

暂时遏止混乱的锐利思想武器

——儒家思想观照下罗伯特·弗罗斯特诗歌研究

Something

as a Momentary Stay against Confusion

徐新辉◎著

暨南大学出版社

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This book is dedicated to
My beloved wife, Wang Chunmei, and
My dear daughter, Xu Jingying,
Who always stand behind me,
Support, inspire and encourage me,
On the roads less travelled by, or those not yet taken,
In pursuit of the poetic truth,
In this uncertain, changing, and chaotic world.

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作者简介

徐新辉，深圳职业技术学院英语系副教授，曾任嘉应大学（现嘉应学院）外语系副主任、主任；深圳职业技术学院商务英语专业主任、英语系负责人；广东省外国语言协会常务理事；深圳市翻译协会理事。1999年至2000年，受广东省委组织部委派，到美国马萨诸塞州立大学波士顿分校管理学院接受MBA培训。曾赴英国、法国、西班牙、德国和意大利等国进行文化考察和合作交流。

近年来，主要从事美国诗歌和中国职业技术院校英语教育研究，先后在全国各级学术刊物上发表有关美国诗人罗伯特·弗罗斯特诗歌研究的论文近十篇，主编教育部“十一五”规划教材《商务人力资源管理》（英文，合编）一部，参加教育部“新世纪高职高专教育人才培养模式和教学内容体系改革与建设项目计划”（Ⅲ26－1）子课题“英语课程教学内容体系改革建设的研究和实践”、外语教学与研究出版社“英语教育学术文库”之“中国高职英语专业教育理论研究”等重大科研项目的研究工作，并在全国核心期刊、国外学术网站上发表相关学术论文。

内容简介

本书是一部关于美国著名诗人弗罗斯特诗歌研究的学术专著，主要研究了在中国儒家思想观照下诗人在时间、空间、真爱、真相、家庭、命名和凝视等方面的基本观点和核心思想。

本书以儒家的“仁爱”和弗罗斯特的“something”为切入点，试图解决国内弗罗斯特诗歌研究中长期困扰我们的一个中心问题，即弗罗斯特诗歌中“暂时遏止混乱”的思想模式和中国儒家传统文化中和谐思想模式的关系。其特色有二：一是每章都在不同程度上直接或间接地印证了“暂时遏止混乱”的主题；二是每章相对独立，围绕诗人的基本观点和核心思想进行独立论述，是在儒家思想文化视野中对弗罗斯特诗歌理论和创作实践具体问题的专题研究。如果说中国儒家思想体系是一个坐标，那么弗罗斯特诗歌就是坐标中的点、线和面，两者互为观照，相互印证。

本书通过对儒家文化思想和弗罗斯特诗歌思想的跨文化比较，目的不在于评判两者价值的高低或者谁是谁非，而在于指出两者之间的异同，并且努力揭示两种思想对过去、现在和未来的启示，从而诱发读者对弗罗斯特诗歌进行跨文化的思考，在超越时间和空间的对比中，开阔弗罗斯特诗歌研究的范围和视野，激发新的思想和观点，同时也加深对儒家传统文化的认识。

本书注重理论和实践相结合，通过对弗罗斯特诗歌具体作品的“细读式”分析，说明诗人的思想观点及其渊源。笔者相信国内英语语言文学专业的教师、学生、诗歌爱好者和想了解中国儒家文化思想的外国友人，只要跨越太平洋上空的彩虹桥，一定会发现弗罗斯特诗歌和中国儒家思想文化的异同，在对比分析中，拓宽视野，加深理解，包容对方，扩大自我，认识自己。

序

梁栋华

金秋十月，秋高气爽。徐新辉先生送来《暂时遏止混乱的锐利思想武器——儒家思想观照下罗伯特·弗罗斯特诗歌研究》新书稿，恳请我为该书写一篇序言。他虽身居欲望都市，却安于一隅，甘坐“冷板凳”，潜心钻研，勇于探索，大胆实践，毕五年之功，成一专著。读过专著，颇感欣慰，如金风扑面，如跨越太平洋上空的七色彩虹，让人浮想联翩，启迪甚多，故欣然命笔，寥寥数语为其序，一来勉励作者，二来就教于读者和行家。

20世纪90年代以来，在国内弗罗斯特诗歌研究中，出现了一个新的学术动向，就是从中国传统思想文化（如儒家、道家和佛家）的角度来理解和阐释弗罗斯特的诗歌作品和艺术思想。这种现象表明，中国学者已经不满足于以西方独立、成熟和完善的文学批评体系来评价弗罗斯特诗歌，而是独辟蹊径，扩大视野，从博大精深、深邃莫测的中国文化这一全新的语境中，以开放、融合的态度，重新检视和阐释久已熟知的弗罗斯特诗歌作品，进而阐发和挖掘弗罗斯特诗歌的艺术思想。

在全球化的大背景下，在中西文学理论和文化思想的双向互动、多层阐发和互识互见中，弗罗斯特的经典作品将会呈现什么新价值和新发现？这是一个重要的文学命题，具有重要的跨文化比较价值，值得深入研究。《暂时遏止混乱的锐利思想武器——儒家思想观照下罗伯特·弗罗斯特诗歌研究》一书在跨文化这一宽泛的思想维度上，从时空、真理、真爱、凝视、家庭和命名等侧面，以独到的眼光和独特的方式，回答了这一问题。这在林林总总、斑驳纷繁的诗歌研究中，可谓是颇具特色。



首先，视角独特，视野开阔。以儒家思想为支撑的中国文化和以“二希”（古希腊和希伯来）为起点的西方文化博大精深，浩如烟海，都是成熟和完善的独立文化体系。本书的阐释，精心挑选了中国儒家思想代表人物（如孔子、孟子、曹丕、陆机、刘勰、严羽和王夫之等）的文学思想作为论述的切入点，借鉴西方文艺思想发展中标志性人物（如柏拉图、亚里士多德、卢克莱修、康德、尼采、叔本华、海德格尔、爱默生、梭罗、伯格森、伽达默尔和桑塔亚那等）的金句名言，对弗罗斯特经典诗作进行了鞭辟入里、抽丝剥茧式的阐释和论述，深化了弗罗斯特诗歌的内在张力，赋予了其更广泛的外延和更深刻的内涵，揭示了弗罗斯特诗歌中关于时空、真理、真爱、凝视、家庭和命名的真谛，的确别开生面，耐人寻思。

其次，层层深入，环环相扣。第一章“我们在一个陌生的世界站了片刻”是取自弗罗斯特作品《无限的瞬间》中的诗句。时间观念是中西文学传统中重要母题之一。孔子和弗罗斯特均选择了以时间为支点，探索时间、空间和人类存在的本质关系。中国儒家思想和西方哲学思想在时间观念上的差异最终导致了弗罗斯特与孔子对其他问题如真爱、真相、凝视、家庭和命名等看法的不同。第一章不仅为第二章的关于真爱和真相命题的认识和讨论做好了铺垫，也为以后各章打下了基础。

第二章“我们爱所爱之事物只因其真相”是取自弗氏作品《雨蛙溪》中的诗句。真爱（爱与被爱）的问题在弗罗斯特诗歌中具有重要意义。弗罗斯特的“自爱”和儒家的“泛爱众”的出发点和归宿点颇为相似。他们对人类、对大自然的深情厚爱折射出人类思想的光辉。弗罗斯特和孔子探索了在时间和空间的交汇处处理人与人之间的指导原则——爱。

在“爱”的原则指导下，基于“知人”即对人性的理解，儒家和弗罗斯特都重视实现“爱人”或“爱己”的理想，强调人类的爱离不开人与人之间心灵的交流。眼睛是心灵的窗口，目光交流是心灵交流的基本特征和根本途径。第三章“寻找目光回应的目光”主要围绕儒家的“省”和弗罗斯特的“目光”之间的异

同展开讨论。在儒家思想宝库中，弗罗斯特从“寻找目光回应的目光”中找到了“爱”的真正归宿。

第四章“家就是在你不得不进去的时候，/他们不得不让你进去的地方”（取自《雇工之死》），具体论述男人和女人之间的爱。本章要解决全书难度最大、争议较多而且是最重要的问题，即儒家以家庭为中心的传统价值观念和西方以个人为中心的现代价值观念之间的异同和冲突等问题。孔子和弗罗斯特都给了我们一双慧眼，让我们在纷繁无序的世界中能明察秋毫、把握本质。

基于第一、二、三、四章的讨论和分析，本书指出，在中西方两种价值体系中既相互独立又共生并存的诗歌理论阐释：内容和形式的关系。无论是儒家思想的“文质观”还是弗罗斯特诗歌理论的“形式中的形式”，都试图为人类在纷繁复杂、喧嚣混乱的世界中找到一条通往心灵家园的道路。时间、真理、真爱、目光、家庭和命名，最终通过诗歌形式，赋予世界规律、秩序和理性。在弗罗斯特眼中，这是人类认识世界、把握本质的根本途径，是人类暂时遏止混乱的锐利思想武器。

本专著在谋篇布局上设计得当、恰到好处，语言上简洁流畅、文风质朴，内容上由浅入深、层层推进、明白易懂，从一个侧面反映出作者扎实的语言基本功和勤于思考、谦虚谨慎的学术品质。

再次，资料丰富，取舍得当。新著精心挑选了儒家思想家的金句名言和弗罗斯特的经典之作。这些作品通俗易懂，雅俗共赏，在英语国家和中国的读者中影响极大，对各个层次的读者均有很大的吸引力。弗罗斯特一生共创作了10部诗集共439首诗歌作品，创作生命力旺盛，时间跨度相当大，加之时代变迁，社会激荡，诗人前后创作思想变化也很大。另外，文化背景和文本历史背景之间也存在差异。然而，作者并没有停留在为比较而比较的层次和模式上，而是巧妙地选择弗罗斯特诗作中诗人非常喜爱，虽模棱两可却内涵丰富的“something”一词，把不同时期、不同地域（东方和西方）的文学作品融合在一起，从而使整个研究形成了有机整体，拓展了弗罗斯特诗歌的思想跨度，缩短了诗

人和读者之间的距离，使其意义超越了诗人所处时代和生活的区域，因而具有世界性意义。“something”一词，如同阿里阿德涅之线（Ariadne's Thread），成为理解弗罗斯特诗歌迷宫的主线。正是这一主线，连接起东方儒家思想文化和弗罗斯特诗歌艺术，增强了两者的亲和力和融合力。

徐新辉正是沿着这条主线，在中国儒家思想语境中探索弗罗斯特诗歌理论和创作实践的。面对如此丰富的资料，选择准确的切入点，既要对弗罗斯特具体诗歌作品进行深入分析和系统归纳，又要在中西文化比较的高度上进行宏观把握。这是一项相当艰巨的研究工程，如果没有一种不畏艰辛、知难而上的学术毅力，没有一种老老实实、脚踏实地的务实精神，是无法完成如此重任的。这是目前他人涉猎甚少的新领域和新视角，显示出作者独特的学术眼光和善于发现问题的研究能力。他对中国传统文化的理解和认识，对弗罗斯特诗歌的分析和阐释，反映了他较为坚实的文学理论基础和文化素养，也反映了他勤奋、坚韧、严谨、平实的学术风格。

新著面世，标志着徐新辉在弗罗斯特诗歌研究领域的新起点，这必将对他将来的学术研究注入新的动力。当然，如同任何一项学术研究中不可避免的那样，由于客观条件的限制和制约，这部专著还存在着这样或那样的不足和缺陷。但是，对于一个为人诚恳、为学勤勉、执著追求学术理想的教师来说，我们更需要宽容和激励，无须求全责备。我希望，徐新辉能以这部专著为基础，不断积累和总结学术经验，批判性地学习和借鉴前人和他人的优秀科研成果，将文学研究，特别是弗罗斯特诗歌研究推向深入，为中西文化交流作出更大的贡献。

2007 年 10 月于暨南园



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Introduction

A Poem Begins in Delight and Ends in Wisdom

子曰："诗，可以兴，可以观，可以群，可以怨。迩之事父，远之事君。"

——《论语·阳货》

The *Book of Songs* will help you to incite people's emotions, to observe their feelings, to keep company, to express your grievances. They may be used at home in the service of one's father; abroad, in the service of one's prince.

—*The Analects*, 17.9, translated into English by Arthur Waley

The figure a poem makes. It begins in delight and ends in wisdom. It begins in delight, it inclines to the impulse, it assumes direction with the first line laid down, it runs a course of lucky events, and ends in a clarification of life—not necessarily a great clarification, such as sects and cults are founded on, but in a momentary stay against confusion.

—Robert Frost, *The Figure a Poem Makes*

Some people may feel very odd and wonder how I start a book on Robert Frost and his poetry with the two quotations. One is from the ancient Chinese Confucian Classic *The Analects*, a vivid textbook of life and philosophy for the Chinese people, the other is from the frequently quoted prose *The Figure a Poem Makes* by a modern American poet Robert Lee Frost (1874 – 1963).



Confucius (551BC – 479BC) is a great philosopher and educator in the Chinese history. He was born in an ancient nation called Lu (now in Shandong Province, China). In this period of time, there were constant wars and chaos among many small nations in China ruled by the Western Zhou Dynasty due to the emperor's inability to rule the kingdom very well. When Confucius was very young, he realized the importance of learning, and made full use of every opportunity to study classical books and master practical skills. He believed that, among every three persons he was with, there was at least one who knew more and better than the other two.

When he was about thirty, he became a well-known and widely respected scholar in the Nation of Lu. *The Analects* is a Confucian classic with 20 chapters that appeared in a book form in the early Warring States Period (475BC – 221BC). *The Analects* is a record of the words and deeds of Confucius, and his students or his disciples. In the context of Chinese culture, without Confucius and *The Analects*, there is nothing to speak of the breakthrough in philosophy and the progress of civilization. This is a significant book that has made its unique contributions not only to the Chinese culture but also to the civilization of the whole world and mankind.

Robert Frost was born on March 26, 1874, in San Francisco. For a whole life, he had published 10 volumes of 439 poems, along with 3 plays, and a lot of prose and letters. As a poet of genius, who is deeply loved and much admired by people from all walks of life, he occupies a unique and ever-lasting position in modern American poetry. As a typical New England poet, who always turns his eyes on the beautiful sceneries in New England, he is highly respected for his vivid depictions of the rural life of New England, his command of New England colloquial speech, and his realistic verse portraying ordinary people on the New England farms. Despite debates and disagreement among literary critics over the sources of Frostian poetry, I believe that

it is possible to demonstrate that Frostian poetry is influenced by at least four schools of philosophy and poetic theory:

First, because Frost much admired the classics of ancient Greek and Roman literature, he immersed himself in the brilliant traditions of pastoral art with its dynamic and vigorous growth during the cultural superiority or domination of Alexandria, the fruitful age of Virgil, and the Renaissance. The pastoral art comes to life at the hand of Robert Frost who is capable of adopting his vantage and unique viewpoint to cast himself in the role of farmers in New England and write about the implicit tension between the city and the country, and the common life of the ordinary people in terms of the contrast between the simple, pure and naive world and the complicated, sophisticated and wealthy world. Frost's pastoral poetry is characterized with such a tension and such a contrast.

In his early volumes such as *A Boy's Will* (1913), *North of Boston* (1914), and *New Hampshire* (1923), Frost made a vivid and impressive contrast between the rural life and the urban life. We can see that Frost prefers simplicity in a specific country area to the complexity in a specific city area. In *The Pasture*, the prefatory to *North of Boston* and to his all later collections of poems, Frost enthusiastically invites us to his simple world: "I shan't be gone long, — You come too."[1] Although the pasture is not the only place representing simplicity and pureness, Frost's sincere invitation to such a world provides us with a possibility of finding solace for our soul, facilitating our pursuit of truth, and satisfying our desire for peace of mind in the rural landscape.

Second, Robert Frost's parents provided him with his early experience of religious faith. Frost's father, William Prescott Frost, Jr., was a journalist with ambitions of establishing a career in California. According to Jay Parini, Will Frost's interest was not in religion but, rather, in politics; Frost's mother, Belle Moodie, who



was "by nature a religious person, attracted to the mystical sides of Christianity".[2] The relationship between an energetic, impetuous, and reckless man and a quiet, hesitant, and cautious woman was often incompatible with each other. She became more and more interested in the Swedenborgian Church activity and took comfort in communication with other Swedenborgian brothers and sisters.

Though Frost was not easy with her mother's Swedenborgian faith, and sometimes, he regarded her religious predictions as something "insane", he later apologized for his disregard and said, "I look on at my mother's devotedness and thought it was beautiful"[3] to search solace in such church activity. And later on, as he was growing up and became increasingly perplexed about life, Frost realized that he could not rely on human rational explanations of human fate and nature, and that these efforts would not suffice for him to conduct human rational search for meaning of human existence. Something in the chaotic world, beyond his understanding and explanation, must be left to God for the final judgment and interpretation. Since God knows all the secrets of the Universe, and expresses himself through the changes of seasons, through natural flux, it is not necessary for us to get to the bottom of everything, to know all secrets, to explain mysteries of the world, and to find all answers to all questions. "But something has to be left to God." As a philosophical dualist, he refused to categorize his religious beliefs. He was quite familiar with the *Bible* and the history of Christianity, thanks to his lifelong interest in the knowledge in this regard. But Frost made use of a profound knowledge of religion as a tool, like poetry and all of arts, which could give him power and courage to penetrate deep into the Universe, the human inner reality and the subtle relations of human beings to the nature.

Third, Frost owed his indebtedness to the European literary tradition, especially the English romantic poets, William Wordsworth

(1770 – 1850), Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792 – 1822), Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772 – 1834), and John Keats (1795 – 1821). Frost admitted that his poems have a close relation to the poetry of the past, not only the past of the ancient Greek and Roman literature, but also that of the English romantic origins. Frost's many poems, such as *A Late Walk*, *The Quest of the Purple Fringed*, *Rose Pogonias*, *Meeting and Passing*, and so on, reflect a rich and positive romantic heritage. If we recognize the inherent relation of Frostian poems to the romantic tradition, we can enrich the multiple meaning of words being put into the romantic contexts and get rid of the complexity of meaning—obscurity, disorder, ambiguity, uncertainty, and multiplicity. "Many of Frost's poems, both widely known and many less familiar, unfold to richer meanings."[4] Mario L. D'Avanzo's groundbreaking work on Frost *A Cloud of Other Poets: Robert Frost and the Romantics* distinguishes between Romantic poems and "Anti-Romantic poems". A large number of images, such as water, trees, rivers, streams, mountains, leaves, flowers, pasture, and clouds, clearly indicate Frost's acceptance of or objection to his romantic predecessors concerning the subject matter, theme, and poetic outlook. Frost borrowed words, symbol or images from the romantic poets in his "poetry-making" process.

By comparing Frost's *The Black Cottage* and Wordsworth's *The Ruined Cottage*, we can see Frost is subtle, even disguised when he alludes to romantic works. As more and more critics read Frostian poetry from the romantic perspective, Frost's intellectual, poetic, and cultural allusions will unfold to richer implications, more and more of his poems will extend their meaning beyond and beyond our horizon. Despite Frost's close relation to the Romantic source, he strongly rejected being regarded as a Romantic poet.

Fourth, following Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 – 1882), a central figure of American transcendentalism, and Henry David

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