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大学英语 文化背景导读 (上)



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前言

教育部于2007年颁布了新的《大学英语课程教学要求》，该要求明确提出，要以跨文化交际为主要学习内容之一，并将提高大学生的综合文化素养作为一个重要的教学目标。

在新要求的指导下，出现了一批借鉴与采纳近年来大学英语教学改革成功经验与教学实践成果的大学英语教材。然而，广大学生虽通过新的教材体系习得英语语言知识，提高了语言应用能力，但对于语言知识所涉及的文化底蕴却了解不够。因此，在教学中，我们特意从多方面搜集、整理与教材文本相关联的文化知识，自编了此套参考书，以期对西方文化知识的学习有所帮助。

本书共分17章，主要介绍了目前使用中的大学英语教材所涉及的一些文化知识。其内容包括哲学、宗教、文学、艺术、音乐、教育、科技、体育运动、节日、组织、建筑、旅游与城市、娱乐、政治与经济、军事、社会福利与文化生活以及历史等方面。这其中不但介绍了英语国家的一些文化概况，也涵盖了其他一些主要国家和地区的相关情况，更在其中一些章节推介了中国的传统文化，以达到提高学生跨文化交际水平的目标。

为了帮助读者顺畅地阅读本书，对于书中出现的较难词汇，编者

在文中直接标注了中文释义。同时为帮助读者更好地理解书中出现的部分专业性较强的词汇,我们采用了英语脚注形式加以简单介绍。

本书图文并茂,信息量大,在校大学非英语专业学生可将其作为学习参考资料使用。同时也适合英语专业学生以及对西方文化感兴趣的读者阅读。

在本书的编写过程中,黄清贵教授与本校领导给予大力支持和帮助,在此表示最真挚的谢意。

由于人类文明所创造的文化知识博大精深,编者水平有限,错误与不当之处在所难免,敬请读者与专家不吝指正。

编 者

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1.

Philosophy and Religions

哲学与宗教

Introduction 导读

Philosophy is a well-coordinated and systematized attempt at evaluating life and the universe as a whole, with reference to first principles that underlie all things as their causes and are implicit in all experience. It bases itself on facts already known and rises above them to absolute verities, on which all phenomena depend and by which alone they can be rationally explained. Religion is the belief in and worship of a god or gods, or more in general a set of beliefs explaining the existence of and giving meaning to the universe. For most of the college students, philosophy and religions are usually the difficulties to tackle with when they want to get access to the field of language or culture. In an attempt to help college students to have a better understanding of the context in *College English*, this chapter tries to explain some terms related in the textbook: life outlook, job outlook, success, Rene Descartes, Aristotle, SCLC, Christianity, Catholicism, Islam, Daoism, and Baptist Church.

1.1 Philosophy 哲学

1.1.1 Life Outlook 人生观

1.1.1.1 What Is Life Outlook? 什么叫人生观?

Life outlook or the view of life constitutes a philosophical question concerning

the purpose and significance of life or existence in general. This concept can be expressed through a variety of related questions, such as *why are we here?* *what is life all about?* and *what is the meaning of it all?* Life outlook is deeply mixed with the philosophical and religious conceptions of existence, consciousness, and happiness, and touches on many other issues, such as symbolic meaning (象征意义), ontology (本体论), value, purpose, ethics (道德观), good and evil, free will, conceptions of God, the existence of God, the soul, and the afterlife.

1.1.1.2 Some Western Philosophical Perspectives on Life Outlook 一些西方哲学领域中的的人生观

1. Platonism 柏拉图主义

In Platonism, life outlook lies in attaining the highest form of knowledge, from which all good and just things derive utility (功用) and value. Human beings are duty-bound to pursue the good, but no one can succeed in that pursuit without philosophical reasoning, which allows for true knowledge.

2. Aristotelianism 亚里士多德哲学

Aristotle argues that the *Highest Good* (最高善) is not desirable for the sake of achieving some other good, and all other “goods” desirable for its sake. The *Highest Good* involves achieving eudemonia (幸福), usually translated as “happiness”, “well-being”, “flourishing”, and “excellence”.

3. Cynicism 犬儒主义

The Cynic philosophers said that the purpose of life is living a life of Virtue that agrees with Nature (回归自然). Happiness depends upon being self-sufficient and master of one's mental attitude; suffering is the consequence of false judgments of value, which cause negative emotions. The Cynical life rejects conventional desires for wealth, power, health, and fame, by being free of the possessions acquired in pursuing the conventional.

4. Cyrenaicism 昔兰尼学派快乐论

Cyrenaicism, founded by Aristippus of Cyrene, was an early Socratic school that emphasised only one side of Socrates's teachings—that happiness is one of the

ends of moral action and that pleasure is the supreme good; thus a hedonistic world view, wherein bodily gratification is more intense than mental pleasure. Cyrenaics prefer immediate gratification to the long-term gain of delayed gratification; denial is unpleasant unhappiness.

5. Epicureanism 享乐主义

To them, the greatest good is in seeking modest pleasures, to attain tranquility (平静) and freedom from fear via knowledge, friendship, and virtuous, temperate living; bodily pain is absent through one's knowledge of the workings of the world and of the limits of one's desires. Combined, freedom from pain and freedom from fear are happiness in its highest form. The Epicurean meaning of life rejects immortality and mysticism; there is a soul, but it is as mortal as the body. There is no afterlife, yet, one need not fear death, because "Death is nothing to us; for that which is dissolved is without sensation, and that which lacks sensation is nothing to us".

6. Stoicism 禁欲主义

Stoicism teaches that living according to reason and virtue is to be in harmony with the universe's divine order. The meaning of life is freedom from suffering through apatheia (无欲心境), that is, being objective, having "clear judgment", not indifference. In fact, the Stoic (禁欲主义者) does not seek to extinguish emotions, only to avoid emotional troubles, by developing clear judgment and inner calm through diligently practiced logic, reflection, and concentration.

7. Classical Liberalism 古典自由主义

Classical liberalism considers individual liberty to be the most important goal, because only through ensured liberty are the other inherent rights protected.

8. Utilitarianism 功利主义

Utilitarianism is the idea that the moral worth of an action is determined solely by its utility in providing happiness or pleasure as summed among all sentient (有感知的) beings. It is often described by the phrase "the greatest good for the greatest number of people" (最大多数人的最大幸福), and is also known as "the greatest happiness principle".

9. Nihilism 虚无主义

Nihilism rejects any authority's claims to knowledge and truth, and so explores the significance of existence without knowable truth. Rather than insisting that values are subjective, the nihilist says, "Nothing is of value", morals are valueless.

10. Pragmatism 实用主义

Pragmatic philosophers suggest that the practical, useful understanding of life is more important than searching for an impractical abstract truth about life. Moreover, pragmatism posits that anything useful and practical is not always true, arguing that what the most contributes to the most human good in the long run is true.

1.1.2 Job Outlook 工作观

1.1.2.1 Different Working Time Among Countries 各地工作时间的差异

1. South Korea 韩国

By far, workers in South Korea have the longest work hours among OECD (经济合作与发展组织) countries. A typical workweek in South Korea is 44 hours or longer. Most people start their day at 8 a. m. and end at around 10 p. m. or later, often having lunch at noon before returning to work.

2. Japan 日本

Work hours in Japan are decreasing, but many Japanese still work long hours. Even though the Japanese work long hours, there is an expectation that on Wednesday and Friday, the work day ceases after 8 hours. This is included in many union practices and is a generally accepted norm.

3. Western Europe 西欧

In most Western European countries, working time is gradually decreasing. The decrease is inversely related with productivity, though overall, less is

