



时尚英语

目 录

The buzzwords for 2009·····001	
2009 年的流行词	
One small step back to where we started·····004	
一小步,重返初始之地	
A heated debate·····010	
一场升温的讨论	
Online Maps:Everyman Offers New Directions·····013	
网上地图:谁都可以指引新方向	
The Plan That Saved The Planet·····017	
拯救了地球的计划	
The Battle for Mother Teresa's Remains·····020	
特蕾莎修女遗体之争	
The cars of N. Y. and L. A.·····023	
纽约和洛杉矶车事大比拼	
Who Knew Foreign Affairs Required So Much Math?·····026	
谁知道外交还需要这么多数学知识?	
Prize fools·····029	
愚人奖	
Magical History Tour·····032	
奇幻的怀旧之旅	
首届《参考消息》读者译文大赛·····035	
Saying it with silence·····042	
以静默诉说	

目 录

The lost art of reading·····045	失去的阅读艺术
How to Manage Your Online Life When You're Dead·····048	如何管理身后的在线生活
Who Won the Recession?·····051	谁是衰退的赢家?
Giving Churchill a mohican is no alternative·····054	给丘吉尔留个莫希干头并非替代性选择
Fathers and Money·····057	父辈和钱
Help yourself·····060	自助
To Google or not to Google·····063	谷歌还是不谷歌
How Michael Jackson Became a Pop God·····067	杰克逊:流行音乐天王之路
The CEO As Storyteller In Chief·····070	首席执行官就是故事大王
The Future of Reading in a Digital World·····073	数字时代阅读的未来
When The Shoe Fits·····076	适履难求
God is merciful, but only if you're a man·····079	造物主是仁慈的,但前提是你得是男人
Laughing matters——A gas about gas in Russia and Ukraine·····082	笑料——俄乌天然气之大话

目 录

10 reasons why the internet is great for older people·····085	
互联网对老年人至关重要的 10 个理由	
Obama and Twitter; White House Social–Networking·····088	
奥巴马与 Twitter 网站; 白宫加入社交网络	
What we will miss about the prophets of doom·····091	
衰退预言家让我们怀念的地方	
The Volunteer Organization That Finds You A Job·····094	
帮人找工作的志愿者组织	
Want to Save Money? Carry Around \$100 Bills·····097	
想省钱? 身揣百元大钞	
Name shame causes Cock shrinkage but Wang is on the rise·····099	
因姓蒙羞	
Memo from the C. E. O.·····101	
CEO 备忘录	
The Commercial Republic·····104	
商业共和国	
The Inflection Is Near?·····107	
拐点临近?	
Stimulate Me!·····110	
刺激我!	
I Dream of Denver·····113	
我梦想住在丹佛	
E–Waste Not·····116	
杜绝电子垃圾	
Obama’s inaugural speech·····119	
奥巴马就职演说	

目 录

Insulting or just lost in translation?..... 127	是侮辱还是文化差异?
Great Headlines From 2008..... 130	2008 年精彩标题
Word of the Year..... 133	年度词汇
The CEO's Guide To Begging In Washington..... 136	CEO 的华盛顿行乞指南
The Return of the Calling card..... 139	名片的回归
Lesson for London..... 141	给伦敦的借鉴
Looking Squarely at Death, and Finding Clarity..... 144	直面死亡,看透生命
Driven Mad by Google..... 147	被谷歌逼疯
The naked truth: Keeping up appearances..... 150	裸的真相:妆点门面
Unplugged..... 152	断开
Microsoft: The meaning of Bill Gates..... 155	微软:比尔·盖茨的意义
War of Words..... 158	词语之战
Hey U.S., welcome to the Third World!..... 161	亲爱的美国,欢迎来到第三世界!

目 录

Wedding March·····164	
婚礼征途	
Market Warms to electronic books·····167	
电子书市场热起来	
The secret to success:Fail a Little·····170	
成功秘诀:需要一点儿失败	
Survival tips for a depression·····173	
萧条时期的生存忠告	
Barack Obama's Victory Speech·····176	
奥巴马的获胜演说	
All Fall Down·····182	
全部倒下	
Getting Paid for Your A's·····185	
靠“优”挣钱	
Desperate Housewares·····188	
绝望的零售商	
Drop your car,get on the bus—warm your heart·····191	
巴士暖人心	
Stress Management·····194	
压力控制	
Entering Sector D·····197	
进入 D 区	
The Seven Ages of Business·····200	
职场七部曲	
Kitchen Chemistry·····203	
厨房化学	

目 录

A Boy's Life, Guided by the Voice of Cosmic Wonder.....	206
唤我一生	
Chinese ambassador Fu Ying: Western media has “demonised” China	209
火炬伦敦传递后的思考	
Writers Vs. Editors: A Battle for the Ages.....	214
撰稿人对编辑:宿敌之战	
“Two Words: Save Lives”.....	217
两个字:救人	
China comes to a standstill in silent tribute to earthquake victims.....	219
中国静默,向遇难者致哀	
Who's your mommy?.....	221
谁是你妈妈?	
Start early, and time is on your side.....	224
及早开始,赢得时间	
Going, Going.....	227
换了,换了.....	
Dropped Call: Why Japan lost the mobile-phone wars.....	229
掉线:日本为什么输掉了手机大战	
Hillary Clinton's exit speech.....	232
希拉里·克林顿的退选演说	
How to Live With Just 100 Things.....	238
如何只靠 100 件物品生活	
Fish Tale.....	241
鱼儿的故事	
Musical Mismatch.....	243
音乐配错了	



The buzzwords for 2009

Grant Barrett

aporkalypse—Undue worry in response to swine flu. Includes unnecessary acts like removing nonessential kisses from Mexican telenovelas and the mass slaughter of pigs in Egypt.

athey—An atheist. Usually derogatory.

birther—A person who believes that Barack Obama was not born in the United States and therefore can't be president.

bonus tax—A proposed levy on bonuses given to employees of companies that received federal bailout money.

car tone—Music or ambient noise proposed for use by electric cars, whose quietness otherwise makes them go unnoticed by pedestrians.

Cash for Clunkers—A government program in which older automobiles are exchanged for pollution credits or rebates on newer and more fuel-efficient models.

Chimerica—The intertwined economies of China and the United States, which together dominate the world economy. Popularized by Niall Ferguson in his book "The Ascent of Money".

2009 年的流行词

格兰特·巴雷特

甲流末日 对甲流的过分担心。包括像墨西哥肥皂剧中删掉可有可无的吻戏以及埃及大规模屠宰猪这样的不必要之举。

阿西 无神论者,通常带有贬义。

出生论者 认为贝拉克·奥巴马并非生于美国因而不能成为总统的人。

奖金税 针对接受联邦政府救助金的公司,拟订向其发放给员工的奖金征收的税款。最早流行于 1990 年,在 2009 年再度出现。

汽车声调 电动汽车拟订使用的音乐或车外声响,否则这种悄无声息的汽车让行人很难察觉。

旧车换现金 政府推出的一项计划,用旧车换取污染排放限额,或折价购买更省油的新款汽车。

中美国 共同主导着世界经济的中国和美国的经济结合体。因尼尔·弗格森的《货币崛起》一书而流行。



conflict minerals—Gold, tin, tungsten and tantalum, widely used in electronic devices and commonly mined, in politically unstable countries or regions.

crash blossom—A headline that can be misconstrued.

death panel—A supposed committee of doctors and / or bureaucrats who would decide which patients receive treatment, ostensibly leaving the rest to die. Also deather, someone who believes erroneously that the government would have death panels under health care reform.

002

Dracula sneeze—Covering the mouth with the crook of the elbow when sneezing, like Dracula hiding his face with a cape.

drive like a Cullen—To drive like a bat out of hell, like a member of the Cullen family in the “Twilight” vampire books by Stephenie Meyer.

Government Motors—A nickname for General Motors, which is now majority owned by the federal government.

El Stiffo—Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger of California said he wasn't El Stiffo, meaning a colorless character, after he was criticized for brandishing a large knife in a video promoting the sale of state property to raise money.

gaymarry, gay - marry—To marry someone of the same sex. Also used hyperbolically to mean to form an unconventional relationship, as in, “I love my new cellphone so much I want to gay-marry it.”

冲突矿物 金、锡、钨和钽, 广泛用于电子器件, 而且通常采掘自政治动荡的国家或地区。

坠机火了 可能造成误解的标题。

死亡小组 据称由医生和(或)官员组成的委员会, 他们将决定哪些病人接受治疗, 貌似其他病人就要等死。“死亡论者”还指的是错误地认为政府会根据医疗改革计划成立死亡小组的人。

德古拉喷嚏法 打喷嚏时用胳膊肘掩住嘴巴, 就像吸血鬼德古拉用斗篷遮脸。

像卡伦那样开车 横冲直撞地飙车, 就像斯蒂芬妮·迈耶笔下吸血鬼系列书籍《暮光之城》中卡伦家族的一名成员。

政府汽车 通用汽车公司的绰号, 目前该公司大部分股权掌握在联邦政府手中。

埃尔·斯蒂福 加利福尼亚州州长阿诺德·施瓦辛格因在一段推销州政府资产以筹集资金的视频中挥舞一把长刀而受到批评, 之后他说自己不是埃尔·斯蒂福(加州前任州长——译注), 意指平淡乏味之人。

同志结婚 和同性的人结婚。也用来夸张地指建立一种不同寻常的亲密关系, 比如“我太喜欢我的新手机了, 我想和它同志结婚”。



Great Recession—A reference to the current economic downturn. Used at least a few times for every recession since 1980, but never with such vigor as now.

green shoots—Signs of an economic recovery or of a company's financial turnaround.

heinie—A pronunciation of H1N1, the swine flu virus.

I'mma let you finish—Part of Kanye West's interruption of Taylor Swift's acceptance speech at the MTV Video Music Awards.

jeggings—Jean leggings.

mancession, hecession—A recession that affects men more than women.

meep—An exclamation used disruptively or nonsensically by young people.

mini-Madoff—A person who perpetrates a Ponzi scheme smaller than Bernie Madoff's.

netbook—An inexpensive portable computer, usually smaller than a laptop but larger than a smartphone, intended mainly for use with the Internet.

Octomom—Nadya Suleman, who gave birth to octuplets in January.

orphan books—Volumes still in copyright but out of print and unavailable for sale, and whose copyright holders cannot be found.

大衰退 指当前的经济衰退。至少数度用于 1980 年以来的历次衰退,但从未像现在这样火爆。

绿芽 经济复苏或公司财务状况好转的迹象。

海泥 甲流病毒 H1N1 的发音。

等会儿我会让你说完的 在 MTV 音乐电视颁奖典礼上,卡尼·韦斯特(说唱歌手——译注)打断泰勒·斯威夫特(最佳女歌手奖获得者——译注)的获奖感言时说的其中一句。

牛仔打底裤 牛仔裤与打底裤的结合。

男人衰退 对男性影响更甚于对女性影响的衰退。

Meep 年轻人使用的存心捣乱或根本没什么意义的感叹词。

迷你麦道夫 制造比伯尼·麦道夫的庞氏骗局规模要小的此类骗局的人。

网本 一种价格便宜的便携式电脑,通常比笔记本电脑小,比智能手机大,主要用于上网。

八胞胎妈妈 今年 1 月产下八胞胎的纳迪娅·苏莱曼。

孤儿书 仍在版权有效期内但已经绝版、无法买到且找不到版权持有人的书籍。

(李凤芹译自美国《纽约时报》网站 12 月 19 日文章)



One small step back to where we started

The Appollo missions were supposed to reveal the truth about the Moon. In fact, they taught us about the Earth—and ourselves.

Mark Mason

In July 1969, soon after their return from the moon, Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin were shown footage of the world's reaction to the lunar landing. They saw the US newscaster Walter Cronkite wiping away his tears; people gathered around televisions from China to Brazil; pavements outside TV shops crammed as people watched in awe. Aldrin turned to Armstrong. "Neil," he said, "we missed the whole thing".

That comment (reminiscent of George Harrison's complaint that the Beatles felt left out because "We were the only people who never got to see the Beatles") reveals the surprising truth about the Apollo missions: they weren't about the Moon. They were about the Earth.

The clues had been there from the start, when the crew of Apollo 8 became the first humans to leave their home planet's orbit. Orbiting the Moon on Christmas Eve 1968, fulfilling dreams as old as mankind itself, their

一小步,重返初始之地

阿波罗探月计划原本是为了揭示月球的奥秘,但其实却让我们重新认识了地球,以及我们人类自身。

马克·梅森

1969年7月,阿波罗11号飞船宇航员尼尔·阿姆斯特朗和巴兹·奥尔德林登月归来后没几天便从一些录像镜头感受到全世界对这次人类首次登月的反响:美国电视新闻主播克朗凯特激动得挥洒热泪;从中国到巴西,人们都簇拥在电视机前;电视销售店前的人行道上也挤满了惊叹不已的观众。看到这些画面,奥尔德林转身对阿姆斯特朗说道:“尼尔,这些我们全都没赶上。”

奥尔德林此言道出了阿波罗探月计划鲜为人知之处:这些探月飞行关注的其实并不是月球,而是地球。他的这番话也不禁让人想起当年披头士乐队吉他手哈利森的怨言,他说自己的乐队有一种局外人的感觉,因为“唯有我们自己从未曾看过披头士乐队的演出。”

其实这种感受从探月计划伊始,也就是人类乘坐阿波罗8号飞船首次离开近地轨道时,就略见端倪了。1968年圣诞节,阿波罗8号进入月球轨道飞行,实现了人类亘古通今的梦想。然



real wonder was not at the dead grey planet beneath them, but at the vibrant blue globe in the distance. The first three men to see the Moon up close soon realised—with a much deeper sense of reverence—that they were the first three men to see the Earth from a distance. Witnessing an earthrise made them feel humble. They read the opening chapters of Genesis to a worldwide audience of millions, signing off with, “Merry Christmas, and God bless all of you, all of you on the good Earth.”

Over the next four years, Apollo taught us what it means to be human: in a word, restless. Curiosity is never satisfied, it merely finds new targets. Quite how quickly the shift can occur was learnt by Pete Conrad, the third man to walk on the Moon (and the first to fall over on it). Once Armstrong and Aldrin had claimed the prize, no one was interested in Apollo 12. Conrad later appeared in an American Express advert of famous Americans nobody recognised. (Others included Mel Blanc, the voice of Bugs Bunny.) Yet in many ways Conrad's was the most interesting Apollo mission of all. His fellow moonwalker, Al Bean, never the most naturally gifted astronaut, compensated with sheer hard work. Finally standing on the lunar surface, he threw his silver NASA badge into the distance, knowing that the moonwalk had earned him a gold

而，当时真正让宇航员们惊叹不已的并不是眼皮下土灰色的月球，而是远处那蓝色夺目的地球。作为人类最先近距离俯瞰月球的这三名字航员很快意识到，他们更是最先从太空远眺地球的人，而他们此时的崇敬之情比近看月球时要强烈得多。亲眼目睹地球从月平线上冉冉升起让他们深感自己的渺小。他们通过直播对着全世界的亿万观众诵读着《圣经》创世纪的开篇章节，最后祝福道：“圣诞快乐，上帝保佑你们，保佑地球上的每一个人。”

随后的四年，阿波罗探月让我们认识到人类的秉性，那就是四个字：永不停歇。人类的好奇心永不知足，它只会不断寻找新的目标。作为人类第三位登月者（也是第一位在月球上摔倒的），康拉德深知人的这种目标转换速度之频。自阿姆斯特朗和奥尔德林摘取了首次登月者殊荣之后，就没有人关注阿波罗 12 号了。康拉德后来还在美国运通金融公司的一则广告里出现过，上面露面的都是些被遗忘了的美国名人，当中还包括为动画片中兔八哥配音的梅尔·布兰克。然而，从诸多角度看，康拉德参与的这次探月飞行才是整个阿波罗探月计划中最有意思的。比如，与康拉德一起登月的比恩在宇航员当中绝非最具天赋，但却能刻苦努力，以勤补拙。当比恩终于登上了月球表面时就把身上佩戴的美国宇航局银质徽章扔得远远的，因为他知道在月球上行走就意味他已经赢得一枚



one. But as they flew back to Earth, he turned to Conrad and admitted disappointment in the Moon itself: "It's kind of like the song Is That All There Is?" Another timeless truth: achievements themselves aren't, what count, it's the fact that you worked for them.

When Bean returned to Earth he would sit in shopping malls, simply to marvel at the variety of human life. And he has never again complained about the weather: "I'm just glad there is weather." As so often, a journey into the unknown had revealed more about the traveler's home than about the destination.

Virtually every Apollo astronaut came back with a deep sense of the Earth's fragility. Ed Mitchell, Moon-walker No. 6: "When we see ourselves in this bigger perspective—call it the ET point of view, the God point of view—a shift takes place in your perception and you start to think quite differently." Apollo 16's Charlie Duke describes Earth as "hanging in space like a jewel". "People are always asking what we discovered when we went to the Moon," says Dick Gordon, of Apollo 12. "What we discovered was the Earth."

The discovery gave a big boost to the nascent Green movement. Sir Jonathon Porritt cites the "deep and lasting effect" that Apollo had on "many environmentalists—including me". Friends of the Earth was founded in the same year that man first walked on the

金质勋章了。可是当他们飞回地球时,比恩还是向康拉德坦言他心中对月球的失望:“我的感觉有点像歌曲《难道仅此而已?》里所表达的感觉。”这里我们又得出一条亘古不变的真理,那就是:成就本身并不重要,重要的是你为之付出过努力。

比恩重返地球之后,常闲坐在购物广场,饶有兴致地欣赏着人类精彩纷呈的生活。比恩再也没有像以前那样抱怨过天气,他说:“至少我们地球上天气有变化,我就很开心啦。”可见,我们每每对未知世界的探索,揭示更多的并不是目的地,而是探索者始发之乡。

几乎每一位阿波罗探月宇航员回来后都深深地感受到地球的纤美。第六位登月宇航员米切尔说:“当我们以这种更为宏大的角度审视自己时——就把它叫做外星人视角或造物主视角吧——我们的感知就不一样了,我们也开始以不同的方式去思考。”阿波罗16号的宇航员杜克心目中的地球便是“太空中悬挂着的一枚宝石”。阿波罗12号的宇航员戈登也说:“人们总是问我们登月发现什么了,其实我们所发现的就是地球。”

这一对地球的重新认识极大地推动了当时刚刚兴起的绿色环保运动。环境专家乔纳森·波利特爵士指出阿波罗登月壮举对包括他自己在内的“众多环保人士”产生了“深远的影响”。就在人类首次登上月球的同一年,环保组织“地球之友”成立。一年之



Moon. The inaugural Earth Day happened a year later. Everyone seemed to agree with Michael Collins's thought as he splashed back down into the Pacific with Armstrong and Aldrin: "Nice ocean you got here, planet Earth."

Politically, too, there was a shift. The Earth from space looks just like a map—except without the national borders. Collins remembers people of every nation saying to him, "'We did it'—it was a wonderful thing." Ed Mitchell, on his way back from the Moon, realised that "the molecules of my body and of the spacecraft and of my partners were manufactured in some ancient generation of stars—and that was an overwhelming sense of oneness and connectedness". Inspired by the landings, René Dubos coined the phrase "Think globally, act locally". T minus zero for Apollo was T plus one for globalisation.

Yet despite the astronauts' protestations that the Moon itself was a let-down, which of us, given the chance, wouldn't want to go there? The Chinese are planning missions of their own, and the commercial investment being ploughed into space tourism proves just how much we yearn for new experiences. So much so that we resent anyone who dampens our excitement.

Pete Conrad used to say he was prouder of his work on the Skylab missions than his walk on the Moon. "Some

后,第一个“世界地球日”诞生。而就在同载网姆斯特朗和奥尔德林的阿波罗11号太空舱溅落到太平洋时,宇航员科林斯感慨道:“地球啊!你的海洋那么的美!”大家似乎都认同这一感言。

这一对地球的重新认识也带来了政治意识上的转变。从太空看地球俨然就是一幅地图,一幅未标国界的地图。科林斯至今还记得每个国家的人都对他说:“‘我们成功了’,那可是个壮举。”而阿波罗14号的宇航员米切尔在他登月返程时感悟到“我和我探月队友们的身躯以及这飞船的每一部分,早就孕育于亘古悠远的星辰之中——时空一体,天地合一,万物关联,就是这种极其强烈的感觉。”科学家杜博斯也受登月壮举的启发,首次提出了“放眼全球,立足本地”这一口号。可以说,阿波罗飞船升空出征的那一刻,便拉启了人类全球意识的序幕。

尽管探月宇航员们说月球看了后不免让人失望,可但凡我们有机会的话,谁又不想去看看月球呢?中国就在筹备着自己的探月计划。人们也对太空旅游正大量注入商业投资。这说明我们人类是多么渴望新体验。这种渴望之心非常强烈,谁若是扫我们的兴,我们会对他深恶之痛绝。

宇航员康拉德常常说,与他登月之行相比,更让他自豪的是他在太空实验室的工作。他解释道:“有人听了



people even get mad,” he said. “‘What do you mean, the Moon isn’t the biggest thing in your life?’ I say: ‘Well, it isn’t.’ They think, ‘Well, it should be.’ I say: ‘Why? I’m the guy that did this.’” Maybe life is one long “wet paint” sign: you don’t believe it until you reach out and touch.

Certainly, Dave Scott, of Apollo 15, thought so. Standing on the Moon, he voiced his thoughts to Houston: “I realise there’s a fundamental truth to our nature: man must explore.”

Home is never far from our thoughts, though. How many times have you looked forward for months to a holiday, only to find that on day three you’re already dreaming of your own bed? But when you return, the process starts all over again. This idea of life as a perpetual cycle seems particularly comforting in a recession. Even though we’ve overreached (and overborrowed), and been reminded of some home truths, we know that one day we’ll reach out once more.

When Bean retired from Nasa he became an artist. His paintings of the lunar landscape, which fetch tens of thousands of dollars, bear the lessons of his time as an astronaut. Just as he worked hard to reach the Moon, now he works hard to perfect his painting. “That’s what I tell myself when the colours don’t come out right or it hasn’t worked like I thought it would: ‘That’s

甚至会很生气的:‘你什么意思,难道登月不是你一生最重要的事吗?’我说:‘呃,不是最重要的。’他们会觉得,‘呃,应该是最重要的呀。’我就告诉他们说:‘为什么呢?我经历过的当然只有我知道。’生活也许就像是一道写着“油漆未干”的长条提示牌——你非要走近亲手去摸一摸,方才相信是真是假。

阿波罗 15 号的宇航员斯科特无疑就是这么想的。他站在月球上时是这样向休斯敦宇航中心道出心声的:“我发现我们天性中有一点是千真万确的:人类就是要探索。”

不过,尽管如此,我们总还是惦记着自己的家园。曾几何时,你数月翘盼假期的到来,结果却发现刚外出度假第三天,你就梦回自己眷恋的家了?而当你真的回到家中,却又渴望着什么时候再出去度假。生活就是这样周而复始,永不停歇,这种人生态度在经历经济萧条时似乎特别能慰藉人心。尽管我们已经不自量力、超额举债,而且也有人棒喝警示过我们,可我们心里清楚终有一天我们还会再去那么做的。

比恩从美国宇航局退休之后,便致力于绘画创作。他的月球风景画,给他带来数十万美元的收益,当中也凝聚了他当年作为宇航员的经验。昔日为了登月,他以勤补拙;而如今他依然勤勉创作,不断提高画技。比恩说:“每当画的色调搭配不佳,或者作品未能呈现预期效果时,我就会告诉自己:‘这就是为什么人们称其为艺



why they call it art'."

Another of Bean's thoughts sums up the very essence of the Apollo missions, indeed of all human travel: that it isn't about where you're going, it's about who you are. "Everybody came back just more like I knew them. I think maybe success doesn't change you as much as reveal you."

Which is why the greatest reason to celebrate this 40th anniversary isn't scientific or environmental or political; it's personal. The next time you go down a footpath just to see where it leads, or when the only thing that will stop your baby crying is taking it for a drive, remember the 12 men who stood on the Moon and looked at Earth. As T. S. Eliot put it:

We shall not cease from exploration
And the end of all our exploring
Will be to arrive where we started
And know the place for the first time.

术'。"

比恩还认为,探索的关键不在于去往何处,而在于认识自我。这一想法道出了阿波罗探月计划乃至人类一切探索活动的实质。比恩说:“每位探月宇航员回来后都更像我之前认识的样子。所以我觉得也许成功未必真的改变了你什么,而是更多地展示出了你自己。

这便解释了我们今天庆祝人类登月四十周年的最根本原因其实既不为科学、环境或政治,而是因我们自己。下次当你漫步小道探寻其尽头时,当你为让宝宝不哭非得开上车带着她溜达时,你就想一想那曾登月眺望地球的十二位宇航员吧。正如 T·S·艾略特诗中所言:

我们将不停止探索
而我们一切探索的终点
将是到达我们出发的地方
并且是生平第一遭知道这地方。
(译者为广东外语外贸大学胡正茂)



A heated debate

“What is truth?” That was Pontius Pilate’s answer to Jesus’s assertion that “Everyone that is of the truth heareth my voice.” It sounds suspiciously like the modern argument over climate change.

A majority of the world’s climate scientists have convinced themselves, and also a lot of laymen, some of whom have political power, that the Earth’s climate is changing; that the change, from humanity’s point of view, is for the worse; and that the cause is human activity, in the form of excessive emissions of greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide. A minority, though, are sceptical. Some think that recent, well-grounded data suggesting the Earth’s average temperature is rising are explained by natural variations in solar radiation, and that this trend may be coming to an end. Others argue that longer-term evidence that modern temperatures are higher than they have been for hundreds or thousands of years is actually too flaky to be meaningful.

Such disagreements are commonplace in science. They are eventually settled by the collection of more data and the invention of more refined (or entirely new) theories. Arguments may persist for decades; academics may—and often do—sling insults at each other; but it does not matter a great deal

一场升温的讨论

“真理是什么呢?”当耶稣说“凡属真理的人就听我的话”时,本丢·彼拉多(罗马帝国派驻犹太的总督。据《圣经·新约》,耶稣即由彼拉多核准处死,钉在十字架上——译注)这样回答。这听起来像极了当下围绕气候变化展开的争论。

世界上大多数气候科学家让自己以及许多外行——其中有些人掌握着政治权力——相信,地球上的气候正在发生改变;而从人类的角度讲,这种改变是朝着坏的方向发展;导致这一局面的原因是人类活动,表现为过量排放像二氧化碳这样的温室气体。不过一小部分人对此持怀疑态度。有人认为,最近那些表明地球平均温度正在上升的有充分依据的数据可以用太阳辐射的正常变化来解释,而且这一趋势可能行将结束。另外一些人指出,证明当前气温为几百年或者几千年来最高的长期证据其实太过薄弱,没什么意义。

这样的分歧在科学界司空见惯。最终会通过收集更多数据和创造更精辟的(或者全新的)理论得到化解。争论可能会持续数十年;学者可能——而且往往会——恶语相向;但这并无大碍,因为通常都没什么大不了的。