

哈佛

蓝星双语名著导读

Today's Most Popular Study Guides

艰难时世 Hard Times

[英] Charles Dickens 原著
Brian Phillips 导读
Juliet Shields
袁鑫 翻译

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天津科技翻译出版公司

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致读者

亲爱的读者,在这个多元文化的世界里,渴望知识、钟情文学、热爱英语的你是否希望站在巨人的肩膀上摘星呢?

“哈佛蓝星双语名著导读”系列是全美最风行的经典名著导读笔记,由哈佛学生们融会名著阅读和文学学习精华,亲笔撰写而成。蓝星系列精选了来自世界各国的杰出经典著作,以经典性和流行性并重的名著为素材,以明晰的风格和地道的语言,解读名著精华和具有时代性的主题和思想。每一分册都包括名著的创作背景、人物分析、主题解析、篇章讲解、重要引文释义、作品档案,并且附有相关的思考题、推荐论题、小测验以及延伸阅读篇目。

如今“蓝星”漂洋过海,轻轻落在了国内英语学习读者的掌中,读者不需走出国门,即可轻松掌握哈佛课堂上的知识。蓝星系列丰富的内容编排,使我们不仅仅停留于名著内容的了解,而且对著作的精华和内涵有更全面、深入的掌握,进而对英语语言和文化做更进一步的了解和研究。蓝星精辟、明晰的编写风格让“半天阅读一本名著”成为现实,使我们在有限的闲暇时间内阅读更多的书,同时迅速增强英语水平,提高文学修养,增加谈资。

天津科技翻译出版公司之前推出的“蓝星”系列50册,在图书市场上收到了很好的反响。本次新推出的品种同样精挑细选了国外近现代经典作品,以期进一步丰富该系列的内容。本次出版仍由天津外国语学院张滨江教授和青年教师负责翻译和审校,并严格按照原作的风格,提供原汁原味的英语环境,让读者自由地阅读、想象和发挥。

蓝星闪耀,伴你前行!

CONTEXT

Charles Dickens was born on February 7, 1812, and spent the first nine years of his life in Kent, a marshy region by the sea in the west of England. Dickens's father, John, was a kind and likable man, but he was incompetent with money and piled up tremendous debts throughout his life. When Dickens was nine, his family moved to London, and later, when he was twelve, his father was arrested and taken to debtors' prison. Dickens's mother moved his seven brothers and sisters into prison with their father but arranged for Charles to live alone outside the prison, working with other children at a nightmarish job in a blacking warehouse, pasting labels on bottles. The three months he spent apart from his family were highly traumatic for Dickens, and his job was miserable—he considered himself too good for it, earning the contempt of the other children.

After his father was released from prison, Dickens returned to school. He tried his hand professionally as a law clerk and then a court reporter before becoming a novelist. His first novel, *The Pickwick Papers*, became a huge popular success when Dickens was only twenty-five; he was a literary celebrity throughout England for the remainder of his life. At about this time, he fell in love with Mary Beadnell, the daughter of a banker. In spite of his ambition and literary success, Dickens was considered her social inferior in terms of wealth and family background, and Mary's father prohibited

来龙·去脉

查尔斯·狄更斯生于1812年2月7日，他生命中最初的九年是在肯特郡度过的，那是一个英国西部靠近大海的多沼泽的地区。狄更斯的父亲约翰是一个善良可亲的人，但是他不善理财，因而终生债台高筑。狄更斯九岁的时候，他们搬到了伦敦，十二岁时，他的父亲被捕，并被投入债务监狱。狄更斯的母亲带着他的兄弟姊妹七个人到监狱里和父亲住在一起，但是安排查尔斯独自留在外面，和其他孩子在一家地狱般的皮鞋油仓库中做工，往瓶子上贴标签。这三个月与家人分离的日子在狄更斯的心灵中留下深深的创伤，而他的工作也让他痛苦——他觉得自己干那活儿很委屈，招致了其他孩子的轻视。

在他的父亲从监狱释放后，狄更斯重新回到学校。在成为小说家之前他尝试过做专业法官助手和诉讼发布人。在他年仅二十五岁时，他的第一部小说《匹克威克外传》便大为畅销，获得成功；从此他成了文学名人，终生享誉英格兰。几乎就在同时，他爱上了玛丽·比得奈尔——一个银行家的女儿。尽管他有雄心壮志和在文学上的成功，但就财富与家庭背景而言，狄更斯被认为在社会地位上低她一等，因此玛丽的父亲不许他们结婚。几年之后，狄更斯和凯萨琳·



the marriage. Several years later, Dickens married Catherine Hogarth. Although they had ten children, Dickens was never completely happy in this marriage, and he and Catherine eventually separated.


Though the young blacking factory employee had considered himself too good for his job, the older novelist retained a deep interest in and concern for the plight of the poor, particularly poor children. The Victorian England in which Dickens lived was fraught with massive economic turmoil, as the Industrial Revolution sent shockwaves through the established order. The disparity between the rich and poor, or the middle and working classes, grew even greater as factory owners exploited their employees in order to increase their own profits. Workers, referred to as “the Hands” in *Hard Times*, were forced to work long hours for low pay in cramped, sooty, loud, and dangerous factories. Because they lacked education and job skills, these workers had few options for improving their terrible living and working conditions. With the empathy he gained through his own experience of poverty, Dickens became involved with a number of organizations that worked to alleviate the horrible living conditions of the London poor. For instance, he was a speaker for the Metropolitan Sanitary Organization, and, with his wealthy friend Angela Burdett Coutts, he organized projects to clear up the slums and build clean, safe, cheap housing for the poor.


Though he was far too great a novelist to become a propagandist, Dickens several times used his art as a lens to focus attention on the plight of the poor and to attempt to awaken the conscience of the reader. *Hard Times* is just such a novel: set amid the industrial smokestacks and factories of Coketown,

霍迦斯结婚。虽然他们有十个孩子,但是狄更斯在这段婚姻中从没有感到真正的快乐,他和凯萨琳最终还是离异了。

虽然作为皮鞋油厂的年轻工人他认为自己是大材小用了,但是作为成熟的小说家他却对穷人,特别是穷孩子的痛苦一直保有很大的兴趣和深深的关切。由于工业革命震撼了固有的秩序,狄更斯所生活的维多利亚时代的英格兰沉浸在巨大的经济动荡之中,工厂主们为了增加自己的利润对工人加大了剥削,因此穷人和富人之间,或者说中产阶级和工人阶级之间的差距拉得更大了。工人们——就是《艰难时世》中的“人手”,为了很少的报酬不得不在狭窄的、煤烟熏黑的、嘈杂而且充满危险的工厂里每天工作很长时间。因为缺乏教育和工作技能,这些工人在改善他们的恶劣生活和工作条件方面几乎没有选择。从自己的贫穷经历中获得的切身体会使狄更斯参与了许多组织的活动,这些组织的活动旨在改善伦敦穷人们的恶劣生活条件。比如,他是都市卫生组织的代言人,和他富有的朋友安吉拉·博尔代特·考茨一起组织了很多项目来清理贫民窟,为穷人建起干净、安全、廉价的住房。

狄更斯是一位伟大的小说家,而不必去做一个宣传员,但他曾数次以他的艺术为镜头聚焦于穷人的苦难,以求唤醒读者的良知。《艰难时世》就是这样的一部小说:该书以英格兰焦煤镇的工业烟囱和工厂群为背景,运用其中的人物和故事揭露这个国家中贫富的

England, the novel uses its characters and stories to expose the massive gulf between the nation's rich and poor and to criticize what Dickens perceived as the unfeeling self-interest of the middle and upper classes. Indeed, *Hard Times* suggests that nineteenth-century England itself is turning into a factory machine: the middle class is concerned only with making a profit in the most efficient and practical way possible. *Hard Times* is not a delicate book: Dickens hammers home his point with vicious, often hilarious satire and sentimental melodrama. It is also not a difficult book: Dickens wanted all his readers to catch his point exactly, and the moral theme of the novel is very explicitly articulated time and again. There are no hidden meanings in *Hard Times*, and the book is an interesting case of a great writer subordinating his art to a moral and social purpose. Even if it is not Dickens's most popular novel, it is still an important expression of the values he thought were fundamental to human existence. 

巨大差距,批判狄更斯所察觉到的存在于中产和上层阶级中的冷酷的利己主义。的确,《艰难时世》这部小说暗示出 19 世纪的英国本身正在变成一部机器:中产阶级关心的只是以可能最有效率和最实际的方式赚取的利润。《艰难时世》不是一本清雅的书:狄更斯用尖刻且时常荒诞的讽刺和感性的戏剧化手法入木三分地表明他的观点。它也不是一本难懂的书:狄更斯想要让他所有的读者能准确地捕捉到他的观点,而小说非常清晰明确地反复说明了它的道德主题。在《艰难时世》中没有隐含意义,一个伟大作家将自己的艺术从属于一种道德和社会目的,这很有意思。即使它不是狄更斯最畅销的小说,也仍然是对他所认为的关于人类存在基本价值的重要阐释。

PLOT OVERVIEW

Thomas Gradgrind, a wealthy, retired merchant in the industrial city of Coketown, England, devotes his life to a philosophy of rationalism, self-interest, and fact. He raises his oldest children, Louisa and Tom, according to this philosophy and never allows them to engage in fanciful or imaginative pursuits. He founds a school and charitably takes in one of the students, the kindly and imaginative Sissy Jupe, after the disappearance of her father, a circus entertainer.

As the Gradgrind children grow older, Tom becomes a dissipated, self-interested hedonist, and Louisa struggles with deep inner confusion, feeling as though she is missing something important in her life. Eventually Louisa marries Gradgrind's friend Josiah Bounderby, a wealthy factory owner and banker more than twice her age. Bounderby continually trumpets his role as a self-made man who was abandoned in the gutter by his mother as an infant. Tom is apprenticed at the Bounderby bank, and Sissy remains at the Gradgrind home to care for the younger children.

In the meantime, an impoverished "Hand"—Dickens's term for the lowest laborers in Coketown's factories—named Stephen Blackpool struggles with his love for Rachael, another poor factory worker. He is unable to marry her because he is already married to a horrible, drunken woman who disappears for months and even years at a time. Stephen visits Bounderby to ask about a divorce but learns that only the wealthy can ob-