



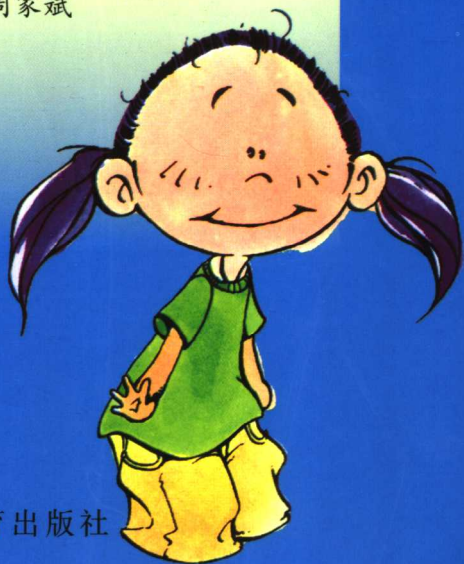
# 英語巧克力

英汉对照读物

## 文化解密

*Culture Interpretation*

主编◎周家斌



 湖北教育出版社



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## 文化解密

*Culture Interpretation*

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## 前 言

许多人读英文时无一生词,但不知所读句子为何物;或者每个句子皆明了于心,但整个段落却莫名其妙。道理很简单:语言乃文化之载体,语言外壳包裹着文化之核。如果不透过语言之外壳去把握文化之核,则一切学习的努力皆徒劳也。

正因为语言只是伪饰的外衣、肤浅的表象,所以不认识文化就不可能了解语言的本质和永恒的内涵。

是故学语言不能只接触表相而无视本质,否则交际永远无法实现。

只懂语言而不了解文化,好似认识了一个只知其表、不知其里的朋友。这样的朋友决不能称之为相知。你知道英国人保守,就知道他们为什么会反对将英镑纳入欧共体货币一体化了;你明白美国人欣赏竞争,就理解他们为什么怕老了……文化会使你发现语言其实是妙趣横生、妙不可言的娱乐,会使你发现语言如咀嚼橄榄一样,回味无穷……

对于英语,如果你只想学点皮毛,则不必看此书;

但倘若你想领会英语之精髓,就必定吃透本书!

周家斌

2004年12月于武汉大学

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## *Conservatism of the English People*

Conservatism refers to the acceptance of anything familiar and refusal of anything strange or foreign. There are numerous facts that tell the conservatism of the Englishmen.

- The monarchy as nominal head of the state still exists in the highly developed capitalist country.
- The national anthem was, is and will be in the near 1000 years the old "God Save the King (or Queen)".
- English judges as usual wear long wigs in law courts, as shown in many films shot in Hong Kong. (As a colony of the British Empire, Hong Kong was once forced to adopt the British legal system.)
- Despite the fact that the feudal class is a term of only history significance, noble titles are conferred on distinguished persons, who would accept the titles as something of the greatest honor.
- Many Englishmen still spend lots of money keeping dummy fireplaces that are of no value at all, although their rooms are heated by gas or electric fire. They find it difficult to say goodbye to the past.
- As the first country to complete the industrial revolution, Britain refused to introduce dec-

## 英国人的保守

保守是指一种乐于接受熟悉的東西、而拒絕陌生或新奇事物的心态。有很多的事实可以证明英国人是多么的保守：

- 在这么一个高度发达的资本主义国家，君主仍然作为国家名义上的统治者而保留了下来。
- 他们的国歌过去是、现在是、也许再过 1000 年还是“上帝拯救国王（或女王）”。
- 在法庭上，英国的法官们仍旧戴着长长的假发——正如在香港拍的许多电影里看到的那样。（曾经作为英国殖民地的香港曾被迫采用英国的法律制度。）
- 虽然封建阶级早已被扫进历史的垃圾堆，但英国仍给声名显赫的人授予贵族封号，而他们也把这种封号视作莫大的荣誉。
- 许多英国人还在花费大把大把的钱保养绣花枕头似的壁炉，虽然他们的房子早就用暖气或者电器取暖了。对他们来说，与过去告别绝非易事。
- 作为世界上第一个完成工业革命的国家，英国直到 1971 年还拒绝采用十进制。便士、先令、英镑；英

imal system until 1971. Pence, shilling, pound and inch, foot, yard... all these are hard to be forgotten.

- English people are always suspicious of any new plans of the government. Today they are still doubtful of the Europe integration plan, thus they are reluctant to allow pound to be integrated into Euro Dollars.

Never talk about any kind of reform to an Englishman, he would surely be silent and keep away from you!

## *Humorous Englishmen*

Suppose a mosquito were seen in the soup in a restaurant, what would be the most likely response by a German, an American, a Japanese, a Chinese or an Englishman?

- A German would, most probably, say: "Oh? What is the philosophical significance between a mosquito and the soup? How cool! It is a golden chance for me to write a doctoral paper on this topic." Really, the German is good at philosophy.
- An American will, of course, make a complaint to the manager at once and call his lawyer at the same time, to see how much "psychological offense" he could claim. How law-abiding are the Americans!

寸、英尺、码……这些实在让他们难以忘怀。

- 英国人对政府制定的任何新政策都持怀疑态度。直到今天,他们对欧洲的统一计划仍然心存疑虑。正因为这样,他们不愿意把英镑纳入欧元计划中去。

千万别跟英国人谈论任何形式的变革——对此他们必定会沉默不语,对你敬而远之!

## 美国人的幽默

假如在餐馆里吃饭时发现汤里有一只蚊子,德国人、美国人、日本人、中国人、还有英国人,他们会怎样反应呢?

- 德国人十有八九会说:“哦?汤和蚊子之间有什么哲学关系呢?真是‘酷’到家了!正好供我写一篇博士论文!”德国人擅长哲学思维真是名不虚传啊!
- 而美国人呢,当然会立马找经理投诉,同时他会打电话给他的律师。他关心的是他能得到多少“精神损失”赔偿费。多么讲法治的美国人啊!

- Japanese would make a complaint to the manager in person, not about any legal suit-case, but about the possible improvement he could make to the uneasy manager. Greatest attention would be paid to management, which is the secret to Japan's success after the WWII.

- What about a Chinese?

To be sure, 9 out of 10 Chinese would also feel angry and hurt at a mosquito in the soup. But thinking that this was not the fault of anyone—no one did it on purpose, and it did him no harm at all, so the Chinese would keep silence or at most, he would pick it out and show it to the manager.

- Now, what reaction would an Englishman make?

An Englishman would pick out the mosquito too, and would say to the waiter or waitress: "I'm sure it is a mosquito free of charge, isn't it?"

Both of them would laugh off the awkward situation.

- 日本人也会向经理投诉,不过他不要打官司,而是想给局促不安的经理就管理问题提供一切可能的改进意见。高度重视管理,这是日本二战后迅速崛起的秘诀。

- 中国人会怎么办呢?

中国人十有八九肯定也会感到气愤,觉得受到了伤害,但转而一想,又不是别人故意干的,况且也没对自己造成什么直接的伤害,罢了。中国人因此会一声不吭,或者最多把蚊子挑出来,给经理瞧一瞧。

- 那么,英国人会怎么做呢?

他们也会把蚊子挑出来,然后对男(女)侍者说:“这只蚊子一定是免费的,对吗?”

大家会相互一笑,一场尴尬随之烟消云散。

## *Weather in England*

England has a changeable weather, which makes it impossible even for the most experienced and skilled weather experts to give a cor-

## *英国的天气*

英国天气变化多端,连最有经验、最高明的气象专家也无法做出准确无误的天气预报。

rect and reliable forecast.

In addition, under the influence of the Atlantic and the North Atlantic Drift, England is rich in rainfall. Much of the rain comes down in drizzle, with almost half of the days as rainy days. In London the rainy days last more than 160 each year, compared with more than 200 in the west part of the country. In Charlotte Bronte's *Jane Eyre* it reads: "It was a cold winter. The wind had brought dark clouds and heavy rain." This shows that there is much rainfall even in winter.

Englishmen can not afford to have much confidence in the weather forecast experts—the weathermen, who, after predicting sunny days for the next day, are often surprised to see rainfall. As a result, the Englishmen make enough preparation themselves. No wonder an Englishman leaves home on a bright, sunny morning with a raincoat slung over his arm or an umbrella in his hand. So changeable is the weather that there might be thunder and lightning on their way off their job. Who can tell?

There is such a joke about weather:

It was time for Greenwich weather forecasters to go home. On their way to the parking lot, one asked his colleague, "Did you close the office windows? Who can tell whether it will rain or not?"

You see, even the weathermen from Greenwich were short of confidence in them-

另外,由于受到大西洋和北大西洋暖流的影响,英国降水充沛,而且多以毛毛细雨的形式落下,所以,英国每年几乎有一半的日子在下雨。伦敦一年有 160 多天在下雨,而在西部地区则长达 200 余天。夏洛蒂·勃朗特在她的小说《简·爱》中写道:“又是一个寒冷的冬天。寒风吹来一阵黑云,大雨发了下来。”这说明英国的冬天也有丰富的降雨。

英国人没办法相信气象预报专家——当他们预报第二天为晴天时,却惊讶地看到了雨。正因为如此,英国人只好自己准备充分了——难怪在阳光明媚的早晨,你可以看见英国人胳膊上搭着雨衣或手里拿着一把雨伞。天气如此变化莫测,说不定下班回家的路上,万里无云的天空会突然间电闪雷鸣呢!谁说得准呢?

有这样一则有关天气的笑话:

在格林威治天文台工作的气象预报员们该下班了。在去停车场的路上,有一个人问他的同事:“劳驾,请问你关好了办公室的窗子没有?谁知道会不会下雨呢?”

瞧,连格林威治天文台的气象预报员对自己预报的准确性也吃不准

selves! The joke to some extent reflects the variable and complicated weather. No wonder there are some people claiming that "There is no climate but weather in England."

### *Englishmen Nicknamed* "John Bull"

In the 18th century, there was a minor novelist in England called John Arbuthnot (1667-1735) who lived in the period of violent war between England and Spain over the succession of Spanish king. He was not satisfied with the English Whig's militarism, so he wrote a book titled *The History of John Bull*.

In the book he successfully created a character in detail. The hero was John Bull, a gentleman from the upper class. He was short and fat, impatient and ready to act as authority. Meanwhile he was honest and candid, ridiculous and funny, emotional and imaginative. He was the shadow of the royal government.

The humor and vividness of the character deeply moved a cartoonist, who, after reading the book several times, drew an interesting picture of John Bull. In the cartoon John Bull was riding a horse, in a hat and a pair of boot, pretending to be a VIP, and seeming to be frightened by no difficulties. The only trouble

呢! 这个笑话从一个侧面反映了英国复杂多变的天气。怪不得有人说: "在英国只有天气,没有气候。"

### 英国人的绰号—— “约翰·牛”

在18世纪,英国有位末流作家名叫约翰·阿布斯诺特。他生活在英国与西班牙争夺西班牙王位继承权的战争年代。他对英国“辉格党”的好战政策非常不满,于是写了一本书,名曰《约翰·布尔的历史》。

在这本书中,他成功而详细地刻画了“约翰·布尔”这一人物。约翰·布尔是来自上流社会的一位绅士,此人矮小又肥胖,急躁又好教训人。不过他为人正直而诚实,滑稽又可笑,热情洋溢又有点想入非非。这个人物简直就是当权者的影子。

这个被刻画得栩栩如生、风趣幽默的人物深深打动了一位漫画家。他细读几遍之后,挥笔画了一幅约翰·布尔的漫画。画中的约翰·布尔骑着一匹马,头戴宽边礼帽,脚蹬长统靴,一派趾高气扬、不惧怕任何困难的模样。可惜他太矮太胖,怎么看都不像是个“大人物”!

is that he was short and fat, not much like a "somebody"!

However, the cartoon was so attractive and profound that the Englishmen saw something that they share with John Bull. Furthermore, "bull" is something the Englishmen admired and even worshipped at that time and even at present — much the same way as we Chinese worship dragon. So the Englishmen step by step accept John Bull as their fellow-man, as the symbol of themselves.

### *How "Uncle Sam" Came into Being?*

Uncle Sam was regarded as the symbol of the USA during the Second Independent War beginning from 1812 in which the newly born US meant to expand its territory to the West.

At that time, there was a wise meat packager in Troy, New York State, called Samuel Wilson. He was well known for his honesty and open-mindedness, sympathy as well as his industry and ambition to develop his business. He was locally respected and admired, thus greeted as Uncle Sam — Sam is the pet name of Samuel.

He was a patriot and had even taken part in the Independent War. In the 1812 War, his

但是,由于这幅漫画形象生动、耐人寻味,英国人很快就在他身上找到了自己的影子。另外,公牛是英国人当时乃至现在都非常喜欢、甚至有几分崇拜的“偶像”——有点像我们中国人崇拜龙一样,于是英国人渐渐地吧“约翰·布尔”视作同仁,乃至自己的象征了。

### *“山姆大叔”的来历*

“山姆大叔”作为美国的象征起源于1812年的第二次独立战争。新兴的美国之所以对英国宣战,其目的是为了向西扩大版图。

当时在纽约州的特罗伊城有位精明强干的肉类包装商人,名叫塞缪尔·威尔逊。他为人正直诚实、豁达大度、乐于助人、吃苦耐劳、富于创业精神。他在当地备受尊敬,人皆称之为“山姆大叔”——“山姆”乃“塞缪尔”一名的昵称。

山姆大叔是位爱国者,甚至参加过独立战争。在1812年第二次独立

factory was responsible for supplying canned beef for the American army. In each barrel he would mark U. S., shortened for his pet name Uncle Sam.

In January 1812, the New York mayor made a personal visit to his factory and was told the meaning of U. S.. With the report of the news, the name Uncle Sam was popular among the soldiers.

In 1861, *Harper's Weekly* carried a cartoon of Uncle Sam: a thin, tall old man, with silver hair and goatee, in a swallowtail and strip trousers, a cap with stars. This cartoon endeared American people. In addition, Uncle Sam was ready to help the others and place the interest of the nation above all—this is in line with the American spirit. All these combined make the Americans consider Uncle Sam as the symbol of the USA.

In 1916, the congress officially admits the nickname in a bill.

Here are two phrases about Uncle:

- talk to sb. like a Dutch uncle
- Uncle Tom: (a character in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, a novel by Harriet Beecher Stowe) a black person who is regarded as being humiliatingly subservient or deferential to white people.

战争期间,他的工厂负责为美国陆军提供罐装牛肉。在每一只桶上,他都会盖上 U. S. 的戳记——这是他名字的首字母缩写。

1812 年元月,当时的纽约市长亲自参观了山姆大叔的工厂,并了解了 U. S. 的含义。经过报界的宣传,“山姆大叔”一名在美军中传为美谈。

1861 年,《哈普斯周刊》登载了一幅山姆大叔的漫画,画中的山姆大叔又瘦又高,皓首白头,一缕山羊胡,上穿燕尾服,下罩条纹裤,头戴星徽圆边高帽。这幅漫画令美国人备感亲切。另外,山姆大叔乐于助人、把国家利益置于一切之上的精神,也符合美国人的理念。所有这些使得美国人把“山姆大叔”视作自己的象征。

1916 年,美国国会通过了一则议案,认可了“山姆大叔”这一绰号。

以下是两条与 UNCLE 有关的短语:

- 严厉训诫某人
- 汤姆叔叔(哈瑞特·比彻尔·斯陀所著《汤姆叔叔的小屋》一书中的人物)——一位对白人卑躬屈膝或谦恭忍让的黑人。

## Americans' Character

Generally speaking, the Americans are well known for following five features they share:

### 1. Adventurous

The courage to try something new has been an American character ever since the colonial times. Mark Twain described the Englishman as "A person who does things because they have been done before" while the American as "A person who does things because they haven't been done before".

The adventurous spirit is reflected in the 4 aspects:

- The cowboys who overcame one difficulty after another to make life better.
- The westward movement in the mid-19th century from people who made a long and dangerous travel westward in search of gold or land.
- Domestic movement: every year about 40 million Americans ( $40/250 = 16\%$  of the population) move to new homes. The average Americans move 14 times in their lifetime.
- Americans change their spouses more often than any other people in the world to try a new life.

### 2. Prompt and Efficient

Almost every American wears a watch. In nearly every American room there is a clock.

## 美国人的性格

总的说来,美国人拥有以下五大共同特征:

### 1. 敢于冒险

从殖民时代起,敢想敢干、敢为天下先、敢吃螃蟹就是美国人的性格主体。马克·吐温曾经这样描述英国人,说他们是“一个因为这件事已经有人做过所以才做的民族”,而美国人则是一个“因为这件事没人做过所以才做的民族”。

美国人的冒险精神集中反映在以下四个方面:

- 征服一个又一个困难以使生活更加美好的牛仔;
- 19世纪中叶冒着生命危险长途跋涉,为寻找黄金或开垦土地而西进的西部开拓者;
- 国内迁居运动:每年约有4千万美国人迁入新家(占总人口的16%,美国现人口约为2亿5千万),美国人一生平均搬家达14次之多;
- 美国人更换配偶的频率为世界之最,目的是为了尝试新生活。

### 2. 注重时效

几乎每个美国人都戴手表,在美国几乎每个房间都有一座钟。快点,快,快点!时间就是金钱啊!时间不



Hurry, hurry, and hurry! Time is money. Time waits for no men. Waste of time is not only a waste of money, but also an insult to others.

### 3. Materialistic

Americans seem to value money above everything else. The key lies in different value. In America, possessions are symbols of one's financial success and one's achievement, though, just as Henry David Thoreau predicted in the mid-19th century, now it is the possessions that own the Americans.

### 4. Direct and Assertive

Americans like to call a spade a spade. They would voice their own opinions whenever possible. Children often argue with their parents. Students frequently challenge their teachers. Citizens always express their objections to government actions. Modesty makes no sense. A modest man gets no job. A modest man may suffer hunger as guest in an American's home, since he takes your word as it is.

### 5. Pursuit of Happiness

Marriage is believed to half people's grief, double people's joy and quadruple the expenses. Thus Americans will try their best to make a happy couple by all means. Once there is no joy from marriage, they will enjoy a divorce to look for a better tomorrow.

等人啊!浪费时间不仅仅浪费了金钱,也是对别人的侮辱!

### 3. 物质至上

美国人似乎把金钱看得比什么都重要。这主要是价值观的不同。在美国人眼里,财产是一个人成功的标志(有钱就说明你有本事,你就有地位)。不过,正如19世纪中叶亨利·大卫·梭罗(美国哲学家)所说:现在的美国人已经被财产占有了!

### 4. 直率自信

美国人喜欢有一说一。只要有可能,他们就会说出自己的观点。孩子们经常和父母争论。学生频繁地向老师发起挑战。美国公民则习惯于对政府的行为进行抨击。谦虚不行啊——谦虚的人找不到工作。如果到美国人家里作客,谦虚说不定要挨饿呢,因为他们会把你说的话当真。

### 5. 追求幸福

婚姻据信可以使痛苦减半,使快乐加倍,使开销翻两番。正因为如此,美国人会竭尽全力使婚姻幸福。而一旦婚姻毫无乐趣可言的时候,他们会高高兴兴地说声“再见”,然后去寻找更加美好的明天。