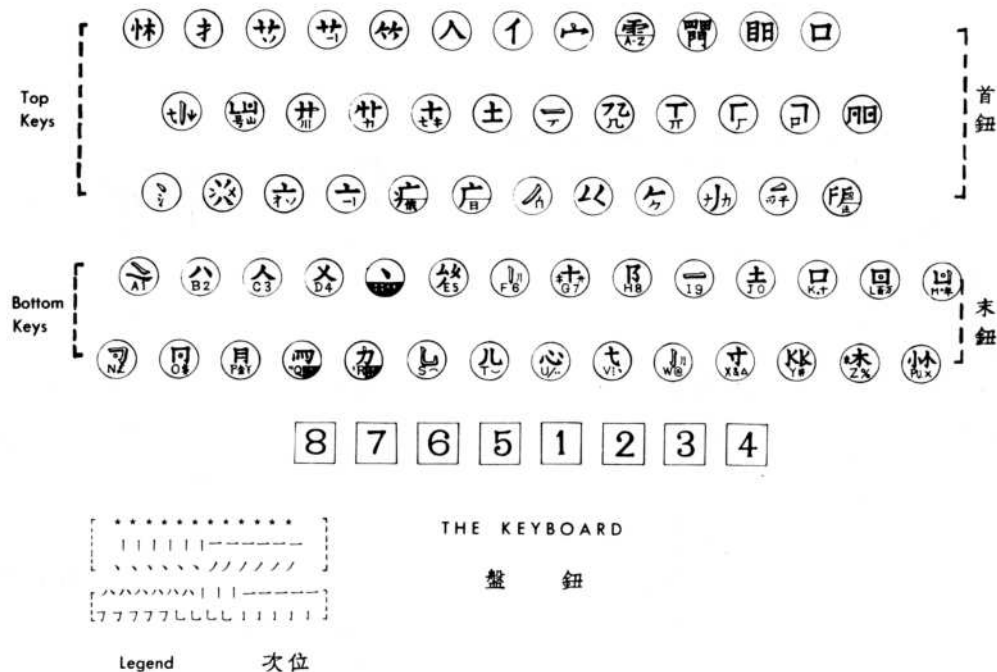
After he finished designing the keyboard (*see next page*), Lin YuTang went to Chinatown to get the typeface carved, found a small machine shop in rural New York to manufacture typewriter parts, and hired an Italian engineer to help figure out mechanical problems. Lin YuTang spent every day tinkering with his machine in the workshop, and as each of the parts needed to be custom-made, the project steadily ate up more and more of his bank account (human labor in America, after all, is never cheap). The typewriter slowly materialized day by day, but near the end, Lin YuTang was running out of money. He asked Richard Walsh for aid, and for the first time, Lin YuTang was rebuffed by his publisher friend. At last he found a sizable donation from a friend, and combined with a bank loan, Lin YuTang finished his prototype.

At 11 in the morning on May 22, 1947, hundreds of hours and \$12,000 later, Lin YuTang, accompanied by TsuiFeng and Anor, delicately delivered his Chinese typewriter home from the workshop. He called it the 「明快打字機」.



Lin YuTang's dreams for his Chinese typewriter finally materialized in this 1947 prototype.

True to its name, use of the typewriter was intuitive, requiring no training at all. The key to its success lay in the cleverly designed keyboard. Any character in the Chinese language could be accessed by just three simple keystrokes. The potential productivity gains and market for such a machine were unimaginable. But Lin YuTang had to sell his idea first.



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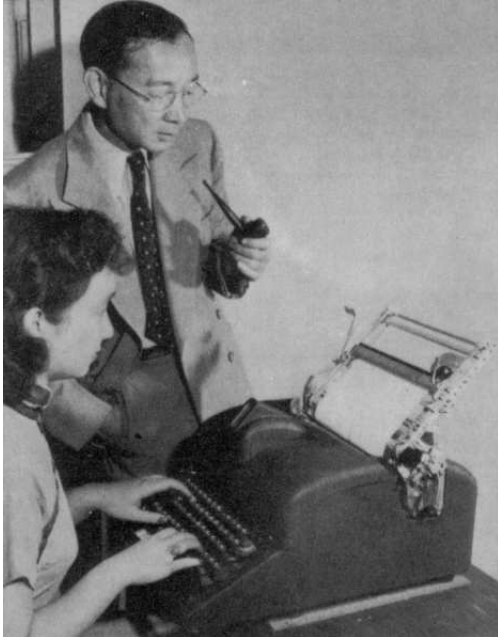
Now that he had patented his design (filed April 17, 1946, and not to be authorized until October 14, 1952) and built a prototype, all that remained was to convince a typewriter company to mass manufacture his invention. One rainy morning, Lin YuTang and Anor hauled the typewriter downstairs in a plastic-covered wooden trunk, hailed a cab, and headed to the downtown office of Remington Typewriter Company. Anor's job this morning was to demonstrate the typewriter.

In the austere conference room, a dozen or so Remington top executives waited. The typewriter was set up on a small table to the side, where Anor sat. Lin YuTang began to make his proposition. Worldwide, about 1/3 of the world's population used Asian typography in some form or another. And yet, no decent Chinese typewriter had been developed, due to the immense complexity of characters. The standard at the time involved about five cassettes of some two thousand characters each, ordered by frequency of use. If the word you wanted was not in the first cassette, you would have to manually remove it from the typewriter, search for the word you want in another cassette, and then load that cassette back into the typewriter. Furthermore, six months of training were necessary before one could effectively use such a typewriter, and even then, it offered little improvement over writing by hand. In this way, Chinese writing had not changed significantly since the invention of pen, ink, and paper.

Lin YuTang offered a solution. Using just 64 keys, any untrained individual could start typing in Chinese. Every character required only three keystrokes, and a seasoned typist could type up to 50 words per minute without even looking at the keyboard.

At the end of his speech, Lin YuTang motioned for Anor to start the typing demonstration. With all attention turned to Anor, she turned on the machine, and pressed a key. Nothing happened. She pressed another key. Still no response. Lin YuTang quickly rushed over to help, but the machine just lay there, stubbornly motionless. In the hushed, severe air of the conference room, the only sound was the empty click of typewriter keys. After a couple minutes, Lin YuTang had no choice but to apologize to the group, and solemnly pack the typewriter back into its wooden trunk to make his exit.

Outside in the pouring rain, Lin YuTang and Anor hailed a taxicab after much difficulty. All the way home, no words were spoken. How could this have happened? The



Lin YuTang watching his daughter Anor practice using the 「明快打字機」.

typewriter had worked just fine at home. And not only that, but Lin YuTang had arranged for a press conference the following day. Might it be necessary to cancel? What would people think?

Once at home, Lin YuTang set about to remedy the situation. He called for the machinist at the workshop, who showed up at his apartment. Within just a couple minutes, the typewriter was repaired and fully operational. What a relief! The next day, the press conference continued as planned, and many major newspapers carried headlines on Lin YuTang's invention of a Chinese typewriter. For three days afterwards, he opened up his apartment for people from all over the world to see the typewriter in action. The 「明快打字機」 was a success—so much so, that the Italian engineer who had helped construct the typewriter got the idea of calling it his own invention, and prepared to go to court. As preposterous as the idea was that an Italian man could invent a Chinese typewriter, Lin YuTang had no choice but to hire a lawyer.

Despite the marvelous reception the 「明快打字機」 received, Lin YuTang faced a real problem. Internal struggles in China prevented any major company from investing in the Chinese typewriter market. And Lin YuTang was now nearly broke from the substantial capital he had poured into building the prototype. As he rode in a taxi with his daughter Anor one day, he fumbled around with a paper model of the keyboard, thinking aloud,

「我這個打字機的發明，主要在利用上下形檢字法的鍵盤，其他機械上的問題是不難解決的。」

To this, Anor replied,

「那麼，你假使只把漢字照上下形檢字法分類，弄個紙型鍵盤，像你手裡拿的一樣，不就可以向人推銷嗎？……當時有沒有製造模型的必要？」

Lin YuTang looked at her briefly, then softly said,

「也許不造模型也可以推銷。但是我忍不住，我一定要造一部打字機，使我可以真正的打字。我當然沒想到要花那麼多錢。」

In May, 1948, Lin YuTang signed a contract with Mergenthaler Linotype Company (默根索拉排字機公司) to explore the possibility of producing his typewriter. It was not a lucrative contract, but it gave Lin YuTang a great sense of accomplishment. A few years

later in 1951, Lin YuTang would sell the rights of his patent to Mergenthaler, though keeping the literary property of the keyboard design to himself. Sadly, no typewriter ever materialized from these agreements. Due to the immense complexity of the machine, it would have had to retail for over \$1,000 USD, an astronomical price to pay for a typewriter at the time. In addition, China was still caught in a throng of political unrest. No profitable market existed for the product. However, Lin YuTang's clever keyboard design remained fruitful. Many years later, IBM and Itek Corporation would borrow the keyboard design for a Chinese-English translation machine. And, as computers became more popular through the mid 1980's, Anor and her little sister HsiangRu would attempt to market the usability of their father's keyboard design. However, the only true 「明快打字機」 ever constructed would remain the \$12,000 prototype from 1947.

A BUMPY RECOVERY

Back in 1947, having hit the bottom of the bank again because of his Chinese typewriter, Lin YuTang needed a salary. His 1947 book The Gay Genius had done well, but was not enough to cover living expenses. Lin YuTang accepted a position as Head of the Arts and Letters Division (美術與文學組主任) of UNESCO (United Nations Educational,



Lin YuTang and TsuiFeng in France, 1950.

Scientific, and Cultural Organization; 聯合國教科文組織). The job would bring him to Paris, so in 1948, selling his apartment and belongings, and collecting a portion of the royalties from The Gay Genius, Lin YuTang traveled again to France.

At UNESCO, a workday was filled with meetings, checking over reports, and dealing with the office bureaucracy. Lin YuTang couldn't take it; the office stifled his free spirit. After half a year, he left and moved to southern France to concentrate on writing again. Over the next few years, he turned out several more books. He published both Chinatown Family (唐人街家庭) and The Wisdom of Laotse (老子的智慧) in 1948. Two years later, he finished On the

Wisdom of America (美國的智慧), and returned to the US. In 1951, he came out with Widow, Nun and Courtesan: Three Novelettes from the Chinese (寡婦，尼姑與歌妓：英譯重編傳奇小說), and in 1952, Famous Chinese Short Stories: Retold by Lin Yutang (英譯重編傳奇小說).

In 1953, Lin YuTang wrote The Vermilion Gate (朱門). The same year, he abruptly severed his longtime relationship with The John Day Company. Why? Lin YuTang discovered, after all these years, that he had been quite unfairly compensated for his work. Usually, publishing companies collected a 10% royalty per book. The John Day Company had been collecting 50%. Not only that, but while it was standard practice for an author to hold the copyright to a book, Lin YuTang's books were copyrighted to The John Day Company. With the vast number of his books that had been published overseas, Lin YuTang had missed out on quite a large sum of money. Early on, because of his close friendship with Pearl and Richard Walsh, he had signed the contracts without a second

glance. Lin YuTang fumed at his discovery, and even hired a lawyer to pursue his lost revenue. It was thus that the relations with The John Day Company broke down, and Lin YuTang became his own publishing agent. He still left the book brokering in England to a company called Curtis Brown (布朗), but he now knew enough to negotiate his own publishing contracts in America.

Later that year, Lin YuTang would have a chance to remove himself from the infuriating publishing debacle. In December, he was invited to be the first Chancellor of the newly established Nanyang University in Singapore (新加坡南洋大學). Lin YuTang's subsequent acceptance would mark the end of his lively middle age, and the beginning of more subdued pleasures of seniority.

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Note: I must credit Mrs. Anor Lin for a substantial amount of the material in this paper. In fact, much of what I have written was directly translated from her Chinese text. In addition, all the pictures I have used are scanned from her book as well.

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