

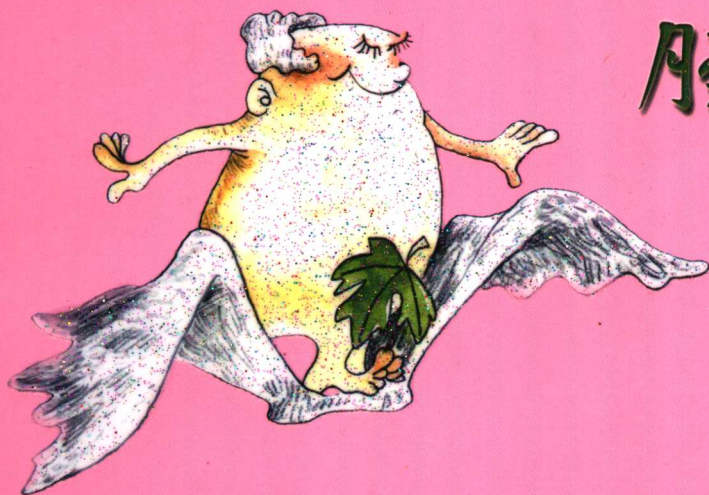
乘着微笑的翅膀

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诺著

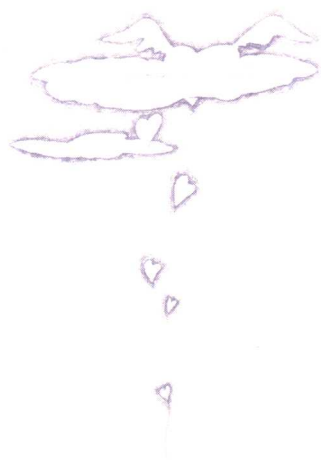
刘安诺快乐人生宝典



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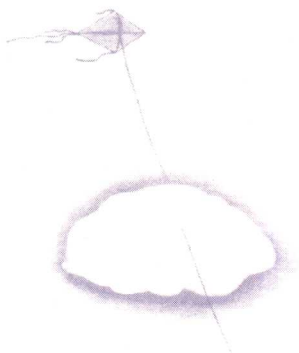
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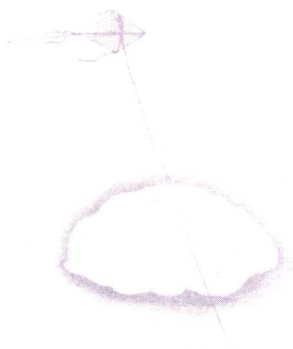
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一种题材，各自表述

(自序)

“见人说人话，见鬼说鬼话”的行径，素为国人所不齿。可是我们平心静气想，见人说人话固然没问题，若见鬼也说人话，对方听不懂，岂非有违沟通的原意？

我为这句俗语平反，当然不无私心——我的写作之路较迂回曲折，笔耕生涯中，有多年时而以母语，时而以英语写作，两种文字，左右开弓，颇有“见人说人话，见鬼说鬼话”的嫌疑。

（必须郑重声明的是，此处所谓“见鬼说鬼话”纯系沿用成语，决无隐喻“洋鬼子”的不敬或歧视之意。）

成长于国内，寄居于海外，大半生游走于两种截然不同的语言文化之间。旅居美国中西部小城时，曾以自由写作者的身份，由报导文学入门，为小城的晚报及爱

州的大报提供新闻特写及人物专访。写了一阵，偶有所感，又为社论版撰写客串专栏。期间亦不时写一些散文及短篇小说，发表于台湾的报纸副刊。

迁居东南部小城后，原欲集中心力于中文写作，不料未几应《美华论坛》英文季刊之邀，辟英文专栏，又开始忽中忽西，左右开弓起来。

近数十年的美国，散文早已式微，发表园地逐渐消失，仅见于小众的文学杂志。大众媒体的报纸杂志中，内容笔触接近散文者，成了异数，而未设专题的专栏更是难得一见。《美华论坛》，顾名思义，属探讨严肃论题之刊物。当时的主编李圣炎先生，邀请我撰写专栏的信中，曾提出他的构想：希望我担当“《美华论坛》的包可华”重任，并特别附《华盛顿邮报》“包可华专栏”剪报一纸。

我对包可华 (Art Buchwald) 的作品当然不陌生。包先生的寓政论于幽默专栏，数十年脍炙人口，几乎已达家喻户晓的地步。可惜我对政论缺乏兴趣，幽默风格与包先生亦不尽相同，何况我深信，写作首须“发诸于中”，方能“形诸于外”。乃将专栏定名“啼笑皆非”，写我的散文。虽有负李先生责成我当“《美华论坛》的包可华”的美意，竟亦颇受欢迎。



时常有人因得知我以英文写作，表示有兴趣读我的专栏。这些人士中，有的不懂中文，亦有因读了我的中文作品，开始对我的英文作品发生好奇，或有意介绍给美国生长的子女。我受宠若惊之余，亦深感不便：首先，选哪几篇合适？都是自己的作品，怎能厚此薄彼？出门影印、投寄，又耗时费力。将英文专栏结集成书的念头，遂产生于空气弥漫影印机化学品刺鼻气味的影印店中。

可惜知易行难。动念与行动间毕竟有相当大的距离，我似乎总是一篇未完又赶着写下一篇，出书的计划便一而再地延缓下来。

迁居加州后，生活形态与之前迥异，写作时间忽然大量缩水，写作内容势必有所选择，不得不忍痛牺牲，停了专栏。既不继续生产，出个集子似乎正得其时，不料仍因循了不少日子，方下决心采取行动，挑选十五篇，会合其中文版本，一并付梓。

由于我的中文及英文作品发表于不同的刊物，两者的读者群极少重复，因此不少读者得知，这些篇英文专栏，均拥有题材相同的中文版本，而且这些中文篇，并非译稿，诞生的过程更不一定是英文在先，中文殿后。而是相同题材，重起炉灶，以不同文字再写一遍。我称

之为一题二写，套句现代流行语说，是“一种‘题材’，各自表述”。

为何一题二写，各自表述？翻译岂不更直截了当？

去岁荣获诺贝尔文学奖的高行健先生，亦曾面对相同问题。高先生说：

“语言中有可译的，有不可译的，翻译中必定会丧失一些和原来语言相关的美感、意义等……，当一个人用双语创作时，就会明白每一种语言有其感知和表述方式……我的中文作品，如果要自己翻译成法语版，我觉得非常困难，还不如交给别人翻译。但是如果我用法文写剧本，完成后，就另外再写个中文版，但这就不是翻译了。”

不是我高攀，高先生与我，在这方面的观点竟不谋而合。

有人喻翻译为“戴着镣铐跳舞”，如何在沉重且束手缚脚的镣铐下，跳得优雅自然，可想而知，是既吃力又不易讨好的苦差使。所谓镣铐也者，当然是原文。原文既然是我的，正如镣铐的钥匙在自己手中，去除之，而随心所欲，自由自在“跳舞”的诱惑，便难以抗拒了。

更重要的是，正如高先生所言，不同语文的读者文

化背景及认知各异。相同题材，以另种文字，不同思路，针对其特具的文化背景及认知而写，不受原文限制，较翻译富弹性。务求仅通其中一种文字者，读来毫无文化隔阂，而趣味盎然；兼通中英文者，则因其内容及表达方式的不同，而有双重收获的喜悦。

双语文的版本，因其不尽相同，中文篇因不受专栏的篇幅限制，便于发挥，英文篇则不得不趋向短小。双语读者亦得以比较其异同（往往连文题都大相径庭），推敲其内容的取舍得失。

最后，藉此文学书市持续低迷之秋，九歌出版公司主持人蔡文甫先生本其国际宏观，毅然决定推出此书，谨在此向蔡先生致诚挚敬意及谢忱。

刘安诺

2001年10月于圣地牙哥



Preface

Over the years, upon learning that I actually began my writing career freelancing in English, my second language, writing feature stories and guest columns for local newspapers, and that later I also wrote a magazine column in English, a number of people have expressed interest in perusing some of my columns. While flattered by these requests, I soon found the logistics daunting. How do you choose among your own works? Then there was the time and effort spent in getting the pieces copied and sent off. It was at a copy center saturated with the acrid smell of toner, that I began thinking wistfully about publishing a collection of these columns. But there was always another piece I had to write.

The vast majority of my prosés in English were written for my column Between Tears and Laughter in the English language quarterly Chinese American Forum (CAF). When a move to California and the resultant change of daily schedule precluded my continuing the column, it seemed a good time to gather all the erstwhile pieces into a single volume. Still, several years went by before I grew sufficiently determined to put aside some time for the job.

In doing so, I have decided to include their Chinese counterparts. It may surprise some of my readers that each of these pieces has a Chinese version. I would like to make the claim that I recycle my topics for environmental reasons, but the truth is that it isn't always easy to come up with a subject that can motivate me to suffer the agony of the writing process. Once this painful price is paid, the temptation to make the most of it by using the topic again can be overpowering.

Sometimes I would write an English piece from one of my Chinese essays, sometimes the other way around. The English version and its Chinese "twin" were almost never produced simultaneously or even consecutively.

Calling these bilingual efforts twins, of course, is rather loose usage, and not simply for reasons of the time lag. Since readers of different languages and cultures possess different perceptions, knowledge, and experiences, I prefer

not to translate my own work, but to write directly for each set of readers, with suitable nuances and background material.

Moreover, translation is a notoriously difficult and restrictive undertaking, and some humorous passages, especially those involving puns, tend to lose their punch if not their meaning in making the transition from one language to the other. Not being one to gravitate toward the direction of the most resistance, I have generally taken a rather liberal approach. If I can use the same material in a different language, fine; if not, I'll do something else.

For those of you who are bilingual and so inclined, it may be interesting to compare the two versions as much for what is said and how it is said as for what is omitted or added. Sometimes even the titles are different. The Chinese version, not being bound by the confines of a column, is usually longer, fuller, while the English version, because of the limitations of space, tend to be lean and mean, according to one congnoscente.

Since I began writing in Chinese in earnest in the mid 1980's, I have published six books with two more in the pipeline. The books encompass nearly 250 pieces, mainly literary essays in a humorous vein, more than a handful short stories, and one novella. The 14 essays in English collected in this book represent a mere six percent of my total

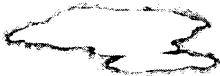
output during this time, indicating less my lack of interest than a dearth of suitable markets for literary essays in English and a lack of energy on my part to pursue those markets.

It may be interesting to note here that, when the former CAF President and Managing Editor Dr. S. Yen Lee first invited me to write a column for his publication, he went so far as to enclose in his letter a clipping of Art Buchwald's syndicated column from the Washington Post, to underscore his expressed wish of my assuming the lofty position of being CAF's Art Buchwald.

I have no idea to what extent I fulfilled Dr. Lee's expectations. Since CAF is a forum for Chinese Americans, it is understandably more of an issue-oriented than a general-interest magazine, and Buchwald is indeed both a humorist and a political columnist. But I happen to be more interested in humor than political issues, and humor, much like fingerprints or DNA, is impossible to emulate.

Despite my feeling at the time that, if it came to a choice between humor and issues, Dr. Lee and his editorial board would probably have favored the latter, I managed to sneak in quite a few columns that speak to no issues, in the hope of achieving my own mix of humor and issues, thereby leavening the serious content of the magazine.

Rereading these 14 odd essays—an additional three



that are more issue oriented had to be excised because their Chinese counterparts could not be used for copyright reasons—in the process of putting together this book, I was surprised to find that although I did not always write about issues, I did speak with a consistent voice, that of a person looking at life through the prism of two rather divergent cultures.

Having spent my formative years in China, I was instilled with certain indelible cultural traits. Yet, inhabiting in a previously foreign culture for more than four decades also has left a rather strong imprint. While the experience has given me new insight into my native culture, my heritage immersion has enabled me to look at my adopted society from a different perspective and to choose, to a large extent, the level and arena of my assimilation. When the choices were difficult, when I seemed to be caught in the worst of both worlds, they offered the benefit of making me think.

Living most of one's life in an adopted country can be lonely; writing has become my means of reaching out. It is perhaps inevitable that my prose, whether in English or Chinese, tend to reflect a personal eclectic mix of the two cultures, as well as my inclination to poke fun at life and my own foibles.

Last but not least, I would like to take the opportunity