

SELECTED STORIES OF EDITH WHARTON

英汉对照 ● 英美文学精品



沃

女性主义的先知
顿夫人短篇小说选

宁欣译

出 外文出版社

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女性主义的先知

沃顿夫人

1862年1月24日，伊迪丝·纽博尔德·琼斯在纽约市降生，她就是后来的伊迪丝·沃顿夫人(Edith Wharton 1862-1937)。她的家庭是纽约豪门，列名纽约400家大族之一，在美国生息繁衍已有200年以上的历史；这家世使她自幼步入纽约城市贵族的行列，成为了一名贵妇人。她的出身使她受到了当时女性少能获得的良好教育，她在上层社会中的经历为她后来的创作提供了丰富的源泉；但像我们将看到的那样，这很难说是一种幸运抑或不幸。在贵族生活金光灿烂的表象背后，掩藏着的却是虚伪、腐朽和对反抗者的残忍；而贵族阶层中的女性在本质上仅仅是一种高级商品，在婚姻的市场上被售卖成为男性的附庸，终其一生饰演贤妻良母和风采迷人的贵妇人的双重角色，在个人生活中受男性的完全支配，在社交场上成为他们炫耀的资本和猎取的对象。沃顿夫人后来感叹道：“这种生活是一个象形文字的世界，那里人们不说真话，不做实事，也没有真实的思想。”

23岁的时候伊迪丝·琼斯嫁给了来自同一个阶层的银行家爱德华·沃顿，似乎从此她的一生已经注定。然而生活的激变改变了她命运的方向，也为世间带来了小说家沃顿夫人。这悲剧简单而严酷：她的丈夫得了精神病，而他们还没有来得及有一个孩子。为排遣孤独和痛苦沃顿夫人提笔尝试写作，从此竟一发不可收。19世纪90年代她的第一批作品问世，但真正令她声誉鹊起的是1905年出版的《春台故事》(The House of Mirth)。1911年她出版了中篇小说《埃森·弗洛姆》，而1920年的《纯真年代》为她赢得了次年的普利策奖。她一生勤奋，笔耕不辍；其它知名的著作还有《夏》、

《礁石》、《风情记》等等。另一座她创作中的重镇是她的短篇小说；她一生写成了88个短篇故事。

1923年她荣膺耶鲁大学荣誉文学博士的头衔（她是第一个获此殊荣的女性）；1930年她当选美国艺术文学学院院士。但在此前很久沃顿夫人便已决然离开了她的故园故乡去往欧洲——像她的一些同代艺术家，她告别了这片文化的荒原另觅艺术的天地。她来到法国定居，——法国在当时与后来都是许多美国艺术家向往的心灵家园——直到1937年8月11日，她逝于圣布里斯苏森林的家中。

那些乌衣优游的异国显贵们已经久成尘土，但沃顿夫人的生命还在她的书中闪耀着光采。然而要真正认识一位艺术家的价值并非轻而易举。沃顿夫人在生前名噪一时，是美国最为大众欢迎也深受评论家们赞扬的作家之一，但身后她的声名却经历了急剧的衰落，长时间的遗忘以及奇迹般的再度辉煌。

在她生前身后很长一个时代里，人们仅仅看到她作品中传统的成份，视她为19世纪以来福楼拜、莫伯桑、亨利·詹姆斯的小说美学原则的信徒。这在某种意义上亦有道理：沃顿夫人自己也曾说过她重视的是“传统的力量”，恪守的是“老式的选材与构思的方法”。她从学习这些大师中获益，而且与亨利·詹姆斯还是私人朋友，有深厚的友情。1925年，63岁的沃顿夫人发表《小说创作》一书总结她大半生创作的甘苦。在现代主义的高潮中，沃顿夫人傲然说道：“由于缺乏文化素养和独创性的洞见，欧洲和美国为数众多的年轻一代小说家们对某些琐碎的创新寄予了过分的重视。独创性的洞见是不惮于使用业已被广泛接受的形式；而也只有有文化素养的头脑才能避免这样的危险，即把某种表面的变化或久已被弃置不用的技巧的复活视为本质上是一种新生事物。”她眼中的那些“琐碎的创新”恰是现代主义对文学最重要的贡献，譬如说，意识流。就在她这部论著发表的前后，1922年，詹姆斯·乔伊斯的《尤利西斯》问世；1925年，弗吉尼亚·伍尔夫发表了另一部著名的意识流小说《黛洛维夫人》，1927年，她发表了又一部同类的名著《到灯塔去》；1929年，在美国，威廉·福克纳写成了《喧哗与

骚动》。这不过是几个最著名的例子。她传统的文学趣味投合当时读者的趣味因而名噪一时，而日后日益落伍而遭遗忘，如此而已，岂有它哉！——很长一个阶段里，这便是主流派的批评家们对她的看法。

但艺术家比我们想像的更高明。到60年代末，文学批评家开始逐渐重新审视沃顿夫人的创作，这主要是两个因素促成的。

第一件是她个人档案在她去世30年后首次公开发表。这批文件，包括她的大量书信手稿，改变了沃顿夫人过去在人们心目中高傲冷峻的形象。人们从中了解到她童年的痛苦，她沉重的精神压力，还有她隐秘的爱情；这些发现无疑给研读她的作品带来了新的线索，自然引发了学者们的足够兴趣。

第二件事更重要，影响也更大，这就是妇女主义文学批评的异军突起。妇女主义文学批评以重写文学史的决心把许许多多被忽视、被遗忘的妇女作家推上前台，又从新的角度去探索那些已有定评的妇女作家和她们的作品。这股力量也使人们看到了沃顿夫人作品中久被忽略的许多东西。

两位著名的妇女主义评论家——桑德拉·吉尔伯特和苏珊·嘉珀对沃顿夫人的作品有这样的评价：“〔这是〕本世纪所有小说家当中对于‘女性’的建构所作的最深刻——也是情感最为强烈的妇女主义的分析。”“女性”的概念，在现代女性主义者看来，本是男性主流社会强加给女性的，并且由于层层积淀而为女性所“自愿”接受，只有为数不多的妇女作家能对此有自觉的认识，并作出分析与批判。沃顿夫人在这方面的成就显然与她的出身有密切的联系：她的阶层正是一个把女性商品化推至登峰造极的程度的阶层。

但沃顿夫人并不是一名孤立的妇女主义先知，而是19世纪末20世纪初女性觉醒潮流的一名代表。就在地开始创作前不久，另两位妇女作家，夏洛特·伯金斯·吉尔曼和凯特·肖邦分别发表了两部反映女性觉醒的作品：《黄色壁纸》（1892）和《觉醒》（1899）。沃顿夫人承继了她们的努力，改变了美国妇女文学在19世纪中遵循的

那种少女依赖自身“智慧、决心、机敏和勇气”克服困难取得成功，以幸福婚姻结局的皆大欢喜的模式，勇敢而深刻地探索现实中妇女的处境。

她写得最多的还是她本阶级的女性，写她们对男性的依附，写她们由此而生的互相竞争和嫉妒，写男性思想对她们的禁锢和压制，写她们本性的扭曲和凋零——也写她们当中渐渐萌生的反抗的声音，和多数情况下这种反抗悲剧性的结局。这个阶层的女性，由于往往染有种种传统的弱点和偏见，由于在经济和思想上都尚不能完全独立以摆脱男性主流社会的控制，往往她们的反抗都以失败告终。沃顿夫人在同情她们的同时客观冷峻地描绘出了这种现状，从而为“新女性”的成长指明了方向。而她自己，在通过写作赢得独立的地位，树立起一种新型思想的过程中，也成为了这样的“新女性”的先驱。在被妇女主义批评家们重写的文学史上，沃顿夫人无疑成为了一位比过去人们所想像的要深刻得多、重要得多的作家。

此一译本的完成应当感谢业师钱青教授的指点。译者学力才能所限，必多疏漏，尚祈读者指正，是所幸焉。

宁 欣

于北京外国语大学

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SELECTED STORIES OF EDITH WHARTON

女性主义的先知

沃顿夫人短篇小说选

Roman Fever

I

From the table at which they had been lunching two American ladies of ripe but well-cared-for middle age moved across the lofty terrace of the Roman restaurant and, leaning on its parapet, looked first at each other, and then down on the outspread glories of the Palatine and the Forum, with the same expression of vague but benevolent approval.

As they leaned there a girlish voice echoed up gaily from the stairs leading to the court below. "Well, come along, then," it cried, not to them but to an invisible companion, and "let's leave the young things to their knitting"; and a voice as fresh laughed back: "Oh, look here, Babs, not actually knitting —" "Well, I mean figuratively," rejoined the first. "After all, we haven't left our poor parents much else to do ..." and at that point the turn of the stairs engulfed the dialogue.

The two ladies looked at each other again, this time with a tinge of smiling embarrassment, and the smaller and paler one shook her head and coloured slightly.

"Barbara!" she murmured, sending an unheard rebuke after the mocking voice in the stairway.

The other lady, who was fuller, and higher in colour, with a small determined nose supported by vigorous black eyebrows, gave a good-humoured laugh. "That's what our daughters think of us!"

Her companion replied by a deprecating gesture. "Not of us individually. We must remember that. It's just the collective modern idea of Mothers. And you see —" Half guiltily she drew from her handsomely mounted black hand-bag a twist of crimson silk run through by two fine knitting needles. "One never knows," she murmured. "The new system has certainly given us a good deal of time to kill; and sometimes I get tired just looking — even at this." Her gesture was now addressed to the stupendous scene at their feet.

罗马热病^①

两位中年过半但风韵犹存的美国女士用毕午餐，从餐桌旁起身，走过罗马人饭店居高临下的天台，倚着护墙站定。她们先是彼此一望，随之将目光投向展现在她们面前的帕拉廷山^②与弗洛姆遗址^③那壮观的景色，脸上不约而同隐隐透出嘉许之情。

正当此时，从通往下面庭院的楼梯上传来了一个女孩子欢快的声音。“快来呀，”这声音叫道，不是冲着她俩，而是朝着一位还没露面的伙伴，“让小年轻们忙她们的毛线活儿去吧！”另一个同样年轻的声音笑着答道：“噢，你瞧，芭博丝^④，其实也不完全是毛线活儿——”“哈，我是打比方的，”头一个声音回答道，“再说，我们也实在没给我们可怜的妈妈们留下什么别的可做嘛……”恰在此刻，楼梯的拐角隐没了这场对话。

两位女士又是彼此一望，淡淡一笑中透出些尴尬。较为瘦小苍白的那一位摇摇头，微露赧颜。

“芭芭拉！”她喃喃说道，冲楼梯上那个嘲弄的声音递去份听不见的责备。

另一位女士体态丰腴，肤色较深，一双活力四射的黑色眼眉承托着一个小小的、坚毅的鼻子。她和气地笑起来。“我们的女儿就是这样看待我们的！”

她的伙伴做了个表示异议的手势。“倒不是对我们个人。这点不要忘记。这不过是对于母亲这个群体的一种摩登观念罢了。再说——”似乎有些愧疚似的，她从自己镶满饰物的漂亮黑色手袋中抽出一双精致的毛线针，用一条红丝绳捆着的。“谁知道呢，”她小声说，“这套新思想倒确实给了我们不少时间来打发。有时候我对着景致真有些厌烦了

The dark lady laughed again, and they both relapsed upon the view, contemplating it in silence, with a sort of diffused serenity which might have been borrowed from the spring effulgence of the Roman skies. The luncheon-hour was long past, and the two had their end of the vast terrace to themselves. At its opposite extremity a few groups, detained by a lingering look at the outspread city, were gathering up guide-books and fumbling for tips. The last of them scattered, and the two ladies were alone on the air-washed height.

"Well, I don't see why we shouldn't just stay here," said Mrs. Slade, the lady of the high colour and energetic brows. Two derelict basketchairs stood near, and she pushed them into the angle of the parapet, and settled herself in one, her gaze upon the Palatine. "After all, it's still the most beautiful view in the world."

"It always will be, to me," assented her friend Mrs. Ansley, with so slight a stress on the "me" that Mrs. Slade, though she noticed it, wondered if it were not merely accidental, like the random underlinings of old-fashioned letter-writers.

"Grace Ansley was always old-fashioned," she thought; and added aloud, with a retrospective smile: "It's a view we've both been familiar with for a good many years. When we first met here we were younger than our girls are now. You remember?"

"Oh, yes, I remember," murmured Mrs. Ansley, with the same undefinable stress. — "There's that head-waiter wondering," she interpolated. She was evidently far less sure than her companion of herself and of her rights in the world.

"I'll cure him of wondering," said Mrs. Slade, stretching her hand toward a bag as discreetly opulent-looking as Mrs. Ansley's. Signing to the head-waiter, she explained that she and her friend were old lovers of Rome, and would like to spend the end of the afternoon looking down on the view — that is, if it did not disturb the service? The head-waiter, bowing over her gratuity, assured her that the ladies were most welcome, and would be still more so if they would condescend to remain for dinner. A full moon night, they would remember ...

Mrs. Slade's black brows drew together, as though references to the moon were out-of-place and even unwelcome. But she smiled away her frown as the head-waiter retreated. "Well, why not? We might do worse.

——“哪怕看的是这个。”她的手势指向她们脚下那壮丽的景观。

肤色黝黑的女士又是一阵大笑。继而她们重被眼前的景色所吸引，陷入了静静的沉思，心境中一片平和，好像从罗马春日天空中那灿烂的阳光里汲取到了这份心情。午餐服务时间早已过了，阔大的阳台上，这一端只有她们两人。另一头还有几群人，由于贪看城市的美景而迟迟不去的，现在也收拾起旅游手册，摸出小费，准备离开了。终于最后一群人散去了，只剩下这两位女士独自留在这和风吹拂的高处。

“嗯，呆在这儿挺好，我看不出有什么理由要离开，”斯莱德夫人，那位有着深色皮肤和充满活力的眼眉的女士说道。旁边有两把空着的柳条椅，她把它们推到护墙的一角，自己在一把椅子上坐定，凝视着帕拉廷山。“这毕竟依然是世上最美的景色。”

“对我，它将永远如此，”她的朋友安斯利夫人赞同道。那个“我”字咬得那样轻，斯莱德夫人虽说注意到了，却怀疑这字是不是仅仅随口吐出的，就像是那些老派的书信作家漫无目的表示强调的下划线一样。

“格蕾丝·安斯利总是非常老气，”她心中想。接着她伴着一个怀旧的微笑高声说道：“这么多年来我们已经熟稔于这片景色了。我们初到这里的时候比我们的女儿现在还要年轻呢。你还记得吗？”

“喔，当然，我记得。”安斯利夫人喃喃说道，语调中的重音还是那样难以辨识。——“侍者领班正在那儿闲逛呢，”她忽然插了一句。和她的伙伴比起来，她显然缺乏自信，不敢那么肯定自己在这世上的权利。

“我要治好他这闲逛的毛病，”斯莱德夫人说着，伸手拿起一个与安斯利夫人的那个一样华贵而不失雅致的手提包。她把领班招呼过来，向他解释道，她和她的朋友多年来都是罗马的爱慕者，现在想把下午的全部剩余时间用于在此观看景致——假如不打扰他们的服务的话。领班拿了她的小费连忙鞠躬致谢，向她保证说夫人们是极受欢迎的，而且若能屈尊留下来用晚餐，将会受到更热烈的欢迎。今晚正当满月，她们二位自然会记得……

斯莱德夫人漆黑的双眉皱了起来，似乎提到月亮是件不相干的举动，甚至是不受欢迎的。但领班退下之后她微微一笑，抹去了脸上的不悦。“哦，也好。我们也别无什么更好的可做。我想我们对姑娘们几时回

There's no knowing, I suppose, when the girls will be back. Do you even know back from *where*? I don't!"

Mrs. Ansley again coloured slightly. "I think those young Italian aviators we met at the Embassy invited them to fly to Tarquinia for tea. I suppose they'll want to wait and fly back by moonlight."

"Moonlight — moonlight! What a part it still plays. Do you suppose they're as sentimental as we were?"

"I've come to the conclusion that I don't in the least know what they are," said Mrs. Ansley. "And perhaps we didn't know much more about each other."

"No; perhaps we didn't."

Her friend gave her a shy glance. "I never should have supposed you were sentimental, Alida."

"Well, perhaps I wasn't." Mrs. Slade drew her lids together in retrospect; and for a few moments the two ladies, who had been intimate since childhood, reflected how little they knew each other. Each one, of course, had a label ready to attach to the other's name; Mrs. Delphin Slade, for instance, would have told herself, or any one who asked her, that Mrs. Horace Ansley, twenty-five years ago, had been exquisitely lovely — no, you wouldn't believe it, would you? ... though, of course, still charming, distinguished ... Well, as a girl she had been exquisite; far more beautiful than her daughter Barbara, though certainly Babs, according to the new standards at any rate, was more effective — had more *edge*, as they say. Funny where she got it, with those two nullities as parents. Yes; Horace Ansley was-well, just the duplicate of his wife. Museum specimens of old New York. Good-looking, irreproachable, exemplary. Mrs. Slade and Mrs. Ansley had lived opposite each other — actually as well as figuratively — for years. When the drawing — room curtains in No. 20 East 73rd Street were renewed, No. 23, across the way, was always aware of it. And of all the movings, buyings, travels, anniversaries, illnesses — the tame chronicle of an estimable pair. Little of it escaped Mrs. Slade. But she had grown bored with it by the time her husband made his big *coup* in Wall Street, and when they bought in upper Park Avenue had already begun to think: "I'd rather live opposite a speak-easy for a change; at least one might see it raided." The idea of seeing Grace raided was so amusing that (before the move) she launched it at a woman's lunch. It made a hit, and went the

来是一无所知。甚至于她们从哪儿回来——你心里有数吗？我可一点儿不知道！”

安斯利夫人面上又是微微一红。“我想，她们是被那些我们在大使馆碰到的意大利飞行员邀请，坐飞机去塔昆尼亚[®]喝下午茶去了。我猜她们会直等到月亮出来才回来。”

“月光——月光！它依然是这么重要。照你看，她们还会和我们当年一样多愁善感吗？”

“我早就得出结论了：对于她们是什么样的人，我是一无所知，”安斯利夫人说。“很可能，我们彼此间的了解也多不到哪儿去。”

“是的，很可能。”

她的朋友腼腆地扫了她一眼。“我以前绝不会认为你是个多愁善感的人，艾莉达。”

“嗯，可能我原本不是的。”斯莱德夫人抿紧双唇陷入了回忆；好几分钟里，这两位自小就是密友的女士心中想着她们彼此相知多么有限。自然，她们各自都有一个现成的标签可以贴在对方的名下；譬如，德尔芬·斯莱德夫人就会这样对自己或任何询问她的人说，25年前的贺拉斯·安斯利夫人是何等娇柔可人——哈，你不愿相信，是吧？……不过，自然，现在也还迷人，出众……嗯，还是女孩子的时候她可真是楚楚动人，美貌远胜她女儿芭芭拉，虽说芭博丝的姿色，照新的标准说来，无论如何，是更有效一些——就像人们说的，更有味儿。真滑稽，有这么两位沉闷的父母，她从哪儿得到这种品质的？是的，贺拉斯·安斯利是——嗯，不过是他妻子的翻版。旧时代纽约的样本，该放到博物馆里去。相貌堂堂，无可挑剔，堪为世范。斯莱德夫人与安斯利夫人多年来一直住对门——既是事实也不妨看作是个比喻。东73街20号起居室的窗帘要是换了新的，断逃不过马路对面23号的注意。同样，举凡他们的度假[®]、购物、旅行、周年纪念、大病小灾——这对可敬夫妇的刻板的每日生活，都在斯莱德夫人的洞察之中。可当她的丈夫在华尔街大获成功时她对这一套已经厌烦了；当他们在上花园道买下房产时她已经在想：“我宁可和一家地下酒馆住对门；这样至少还可以见到它被查抄的样子。”亲眼看到格蕾丝家被查抄，这个念头真让人开心，她忍不住（在

rounds — she sometimes wondered if it had crossed the street, and reached Mrs. Ansley. She hoped not, but didn't much mind. Those were the days when respectability was at a discount, and it did the irreproachable no harm to laugh at them a little.

A few years later, and not many months apart, both ladies lost their husbands. There was an appropriate exchange of wreaths and condolences, and a brief renewal of intimacy in the half-shadow of their mourning; and now, after another interval, they had run across each other in Rome, at the same hotel, each of them the modest appendage of a salient daughter. The similarity of their lot had again drawn them together, lending itself to mild jokes, and the mutual confession that, if in old days it must have been tiring to "keep up" with daughters, it was now, at times, a little dull not to. No doubt, Mrs. Slade reflected, she felt her unemployment more than poor Grace ever would. It was a big drop from being the wife of Delphin Slade to being his widow. She had always regarded herself (with a certain conjugal pride) as his equal in social graces, as contributing her full share to the making of the exceptional couple they were: but the difference after his death was irremediable. As the wife of the famous corporation lawyer, always with an international case or two on hand, every day brought its exciting and unexpected obligation: the impromptu entertaining of eminent colleagues hurried dashes on legal business to London, Paris or Rome, where the entertaining was so handsomely reciprocated; the amusement of hearing in her wake: "What, that handsome woman with the good clothes and the eyes is Mrs. Slade — *the* Slade's wife? Really? Generally the wives of celebrities are such frumps."

Yes; being *the* Slade's widow was a dullish business after that. In living up to such a husband all her faculties had been engaged; now she had only her daughter to live up to, for the son who seemed to have inherited his father's gifts had died suddenly in boyhood. She had fought through that agony because her husband was there, to be helped and to help; now, after the father's death, the thought of the boy had become unbearable. There was nothing left but to mother her daughter; and dear Jenny was such a perfect daughter that she needed no excessive mothering. "Now with Babs Ansley I don't know that I *should* be so quiet," Mrs. Slade sometimes half-enviously reflected; but Jenny, who was younger than her brilliant friend, was that rare accident, an extremely pretty girl who somehow made youth