

Van Loon's Geography

房龙地理

英汉对照

[美] 房 龙 著
袁敏娟 潘 飞 译

《房龙地理》配以房龙亲手绘制的图片，讲述了地理之上的人文，“告诉我们生活在那里的居民的情况，告诉我们他们为什么会居住在那里，他们来自哪里，他们在干什么”。

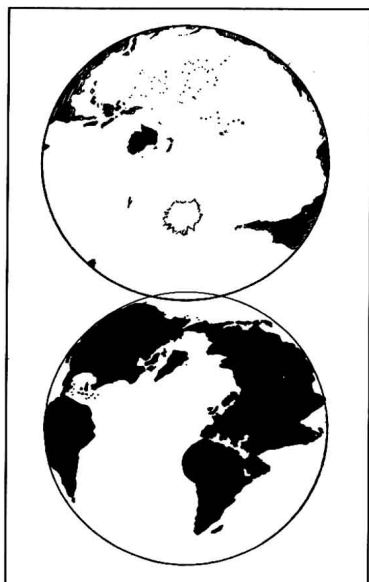
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(英汉对照)

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出版前言



亨德里克·威廉·房龙(Hendrik Willem van Loon, 1882—1944), 著名荷兰裔美国作家、历史学家、科普作家和文学家。

房龙于1882年1月出生于荷兰鹿特丹。幼年时期的房龙由于家庭内部暴力而感受不到温暖, 8岁就进入寄宿学校, 10岁起沉溺于史学。20岁以后, 房龙到美国康奈尔大学、德国慕尼黑大学求学, 获得博士学位, 但他并没有成为书斋里的学究。他当过编辑、记者和老师, 屡经漂泊, 同时苦练写作。房龙还是个多才多艺的人, 从小就对历史、地理、船舶、绘画和音乐感兴趣, 而且终生未曾放弃。他能用10种文字写作并与人交流, 还拉得一手小提琴, 善绘画, 他著作中几乎所有的插图都是自己绘制。

1921年, 房龙出版《人类的故事》, 使他一举成名, 从此迎来了创作的丰收期。之后, 《发明的故事》、《圣经的故事》、《美国的故事》、《房龙地理》(又名《人类的家园》)、《人类的艺术》、《宽容》(又名《人类的解放》)、《与世界伟人谈心》、《伦勃朗传》、《荷兰共和国兴衰史》、《太平洋的故事》等几十部著作陆续出版, 几乎本本畅销, 饮誉世界, 许多国家都翻译出版了他的作品。可以说, 房龙一生出版的30余种著作, 将人类各方面的历史几乎全都复述了一遍。

房龙在学问和文学上坚持人文主义的立场, 并逐渐形成了一套自己的理解和表达方式。他认为: “凡学问一到穿上专家的拖鞋, 躲进了它的‘精舍’, 而把它鞋子上的泥土作肥料去的时候, 它就宣布自己预备死了。与人隔绝的知识生活是引到毁灭去的。”因此, 深入浅出地将艰深枯燥的学问化作轻松风趣的精神食粮, 成了房龙作品的显著特征。

房龙的作品基本围绕人类生存与发展的最本质问题，贯穿其中的精神是科学、宽容和进步，其目标是向人类的无知与偏见挑战，从而将知识和真理普及为人所共知的常识。

当然，由于房龙坚持人文主义立场，在有些问题上不免有失偏颇甚至谬误；同时，由于他的生活时代所限，使他在有些问题上的见解不可避免地受到局限，如他在《房龙地理》中错误地将西藏放到“中亚高地”，而不是放到“中国”这一章来讲述；又比如，他以地理环境决定论来解释日本近代的侵略行为。所有这些，读者在阅读时当然能够甄别。

房龙的主要作品在20世纪20年代就开始被介绍给我国读者。历史学家和著名报人曹聚仁回忆说，他早年曾在一次候车时偶然买到《人类的故事》中译本，“那天下午，我发痴似的，车来了，在车上读，到了家中，把晚饭吞下去，就靠在床上读，一直读到天明，走马观花地总算看完了。这50年中，我总是看了又看，除了《儒林外史》、《红楼梦》，没有其他的书这么吸引我了”。我国著名文学家郁达夫也曾评价房龙的作品说：“房龙的笔，有一种魔力……是将文学家的手法，拿来用以讲述科学……无论大人小孩，读他书的人都觉得娓娓不倦了。”

房龙作品在我国至今仍然畅销不衰。显然，对于我国学习英语的广大读者来说，亲切而不失幽默，同时又饱含人文气息的房龙作品原著是难得的阅读文本。因此，我们推出了房龙作品的英汉对照系列丛书，希望对读者有所裨益。

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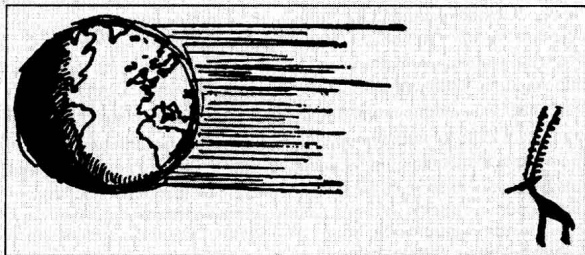
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FOREWORD

Ten years ago you sent me a letter and today you get your answer. What you wrote (I am quoting from the original) was this:

"... Yes, but how about geography? No, I don't merely want a new geography. I want a geography of my own, a geography that shall tell me what I want to know and omit everything else and I want you to write it for me. I went to a school where they took the subject very seriously. I learned all about the different countries and how they were bounded and about the cities and how many inhabitants they had and I learned the names of all the mountains and how high they were and how much coal was exported every year, and I forgot all these things just as fast as I had learned them. They failed to connect. They resolved themselves into a jumble of badly digested recollections, like a museum too full of pictures or a concert that has lasted too long. And they were of no earthly value to me, for every time I needed some concrete fact, I had to look it up on maps and in atlases and encyclopedias and blue books. I suppose that many others have suffered in the same way. On behalf of all these poor victims, will you please give us a new



前言 5

前言

10年前你写给我的那封信,如今终于可以回复了。你在信中写道(引自原文):

"……是的,但是地理又如何?不,我不只是想要一部新地理书。我更想要一部属于自己的地理书,可以从中了解我想要了解的东西,而不是其他别的什么东西。我想请你为我写一本这样的书。我的母校是一所十分重视地理课的学校。我学过各个国家的各方面知识,包括它们的国界线、城市和居民,我还知道每座山脉的名称,它们的海拔以及它们每年能出产多少煤,而我遗忘的速度就和学习的速度一样快。它们之间没有联系,转而成为一堆杂乱且未被融会贯通的记忆,就像摆设了过多图画博物馆,或是持续得过久的音乐会。它们对于我来说,没有任何价值,因为每当要用到确凿的论据时,我都不得不查阅地图、地图册、百科全书或官方报告。我认为还有很多人遇到了同样的麻烦。为了这些可怜的牺牲者,你愿意写一部多少还算实用的新地理书吗?首先地图中要涵盖所有的山脉、城市和海洋,其次是要向我们讲述生活在那里的人们,他们为什么会出现在那里,又来自何方,为了什么事情而奔忙——把有趣的人类故事嵌入到地理知识当中去。而且要把重点放在那些真正有

geography that will be of some use? Put all the mountains and the cities and the oceans on your maps and then tell us only about the people who live in those places and why they are there and where they came from and what they are doing—a sort of human interest story applied to geography. And please stress the countries that are really interesting and don't pay quite so much attention to the others that are merely names, for then we will be able to remember all about them, but otherwise. . . ”

And I, eager as always to oblige when I receive a command from your hands, turn around and say, “My dear, here it is!”

HENDRIK WILLEM VAN LOON

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趣的国家，而不是那些除了名字什么都有的国家，如此一来，我们就能够记住关于他们的种种信息，否则的话……”

自从收到你提出的要求时，我就一如既往地急于为你效劳。直到现在，我才可以转过身来对你说，“亲爱的，这就是你想要的东西！”

亨德里克·威廉·房龙

JUST A MOMENT BEFORE WE GO ANY FURTHER WHILE I TELL YOU HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

This book should be read with an atlas. There are a large number of excellent atlases and almost any one will do. For atlases are like dictionaries. Even a bad one is better than none at all.

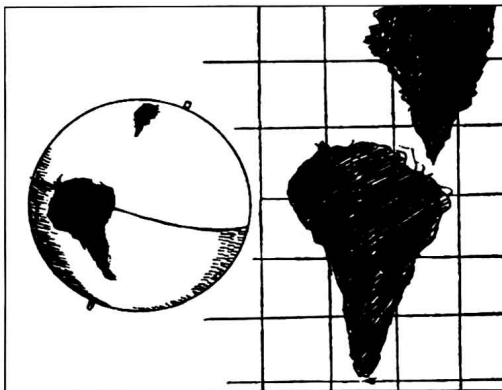
As you will soon discover, there are quite a number of maps in this volume but these are not meant as a substitute for a regular atlas. I drew them merely to show you the many ways of approach to the subject under discussion and (if I must tell the truth) to get you personally interested in drawing maps according to your own notion of the geographical right and wrong. You see, flat maps, however ingeniously conceived, must be somewhat out of gear. The only approximately correct maps are those pasted on globes but even our globes are not entirely above suspicion for they should really be spheroids. We make them spheres merely for the sake of convenience. The earth, of course, is slightly flattened near the poles but it would take a gigantic globe to show the difference, and so we need not worry about that minor irregularity. Get yourself a globe (I wrote this book with the help of a ten-cent-store globe which was really a pencil-sharpener) and use it to your heart's content, but remember that it is an "approximation" and not an "established fact". The "established facts" will only enter into your life if you should try to qualify for a master mariner's certificate. But in that case, you would have to spend many years mastering an exceedingly difficult branch of science; and this book was not written for specialists but for the average reader who wants to get some general ideas about the planet upon which he happens to live.

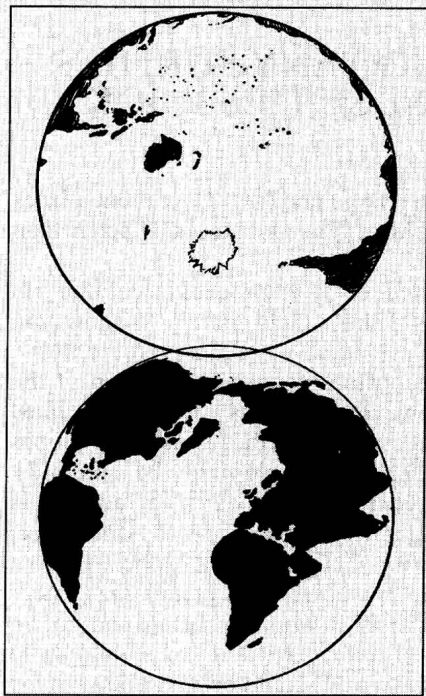
在深入阅读之前，让我来教你怎样使用这本书 7

在深入阅读之前， 让我来教你怎样使用这本书

阅读此书时，请参考地图册。优秀的地图册不计其数，它们就像字典，几乎人人都懂得如何使用。即使你只有一部不怎么样的地图册，那也比没有强。

你很快就会发现，书中引用了相当多的地图，但是这并不意味着它们就可以替代正规地图册。我绘制这些地图仅仅是为了展示到达所讨论主题的若干途径，而且(我不得不如实道来)想让你有兴趣根据自己的地理概念来绘制地图，而无论你的概念是对还是错。你知道，无论你心思多么缜密，制作出来的平面地图都难免有不足之处。只有在地球仪





历史是地理的第四维，它将时间和意义赋予地理

Now let me tell you one thing. The best and most convenient way to learn geography is to reevaluate everything into pictures.

Don't copy me or anybody else. Look at my pictures if you care to do so, but regard them merely as a sort of geographical appetizer, as polite suggestions for the meal you intend to prepare yourself by and by.

I have tried to give you quite a number of samples according to the geographical notions of the author himself. I have drawn you two-dimensional maps and three-dimensional maps. It will take you some time to get accustomed to these three-dimensional contraptions but, once you see them, you will no longer like the two-dimensional variety. I have given you maps as seen from mountain tops and according to the different angles from which you are able to contemplate a landscape. And I have given you maps as seen from aeroplanes and Zeppelins and the sort of maps we might expect to see if the oceans should run dry. I have given you a few maps which are merely pretty and ornamental and others which resemble geometrical patterns. Take your choice and then draw your own maps

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上拼贴出来的地图才勉强算得上精准，但即使是地球仪也并非完全值得信赖的，因为它们是按照标准的球体。人们把地球仪制作成球体只是图个方便。虽说地球的两极略扁，但只有巨型地球仪才能体现出这点差异。因此，我们可以忽略这一细微的不规则。为自己准备一个地球仪（我写这本书就用到了地球仪，其实它只是在小杂货店买来的铅笔刀），用它来武装你的脑袋，但要记住它只是个“大概”，而非“确切事实”。只有当你想取得船长资格证的时候，才需要让“确切事实”走进你的生活。如果是那样，你就必须花费多年光阴去掌握一门极为艰深的学科。再说了，这本书不是写给专家的，而是写给那些想了解与自己恰巧赖以生存的地球的相关常识的普通读者。

现在，让我来告诉你一件事。学习地理最好也是最便捷的方法，就是参照图片重新审视每一件事情。

不要照搬我的或是别人的图片。如果你想这么做，那就看看我的图片，但它们也只能被视作地理学的佐餐。作为你早日着手为自己准备大餐的礼节上的建议。

我已经试着根据自己的地理概念给出了数量可观的范例。我分别绘制了二维地图和三维地图。你需要花一点时间来适应三维地图的设计，一旦你看懂了三维地图，就再也不会喜欢二维地图了。我给出的地图中，一些是从山顶向下看的俯视图，另一些是从其他角度观察的。人们可以在这些地图中观赏到各地风光。我分别画出了从飞机和齐柏林硬式飞艇的角度观察的地图，人们或许会想从这种地图上看出海水是否会枯竭。还给出了一些仅仅是精美而只能起到装饰作用的地图，和其他一些

according to your own notions of how the thing should be done.

Draw maps. . . Get yourself a small globe or a large globe and an atlas. Buy yourself a pencil and a pad of paper and then draw your own pictures.

For there is only one way in which you can learn geography so that you will never forget it—draw pictures.

在深入阅读之前，让我来教你怎样使用这本书 9

类似几何图案的地图。请你自己选择，然后根据自己认为事物会怎样发展的想法来绘制出属于自己的地图。

画地图……为自己准备一个或大或小的地球仪和一部地图册。给自己买一支铅笔和一叠纸，接着便开始绘制属于自己的地图。

要想学好地理，这是唯一的办法，因此，你永远都不要忘记——画地图。

1 AND THESE ARE THE PEOPLE WHO LIVE IN THE WORLD WE LIVE IN

IT sounds incredible, but nevertheless it is true. If everybody in this world of ours were six feet tall and a foot and a half wide and a foot thick (and that is making people a little bigger than they usually are) , then the whole of the human race (and according to the latest available statistics there are now nearly 2,000,000,000 descendants of the original Homo Sapiens and his wife) could be packed into a box measuring half a mile in each direction. That, as I just said, sounds incredible, but if you don't believe me, figure it out for yourself and you will find it to be correct.

If we transported that box to the Grand Canyon of Arizona and balanced it neatly on the low stone wall that keeps people from breaking their necks when stunned by the incredible beauty of that silent witness of the forces of Eternity, and then called little Noodle, the dachshund, and told him (the tiny beast is very intelligent and loves to oblige) to give the unwieldy contraption a slight push with his soft brown nose, there would be a moment of crunching and ripping as the wooden planks loosened stones and shrubs and trees on their downward path, and then a low and even softer bumpity-bumpity-bump and a sudden splash when the outer edges struck the banks of the Colorado River.

Then silence and oblivion!

The astronomers on distant and nearby planets would have noticed nothing out of the ordinary.

10 VAN LOON'S GEOGRAPHY • 房龙地理

1 我们所生活的世界还生活着其他人

虽然听起来难以置信,但这依然是事实。假设世界上人均身高6英尺,宽1.5英尺,厚1英尺(人们的个头通常要比这稍小一点),那么可以把整个人类(据最新的可靠统计,到目前为止,最初的智人和他妻子有将近20亿后代)装进一只长宽高均为半英里的箱子里。正如我所说,这听起来难以置信,但你若真的不相信的话,就自己算算,就会发现事实确实如此。

如果我把这个盒子运往亚利桑那州的大峡谷,把它稳稳地平放在矮石墙上(亚利桑那州的大峡谷不可思议的美妙之处就在于它是永恒力量的无声证明,当人们被眼前的美景震惊时,这座矮石墙可以保护他们不至于掉下去摔断脖子),然后叫来小笨蛋——达克斯狗,并让它(这种小体型的四脚动物很聪明且乐于感恩)用褐色的软鼻子轻轻推一下这个笨重的物件。木箱在向下翻滚的途中,击散了石头、灌木和大树,发出阵阵嘎吱作响和种种撕裂的声音,紧接着便是一阵低沉甚而更加轻柔的砰砰碰撞声。当突然爆发出浪花四溅的声音时,便是木箱的边角撞上了科罗拉多河的堤岸。

接着便是沉寂和遗忘!

无论远近,各行星上的天文学家都不会注意到有什么异常。

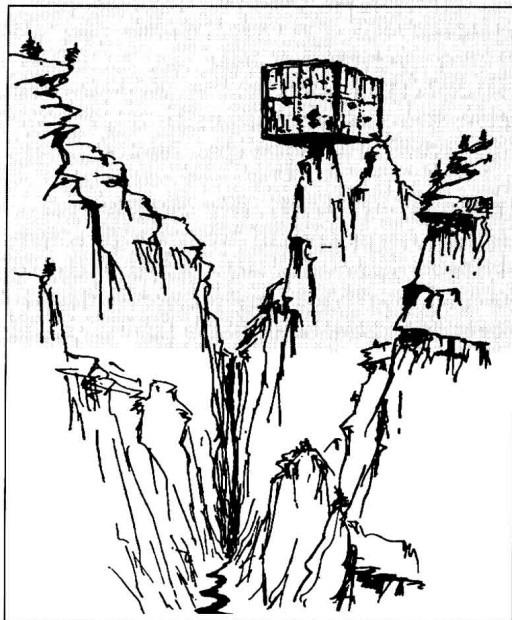
A century from now, a little mound, densely covered with vegetable matter, would perhaps indicate where humanity lay buried.

And that would be all.

I can well imagine that some of my readers will not quite like this story and will feel rather uncomfortable when they see their own proud race reduced to such proportions of sublime insignificance.

There is however a different angle to the problem—an angle which makes the very smallness of our numbers and the helplessness of our puny little bodies a matter of profound and sincere pride.

Here we are, a mere handful of weak and defenceless mammals. Ever since the dawn of the first day we have been surrounded on all sides by hordes and swarms of creatures infinitely better prepared for the struggle of existence than we are ourselves. Some of them were a hundred feet long and weighed as much as a small locomotive while others had teeth as sharp as the blade of a circular saw. Many varieties went about their daily affairs clad in the armor of a medieval knight. Others were invisible to the human eye but they multiplied at such a terrific rate that they would have owned the entire earth in less than a year's time if it had not been for certain enemies who were able to destroy them almost as fast as they were born. Whereas man could only exist under the most favorable circumstances and was forced to look for a habitat among the few small pieces of



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自此时起的一个世纪以后，一堆被有机物厚厚覆盖的小土丘，也许就是人类被埋葬之处的标识。

也许这就是全部。

不难想象，一些读者不是很喜欢这个故事，当他们看到自己引以为豪的

物种被贬低到如此微不足道的程度，会感到很不舒服。

然而，让我们以另一种角度来看待这个问题——就会使得群体规模的渺小和个体的弱小无助成为一件意义深远并令人感到由衷骄傲的事。

我们人类只不过是一小撮柔弱而缺乏防御能力的哺乳动物。从出世第一日的拂晓时分起直至现在，周遭都是昆虫类和蜂类动物，它们为生存而战所做的准备比人类充分得多。其中有些动物长100英尺，重量比得上小火车头，而有些动物则拥有如圆锯的锯齿一样锋利的牙齿。很多种类的动物都在如同中世纪骑士装甲般的保护下处理日常事务。还有其他一些种类的动物是人类肉眼看不见的，但却以如此骇人的速度繁殖，以致它们在不到一年的时间里就可以占据整个地球。而地球之所以没有被占领，那是因为这些动物的天敌能够以与它们繁殖新生命一样快的速度消灭它们。然而，人类仅仅能够在对他们最有利的环境下存活，因而被迫在位于高山和深海之间为数不多的几片小陆地上，寻找定居地。而对于人类野心勃勃的同伴们来说，则没有什么山高不可攀，没有什么海深不可测。它们看起来就像是用一种不管

dry land situated between the high mountains and the deep sea, these fellow-passengers of ours considered no summit too high and found no sea too deep for their ambitions. They were apparently made of the stuff that could survive regardless of its natural surroundings.

When we learn on eminent authority that certain varieties of insects are able to disport themselves merrily in petroleum (a substance we would hardly fancy as the main part of our daily diet) and that others manage to live through such changes in temperature as would kill all of us within a very few minutes; when we discover to our gruesome dismay that those little brown beetles, who seem so fond of literature that they are forever racing around in our bookcases, continue the even tenor of their restless days minus two or three or four legs, while we ourselves are disabled by a mere pin-prick on one of our toes, then we sometimes begin to realize against what sort of competitors we have been forced to hold our own, ever since we made our first appearance upon this whirling bit of rock, lost somewhere in the darkest outskirts of an indifferent universe.

What a side splitting joke we must have been to our pachydermous contemporaries who stood by and watched this pinkish sport of nature indulge in its first clumsy efforts to walk on its hind legs without the help of a convenient tree-trunk or cane!

But what has become of those proud and exclusive owners of almost 200,000,000 square miles of land and water (not to mention the unfathomable oceans of air) who ruled so sublime by that right of eminent domain which was based upon brute force and sly cunning?

The greater part of them has disappeared from view except where as“Exhibit A”or “B”we have kindly given them a little parking space in one of our museums devoted to natural history. Others, in order to remain among those present, were forced to go into domestic service and today in exchange for a mere livelihood they favor us with their hides and their eggs and their milk and the beef that grows upon their flanks, or drag

什么环境都能存活的材料做成的。

当我们从知名的专家那里了解到,某些种类的昆虫能够在石油(我们几乎无法想象,把这种物质作为我们日常饮食的主要部分)中愉快地消遣,还有些动物则能设法忍受在短短几分钟内就能够让所有人死掉的那种温度变化;我们还发现一件令人感到又可恶又气馁的事情,那就是看起来如此酷爱文艺,以致无休止地绕着书架赛跑的褐色小甲壳虫,在失去两三条腿甚至四条腿时,还能继续它们那永不消停的平淡单调的日子,而我们只要被大头针的针尖轧入脚趾就会造成行动不便。自从我们诞生在这块急速旋转的迷失于冷漠宇宙之黯淡边缘的岩石上以来,我们就要时常意识到迫于生存所要坚持对抗的竞争者是什么样的。

对于人类的厚皮动物同伴来说,我们曾经是个怎样的爆炸性笑话啊!他们袖手旁观地看着这个自然界的粉色动物,并放肆地嘲笑我们笨拙地致力于尝试徒手直立行走,而不是借助树干或藤条的支撑!

但是,生活在这片将近两亿平方英里陆地和水面(更不用说无可计量的空中领域了)上骄傲而又霸道的主人,那些凭借极端残酷的暴力和奸诈手段来统治这片领域的强者,又怎样了呢?

除了自然历史博物馆里的“展览品A”或“展览品B”(我们友善地为它们划出一片小小的停泊地),它们中大部分物种都从我们的视野中消失了。其中有些物种为了能延续到现在,不得不服务于家庭,如今为了换取生计,它们要用自己的皮、蛋、奶和长在两肋的肉来取悦人类,或者要替我们驮着沉重的包袱,只不过是为我们