

【 插图 · 中文导读英文版 】

The Story of Mankind

人类的故事

〔美〕房龙 著

王勋 纪飞 等 编译



清华大学出版社





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内 容 简 介

《人类的故事》是一部描写人类文明发展史的经典之作。房龙以轻松平易的风格及幽默风趣的语言，由人类的起源、史前人类、佛祖释迦牟尼、圣人孔子、古希腊和罗马帝国、十字军东征、文艺复兴、启蒙运动，一直写到近代，为读者展示了人类历史的浩荡长卷。该书一度被美国中学选为历史教科书，还曾获得美国最著名的儿童文学奖“纽伯瑞奖”。

无论作为通俗的人类文明历史读本，还是作为语言学习的课外读物，本书对当代中国的读者都将产生积极的影响。为了使读者能够了解每段历史概况，提高阅读速度和阅读水平，在每段故事的开始部分增加了中文导读。同时，为了读者更好地理解书中内容，在部分章节中加入了插图，其中不乏不同时期著名画家的作品。

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亨德里克·威廉·房龙（Hendrik Willem Van Loon，1882—1944），荷兰裔美国人，20 世纪美国著名的通俗历史学家、科普作家和文学家，在历史、文化、文明、科学等方面都有著作，被誉为“伟大的文化普及者，传播人类文明的文化骑士”。

1882 年 1 月 14 日，房龙出生于荷兰鹿特丹。幼年时对历史、地理、船舶、绘画和音乐感兴趣，这种兴趣伴随着他的一生。从 8 岁起，房龙先后进入一些著名的寄宿制学校，学习了拉丁文、希腊文和英文，10 岁时，房龙便立志要成为历史学家。1902 年，房龙进入美国康奈尔大学学习，获学士学位；之后，房龙进入德国慕尼黑大学学习，1911 年获博士学位。房龙求学前后，当过编辑、记者、播音员，也先后在美国几所大学任教，游历过世界上很多地方。1913 年，房龙编著并出版了第一本历史书《荷兰共和国的衰亡》，虽然销路一般，但受到了书评界的赞扬。1920 年圣诞节期间，房龙出版了他的第二本书《古代的人》，这是一部带插图的通俗历史读本，市场反映良好。经过知识、阅历、研究成果等方面的积累，房龙于 1921 年出版了他的第三部历史著作《人类的故事》，并一举成名，从此房龙迎来了他创作的丰收期。之后，房龙陆续出版了《发明的故事》、《圣经的故事》、《美国简史》、《地理的故事》（《人类的家园》）、《人类的艺术》、《宽容》、《与世界伟人谈心》、《伦勃朗传》、《太平洋的故事》等二十多部著作。房龙作品的内容涉及历史、地理、宗教、文学、政治、艺术、科学和技术等诸多方面。房龙多才多艺，能用十种语言写作和与人交流，拉得一手优美的小提琴，还能画画，他的著作中的所有插图全部出自他自己手笔。1944 年 3 月 11 日，房龙在美国康涅狄格州去世，美国《星期日快报》刊登讣告时用了这样的标题“历史成就了他的名声——房龙逝世”。

房龙的作品文笔优美、知识广博，在世界各地广受读者喜爱。其作品内容丰富、资料翔实、知识广博而不乏真知灼见，文字深入浅出、通俗优



美、轻松风趣而又发人深省，贯穿着理性、宽容和进步的思想，具有经久不衰的魅力。他的绝大部分著作均是风靡世界的畅销书，历经近一个世纪仍不失魅力，影响了一代又一代的读者。房龙的作品饮誉世界，荷兰、德国、法国、瑞典、丹麦、芬兰、挪威、日本、印度、前苏联、西班牙、意大利、波兰、匈牙利、希腊等国都翻译出版了他的作品。

自 20 世纪 20 年代开始，房龙的主要作品几乎被同步介绍给中国的读者。翻译者把这个荷兰名字译为“房龙”。此后，这个名字为我国读者所熟悉，并流传下来。房龙作品深入浅出的通俗文风和百科全书般的渊博知识，对与之同时代的中国读者产生了巨大的影响。这是因为，一方面是房龙的文风正好适合于当时新文化运动所提倡的生活化的白话文，房龙的书也为中国求知者提供了关于人类和自然的启蒙知识；另一方面，房龙的写作技巧也给中国当时的作家以很多启发。据历史学家和著名报人曹聚仁回忆：20 世纪 20 年代，他在候车时偶然买到《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”。郁达夫曾说：“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，都觉得娓娓忘倦了。”20 世纪 80 年代是中国改革开放的年代，房龙的作品重新被发现，且被逐步引进。而自 20 世纪 90 年代后期开始，国内兴起“房龙热”，房龙的作品再次受到读者的青睐，这是因为他的著作特别符合现代中国人的心理：务实进取的时代，读书趋向于知识性、趣味性。

目前，国内已出版的房龙著作形式主要有两种：一种是中文翻译版，另一种是中英文对照版。其中的中英文对照读本比较受读者的欢迎，这主要是得益于中国人热衷于学习英文的大环境。从英文学习的角度来看，直接使用纯英文的学习资料更有利于英语学习。考虑到对英文内容背景的了解有助于英文阅读，使用中文导读应该是一种比较好的方式，也可以说是该类型书的第三种版本形式。采用中文导读而非中英文对照的方式进行编排，这样有利于国内读者摆脱对英文阅读依赖中文注释的习惯。基于以上原因，我们决定编译房龙系列著作中的经典，其中包括《人类的故事》、《圣经的故事》、《地理的故事》、《宽容》和《美国简史》，并采用中文导读英文版的形式出版。同时，为了读者更好地理解书中内容，在部分章节中加入了插图。在中文导读中，我们尽力使其贴近原作的精髓，也尽可能保留



原作的风格。我们希望能够编出为当代中国读者所喜爱的经典读本。读者在阅读英文故事之前，可以先阅读中文导读内容，这样有利于了解故事背景，从而加快阅读速度。我们相信，这些经典著作的引进对加强当代中国读者，特别是青少年读者的科学素养和人文修养是非常有帮助的。

房龙始终站在全人类的高度在写作，他摒弃了深奥理论，却拥有自己独立的思想和体系，他的论述主要是围绕人类生存与发展等本质的问题，贯穿其中的精神是科学、宽容和进步，他的目标是向人类的无知与偏执挑战，他采取的方式是普及知识和真理，使它们成为人所皆知的常识。房龙毕生持人文主义立场，在有的问题上不免有与唯物主义者不同的观点；同时，由于他是生活在 20 世纪早期的美国作家，其思想的观点不可避免地会受到时代和历史的局限，比如在他的《地理的故事》一书中错误地将西藏放到“中亚高地”这一章，而不是“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侵略行为，希望读者朋友阅读这些著作时能够甄别。

本书主要内容由王勋、纪飞编译。参加本书故事素材搜集整理及编译工作的还有郑佳、刘乃亚、赵雪、左新杲、黄福成、冯洁、徐鑫、马启龙、王业伟、王旭敏、陈楠、王多多、邵舒丽、周丽萍、王晓旭、李永振、孟宪行、熊红华、胡国平、熊建国、徐平国、王小红等。限于我们的科学、人文素养和英语水平，书中难免会有不当之处，衷心希望读者朋友批评指正。



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1. 舞台布景

The Setting of the Stage



我们对人类的起源所知甚少，但我们能够思考自己的发展历程。

这一章讲的是人类第一次出现的时候，舞台布景是怎样的。

人类在地球的历史中最后一个登场，但却是第一个用大脑思考的生物。

就我们所知，地球曾经是燃烧的火球，后来，地表覆盖了岩石。雨水冲刷地表，汇入海洋。

从无机界诞生了第一个有生命的细胞，在漫长的岁月里演变成各种各样的植物和动物。

植物的数量越来越多，它们来到陆地上，覆盖了整个地球。

有一些鱼离开海洋，成为两栖动物。后来，它们成为体型庞大的爬行动物。

一部分爬行动物演变成了长着羽毛的鸟类，在天空飞翔。

此后，巨大的爬行动物忽然绝灭了。世界上开始出现另一种生物，它们用乳汁哺育幼儿，因此被称为哺乳动物。母亲把孩子带在身边，大大增加了小哺乳动物存活的几率。

有一种哺乳动物用手一般的爪子捕猎，并开始直立行走。它们成群活动，慢慢地学会了用语言交谈。

这就是人类的祖先。

*W*e live under the shadow of a gigantic question mark.

Who are we?

Where do we come from?

Whither are we bound?

Slowly, but with persistent courage, we have been pushing this question mark further and further towards that distant line, beyond the horizon, where we hope to find our answer.

We have not gone very far.

We still know very little but we have reached the point where (with a fair degree of accuracy) we can guess at many things.

In this chapter I shall tell you how (according to our best belief) the stage was set for the first appearance of man.

If we represent the time during which it has been possible for animal life to exist upon our planet by a line of this length, then the tiny line just below indicates the age during which man (or a creature more or less resembling man) has lived upon this earth.

Man was the last to come but the first to use his brain for the purpose of conquering the forces of nature. That is the reason why we are going to study him, rather than cats or dogs or horses or any of the other animals, who, all in their own way, have a very interesting historical development behind them.

In the beginning, the planet upon which we live was (as far as we now know) a large ball of flaming matter, a tiny cloud of smoke in the endless ocean of space. Gradually, in the course of millions of years, the surface burned itself out, and was covered with a thin layer of rocks. Upon these lifeless rocks the rain descended in endless torrents, wearing out the hard granite and carrying the dust to the valleys that lay hidden between the high cliffs of the steaming earth.

Finally the hour came when the sun broke through the clouds and saw how this little planet was covered with a few small puddles which were to develop into the mighty oceans of the eastern and western hemispheres.

Then one day the great wonder happened. What had been dead, gave birth to life.

The first living cell floated upon the waters of the sea.

For millions of years it drifted aimlessly with the currents. But during all that time it was developing certain habits that it might survive more easily upon the inhospitable earth. Some of these cells were happiest in the dark depths of the lakes and the pools. They took root in the limy sediments which had been carried down from the tops of the hills and they became plants. Others preferred to move about and they grew strange jointed legs, like scorpions and began to crawl along the bottom of the sea amidst the plants and the pale green things that looked like jelly-fishes. Still others (covered with scales) depended upon a swimming motion to go from place to place in their search for food, and gradually they populated the ocean with myriads of fishes.

Meanwhile the plants had increased in number and they had to search for new dwelling places. There was no more room for them at the bottom of the sea. Reluctantly they left the water and made a new home in the marshes and on the mudbanks that lay at the foot of the mountains. Twice a day the tides of the ocean covered them with their brine. For the rest of the time, the plants made the best of their uncomfortable situation and tried to survive in the thin air which surrounded the surface of the planet. After centuries of training, they learned how to live as comfortably in the air as they had done in the water. They increased in size and became shrubs and trees and at last they learned how to grow lovely flowers which attracted the attention of the busy big bumble-bees and the birds who carried the seeds far and wide until the whole earth had become covered with green pastures, or lay dark under the shadow of the big trees.

But some of the fishes too had begun to leave the sea, and they had learned how to breathe with lungs as well as with gills. We call such creatures amphibious, which means that they are able to live with equal ease on the land and in the water. The first frog who crosses your path can tell you all about the pleasures of the double existence of the amphibian.

Once outside of the water, these animals gradually adapted themselves

more and more to life on land. Some became reptiles (creatures who crawl like lizards) and they shared the silence of the forests with the insects. That they might move faster through the soft soil, they improved upon their legs and their size increased until the world was populated with gigantic forms (which the hand-books of biology list under the names of Ichthyosaurus and Megalosaurus and Brontosaurus) who grew to be thirty to forty feet long and who could have played with elephants as a full grown cat plays with her kittens.

Some of the members of this reptilian family began to live in the tops of the trees, which were then often more than a hundred feet high. They no longer needed their legs for the purpose of walking, but it was necessary for them to move quickly from branch to branch. And so they changed a part of their skin into a sort of parachute, which stretched between the sides of their bodies and the small toes of their fore-feet, and gradually they covered this skinny parachute with feathers and made their tails into a steering gear and flew from tree to tree and developed into true birds.

Then a strange thing happened. All the gigantic reptiles died within a short time. We do not know the reason. Perhaps it was due to a sudden change in climate. Perhaps they had grown so large that they could neither swim nor walk nor crawl, and they starved to death within sight but not within reach of the big ferns and trees. Whatever the cause, the million-year-old worldempire of the big reptiles was over.

The world now began to be occupied by very different creatures. They were the descendants of the reptiles but they were quite unlike these because they fed their young from the "mammæ" or the breasts of the mother. Wherefore modern science calls these animals "mammals." They had shed the scales of the fish. They did not adopt the feathers of the bird, but they covered their bodies with hair. The mammals however developed other habits which gave their race a great advantage over the other animals. The female of the species carried the eggs of the young inside her body until they were hatched and while all other living beings, up to that time, had left their children exposed to the dangers of cold and heat, and the attacks of wild beasts, the mammals kept their young with them for a long time and sheltered them while they were

still too weak to fight their enemies. In this way the young mammals were given a much better chance to survive, because they learned many things from their mothers, as you will know if you have ever watched a cat teaching her kittens to take care of themselves and how to wash their faces and how to catch mice.

But of these mammals I need not tell you much for you know them well. They surround you on all sides. They are your daily companions in the streets and in your home, and you can see your less familiar cousins behind the bars of the zoological garden.

And now we come to the parting of the ways when man suddenly leaves the endless procession of dumbly living and dying creatures and begins to use his reason to shape the destiny of his race.

One mammal in particular seemed to surpass all others in its ability to find food and shelter. It had learned to use its fore-feet for the purpose of holding its prey, and by dint of practice it had developed a hand-like claw. After innumerable attempts it had learned how to balance the whole of the body upon the hind legs. (This is a difficult act, which every child has to learn anew although the human race has been doing it for over a million years.)

This creature, half ape and half monkey but superior to both, became the most successful hunter and could make a living in every clime. For greater safety, it usually moved about in groups. It learned how to make strange grunts to warn its young of approaching danger and after many hundreds of thousands of years it began to use these throaty noises for the purpose of talking.

This creature, though you may hardly believe it, was your first "man-like" ancestor.

2. 我们最早的祖先

Our Earliest Ancestors



人类学家研究埋藏在土里的化石，推测了人类的祖先。

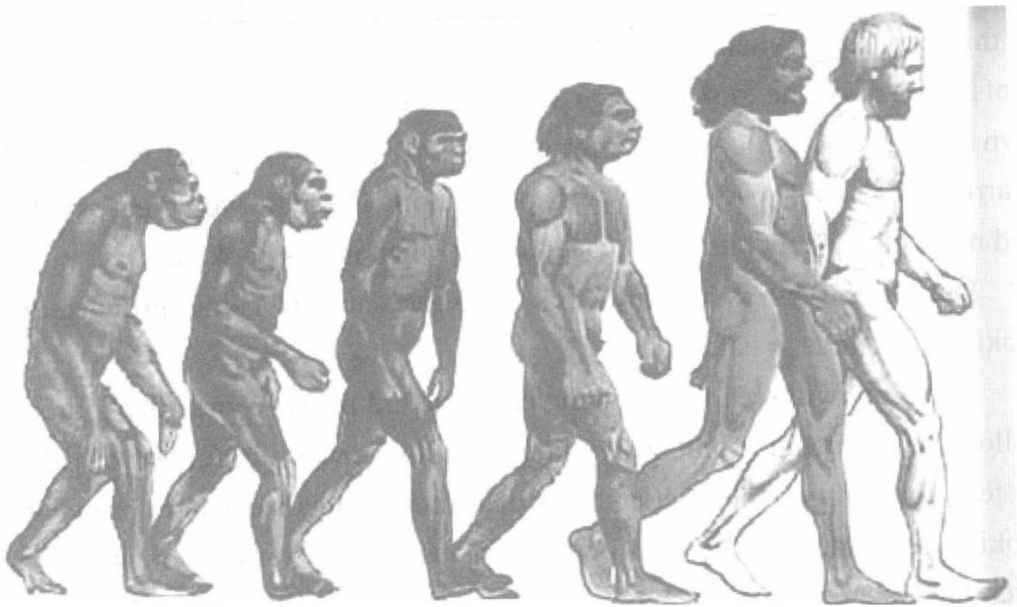
人类的祖先是一种矮小的、长着毛的哺乳动物，长着像猴子一样的爪子、类似野兽的下颚。牙齿是他的工具。他不穿衣服，也不会用火。他在森林中寻找食物。夜晚，野兽给他带来恐惧。严寒酷暑折磨着他，伤病给他带来灾难。

早期的人类慢慢学会了用喉咙里的声音与同伴交流，这大概是语言的起源。

但是，关于人类的祖先，我们所知甚少，早期的人类只留下了化石，剩下的谜尚未解开。

We know very little about the first “true” men. We have never seen their pictures. In the deepest layer of clay of an ancient soil we have sometimes found pieces of their bones. These lay buried amidst the broken skeletons of other animals that have long since disappeared from the face of the earth. Anthropologists (learned scientists who devote their lives to the study of man as a member of the animal kingdom) have taken these bones and they have been able to reconstruct our earliest ancestors with a fair degree of accuracy.

The great-great-grandfather of the human race was a very ugly and



人类的进化

unattractive mammal. He was quite small, much smaller than the people of today. The heat of the sun and the biting wind of the cold winter had coloured his skin a dark brown. His head and most of his body, his arms and legs too, were covered with long, coarse hair. He had very thin but strong fingers which made his hands look like those of a monkey. His forehead was low and his jaw was like the jaw of a wild animal which uses its teeth both as fork and knife. He wore no clothes. He had seen no fire except the flames of the rumbling volcanoes which filled the earth with their smoke and their lava.

He lived in the damp blackness of vast forests, as the pygmies of Africa do to this very day. When he felt the pangs of hunger he ate raw leaves and the roots of plants or he took the eggs away from an angry bird and fed them to his own young. Once in a while, after a long and patient chase, he would catch a sparrow or a small wild dog or perhaps a rabbit. These he would eat raw for he had never discovered that food tasted better when it was cooked.

During the hours of day, this primitive human being prowled about looking for things to eat.

When night descended upon the earth, he hid his wife and his children in a hollow tree or behind some heavy boulders, for he was surrounded on all sides by ferocious animals and when it was dark these animals began to prowl about, looking for something to eat for their mates and their own young, and they liked the taste of human beings. It was a world where you must either eat or be eaten, and life was very unhappy because it was full of fear and misery.

In summer, man was exposed to the scorching rays of the sun, and during the winter his children would freeze to death in his arms. When such a creature hurt itself, (and hunting animals are forever breaking their bones or spraining their ankles) he had no one to take care of him and he must die a horrible death.

Like many of the animals who fill the Zoo with their strange noises, early man liked to jabber. That is to say, he endlessly repeated the same unintelligible gibberish because it pleased him to hear the sound of his voice. In due time he learned that he could use this guttural noise to warn his fellow beings whenever danger threatened and he gave certain little shrieks which came to mean "there is a tiger!" or "here come five elephants." Then the others grunted something