

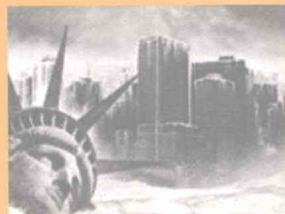
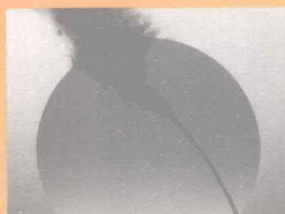
语言文化系列丛书

British and American Culture Through Movies

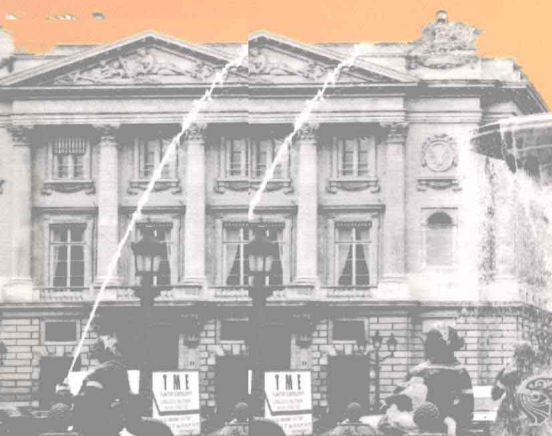
英美文化与电影

总主编 李庆明

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史小妹 主编



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British and American Culture Through Movies

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【内容简介】 本书共分 10 章,分别从英美主流价值观念、宗教信仰、哲学思想、历史、文学、教育体制、节日习俗等方面较为系统地介绍了英美文化的典型特色,并通过丰富的电影例证使英美文化特征具体化、形象化、生动化。第 10 章从不同角度向读者引荐了六部脍炙人口的经典英美电影作品,以便读者有选择地欣赏。全书内容丰富、图文并茂,语言通俗易懂,是在较短时间内了解英美文化概貌的最佳选择。

本书可供本科及以上的学生及英语爱好者拓展文化知识时参考学习。

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总 序

教育现代化飞速发展和经济全球化进程的不断加快对教育,尤其是高等教育的发展提出了更新更高的要求,社会的激烈竞争,要求当代大学生学会如何快速运用自身知识能力以期达到适应社会竞争的目的。在信息化快速发展的时代中,中西文化、政治、经济交流日益密切,提高当代大学生的核心竞争力,发挥语言在各项交流中的桥梁枢纽作用,从而适应我国经济社会的快速发展对高素质人才需求的迫切要求,这也是广大从事英语教育和研究的工作者不得不重视并且应加以解决的实际问题。

面对这样的挑战和要求,我们对大学英语教育进行了全方位的调研和思考,发现传统的大学教材由于受到传统的理念和体制的限制,存在着种种的不足和局限性,导致学生在面对实际知识应用和综合知识素养培养方面都面临着很大的困难与障碍。面对这样的现状和教育现状背景,我们编写了这套符合当代大学生实际学习情况的语言文化系列教材,以此抛砖引玉,达到尽快改善当今英语教育的不足和误区,提高大学英语教学质量的目的。

本系列教材包括《英美文化与电影》、《新闻英语》、《学术英语写作》、《英美历史上四十个重大事件》、《文化视角下的语言》、《英美文化导读》、《英语美文鉴赏》、《现代英语口语与演讲》、《多元文化范式导入》及《从针灸到十二生肖——中国文化的26个主题》。

在“拓宽视野,培养能力,提高素质”的指导方针下,本系列教材以介绍英美文化为背景,培养人文素质为宗旨,达到英语的合理应用能力的提高为目的,涵盖面广泛,内容翔实,重点突出。不仅从英语国家的历史、政治、经济、社会等诸多方面加以阐述和讲解,并且从跨文化交际的视角下与中国的传统文化和现状进行对比。同时更加注重对听、说、读、写、译等英语实际技能的培养和强调,从不同角度体现了语言应用和文化理解并重的概念,总的来看,本套系列教材具有以下几个鲜明的特点:

涵盖面广:

本系列教材内容涵盖文化、历史、文学、语言、新闻等方方面面,方便大专院校的本专科学学生、硕士生和博士生以及英语爱好者更好地了解和掌握英语语言文化知识,更有效率地进行跨文化交际。

选材合理:

本系列教材以教育部颁发的《大学英语课程教学要求》为指导,目的是为各个高校合理设置和规划其所开设的课程,教材难度适中、选材广泛、内容新颖、符合实际、语言灵活,非常适合在校大学生的使用。



设计系统：

本系列教材所包含的全部教材可视作为一个有机整合的集合体，所包含内容互为补充，相辅相成，既可作为选修课教材单独使用，也可作为参考资料互相借鉴弥补。

实用性强：

本系列教材的编写者都是参与实际教学多年的一线高校教师，拥有丰富的课堂教学经验，每一位编者都力求将实用性放在首位，兼顾理论和实际的结合。编写内容丰富，形式多样，以易学、易用为目的，优先考虑学生的学习主导地位，努力实现教师的讲授达到举一反三，学生达到能学会用的最佳效果。

本系列教材在编写过程中，得到了相关外语教学机构和同仁的帮助和支持，对此我们表示衷心的感谢。

李庆明

2011年5月

前言

语言和文化密切相关,二者相辅相成、互相依存、无法分割。语言是文化的载体,又是文化的一部分,文化高于语言,又体现于语言之中。抛开语言谈文化,犹如纸上谈兵,空中建厦;忽略文化学语言,最多也就是个“语言流利的傻瓜”。因此,要掌握一门语言,就必须了解该语言使用国的历史政治、宗教哲学、文学艺术、价值观念等。学好英语也不例外,了解英美文化,对学好英语可谓有事半功倍之效。

英美文化内容包罗万象、千姿百态,涵盖生活的各个方面,绝非一本书所能尽详。即使粗略地谈谈英美历史也可能需要数十万字的篇幅才能说出个眉目。因此,本书仅撷取英美文化中影响较大的、常识性的内容作一简略介绍,以便为读者提供学习英语所必需的相关背景知识。

经典的影视作品是在对生活中具有代表性的事件与人物进行艺术加工和浓缩之后演绎出的精华,是对现实社会与生活的概括与总结。经典的英美电影反映了英美文化的各个层面,折射出英美主流人生观、价值观和伦理道德观念等,是我们了解英美文化最形象生动、最全面概括、最简便快捷的途径。

系统而重点地介绍英美文化,有利于读者较全面地了解英美文化的各个方面,体会英美文化的特色与精髓。经典的英美电影作品既是英美文化各层面的生动体现,也是外语学习者的学习资源,而且可以使外语学习变得更加生动、更加富有趣味性。对比中西文化的异同,有利于我们更进一步地了解中国文化的博大精深,体会中华文明的深厚底蕴和魅力。了解英美文化可以使我们的视野更开阔,也有利于我们借鉴异国文化的精华,弘扬光大中国文化。

通俗易懂的描述,地道生动的英语是本书的又一特色。读者可以一边提高英语水平,一边了解英美国家文化,从而使得文化和语言的学习合二而一,有机结合在一起。何乐而不为呢?

编者

2011年3月

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Chapter 1

Culture

The value of culture is its effect on character. It avails nothing unless it ennobles and strengthens that. Its use is for life; its aim is not beauty but goodness.

– Somerset Maugham

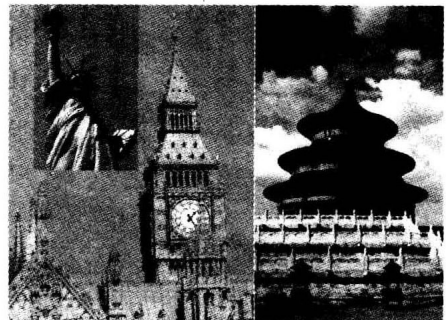
No culture can live, if it attempts to be exclusive.

– Mahatma Gandhi

The term “culture” comes from the Latin word “cultura” meaning “to cultivate”. It first emerged in the 18th century in Europe, connoting a process of cultivation or improvement. In the 19th century, it came to refer first to betterment or refinement of the individual, especially through education, and then to the fulfillment of national aspirations or ideals. In the mid-nineteenth century, some scientists used the term “culture” to refer to a universal human capacity. For the German nonpositivist sociologist, George Simmel, culture referred to “the cultivation of individuals through the agency of external forms which have been objectified in the course of history”. In the twentieth century, “culture” emerged as a concept central to anthropology, encompassing all human phenomena that are not purely results of human genetics. Following World War II, the term became important, albeit with different meanings, in other disciplines such as cultural studies, and management studies.

Among the various definitions of culture, E. B. Tylor’s definition is most often cited as classical. By Tylor, the term “culture” refers to “that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, customs, and many other capabilities and habits acquired by members of society.” (Tylor 1958 [1871]: 1)

We all know that a people’s culture includes





their beliefs, rules of behavior, language, rituals, art, technology, styles of dress, ways of producing and cooking food, religion, and political and economic systems. It is culture that distinguishes one human group from others and also humans from other animals. Anthropologists commonly use the term culture to refer to a society or group in which many or all people live and think in the same ways. Likewise, any group of people who share a common culture, and in particular, common rules of behavior and a basic form of social organization, constitutes a society. Thus, the terms culture and society are somewhat interchangeable. However, while many animals live in societies, such as herds of elk or packs of wild dogs, only humans have culture.

I. Characteristics of Culture

Culture, due to its complexity, has many distinguishing characteristics. The following are some of the most important ones that may help you have a better understanding of culture. First of all, culture is based on symbols, abstract ways of referring to and understanding ideas, objects, feelings, or behaviors, and the ability to communicate with symbols using language. Culture is shared. People in the same society share common behaviors and ways of thinking through culture. Culture is learned. While people biologically inherit many physical traits and behavioral instincts, culture is socially inherited. A person must learn culture from other people in a society. Culture is adaptive. People use culture to flexibly and quickly adjust to changes in the world around them. (Microsoft Encarta Encyclopedia 2000)



1. Culture Is Symbolic



People have culture primarily because they can communicate with and understand symbols. Symbols allow people to develop complex thoughts and to exchange those thoughts with others. Language and other forms of symbolic communication, such as art, enable people to create, explain, and record new ideas and information. A symbol has either an indirect connection or no connection at all with the object, idea, feeling, or behavior to which it refers. For instance, most people in the United States

find some meaning in the combination of the colors red, white, and blue. But those colors



themselves have nothing to do with, for instance, the land that people call the United States, the concept of patriotism, or the U. S. national anthem, The Star Spangled Banner.

To convey new ideas, people constantly invent new symbols, such as for mathematical formulas. In addition, people may use one symbol, such as a single word, to represent many different ideas, feelings, or values. Thus, symbols provide a flexible way for people to communicate even very complex thoughts with each other. For example, only through symbols can architects, engineers, and construction workers communicate the information necessary to construct a skyscraper or bridge.

People have the capacity at birth to construct, understand, and communicate through symbols, primarily by using language. Research has shown, for example, that infants have a basic structure of language—a sort of universal grammar—built into their minds. Infants are thus predisposed to learn the languages spoken by the people around them.

Language provides a means to store, process, and communicate amounts of information that vastly exceed the capabilities of nonhuman animals. For instance, chimpanzees, the closest genetic relatives of humans, use a few dozen calls and a variety of gestures to communicate in the wild. People have taught some chimps to communicate using American Sign Language and picture-based languages, and some have developed vocabularies of a few hundred words. But an unabridged English dictionary might contain more than half-a-million vocabulary entries.

Chimpanzees have also not clearly demonstrated the ability to use grammar, which is crucial for communicating complex thoughts. In addition, the human vocal tract, unlike that of chimpanzees and other animals, can create and articulate a wide enough variety of sounds to create millions of distinct words.

In fact, each human language uses only a fraction of the sounds humans can make. The human brain also contains areas dedicated to the production and interpretation of speech, which other animals lack. Thus, humans are predisposed (influenced in advance) in many ways to use symbolic communication.

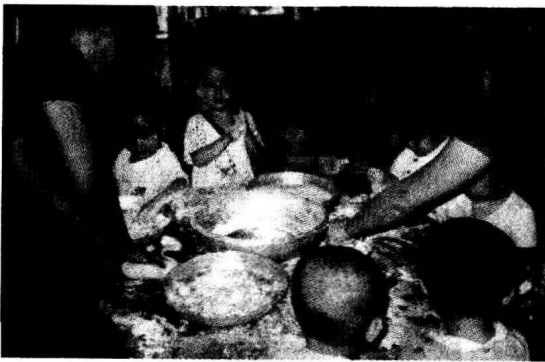


2. Culture Is Learned

Human infants come into the world with basic drives such as hunger and thirst, but they do not possess instinctive patterns of behavior to satisfy them. Likewise, they are

without any cultural knowledge. However, they are genetically predisposed to rapidly learn language and other cultural traits. New born humans are amazing learning machines. Any normal baby can be placed into any family on earth and grow up to learn their culture and accept it as his or her own. Since culture is non-instinctive, we are not genetically programmed to learn a particular one.

People must learn to speak and understand a language and to abide by the rules or customs of a society. For example, sneezing is physiological, but if one sneezes once, twice or more, a person from Shaanxi China may say "Someone is missing you", "Someone is cursing you", or "You've got a cold" respectively, while English natives may say "God bless you" whenever someone sneezes regardless of the times of the sneezes. When we cough in public places, we Chinese tend to ignore it, but an American usually says "Excuse me" immediately after one does so.



In many societies, all people must learn to produce and prepare food and to construct shelters. In other societies, people must learn a skill to earn money. We are all born with the basic needs for food, but what to eat, when, where and how to eat is learned. That's why we use chopsticks while Westerners prefer knives and forks, and why we like rice while Americans prefer bread.

In all human societies, children learn culture from adults. Anthropologists call this process enculturation, or cultural transmission. Enculturation is a long process. Just learning the intricacies of a human language, a major part of enculturation, takes many years. Families commonly protect and enculturate children in the households of their birth for 15 years or more. Only at this point can children leave and establish their own households. People also continue to learn throughout their lifetimes. Thus, most societies respect their elders, who have learned for an entire lifetime.

Humans are not alone in their ability to learn behaviors, only in the amount and complexity of what they can learn. For example, members of a group of chimpanzees may learn to use a unique source of food or to fashion some simple tools, behaviors that might distinguish them from other chimpanzee groups. But these unique ways of life are minor in comparison to the rich cultures that distinguish different human societies. Lacking speech,

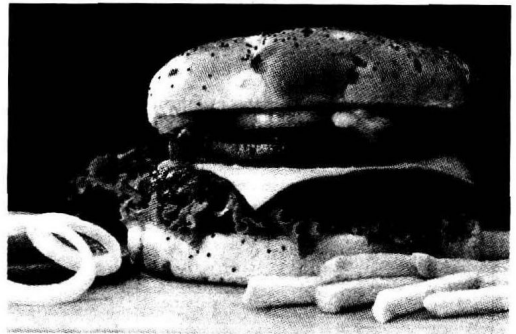
chimps are very limited in what they can learn, communicate to others, and pass on from generation to generation.



3. Culture Is Shared

People living together in a society share culture. For example, almost all people living in the United States share the English language, dress in similar styles, eat many of the same foods, and celebrate many of the same holidays.

All the people of a society collectively create and maintain culture. Societies preserve culture for much longer than the life of any one person. They preserve it in the form of knowledge, such as scientific discoveries; objects, such as works of art; and traditions, such as the observance of holidays. The following are some pictures showing religious beliefs and holidays shared by groups of people.



Woodstock

The Woodstock Art and Music Fair of 1969 drew more than 300,000 spectators to become one of the largest mass-gatherings in the history of popular music.



Easter Procession, Guatemala



Shamanism, Mexico



Ukrainian Orthodox Service

The Ukrainian Orthodox Church has played a key role in preserving a sense of ethnic identity among Ukrainian Americans. Religious observances, such as this Ukrainian Orthodox Church service in Ellenville, New York, provide opportunities for the community to gather and affirm its cultural heritage. A religious tradition dating back to the late 10th century, the Ukrainian Orthodox faith has a rich legacy of ritual, art, and hymns.



4. Culture Is Adaptive

Culture helps human societies survive in changing natural environments. For example, the end of the last Ice Age, beginning about 15,000 years ago, posed an enormous challenge to which humans had to adapt. Before this time, large portions of the northern hemisphere were covered in great sheets of ice that contained much of the earth's water. In North America, large game animals that roamed the vast tundra (冻土地带) provided people with food and materials for clothing and simple shelters. When the earth warmed, large Ice Age game animals disappeared, and many land areas were submerged by rising sea levels from melting ice. But people survived. They developed new technologies and learned how to subsist on (依靠……生活) new plant and animal species. Eventually some people settled into villages of permanent, durable houses and farms.



Cultural adaptation has made humans one of the most successful species on the planet. Through history, major developments in technology, medicine, and nutrition have allowed people to reproduce and survive in ever-increasing numbers. The global population has risen from 8 million during the Ice Age to almost 6 billion today.

However, the successes of culture can also create problems in the long run. Over the last 200 years, people have begun to use large quantities of natural resources and energy and to produce a great amount of material and chemical wastes. The global population now consumes some crucial natural resources—such as petroleum, timber, and mineral ores—faster than nature can produce them.



Many scientists believe that in the process of burning fuels and producing wastes, people may be altering the global climate in unpredictable and possibly harmful ways. Thus, the adaptive success of the present-day global culture of production and commerce may be temporary.

Culture must benefit people, at least in the short term, in order for it to be passed on to new generations. But it can clearly also harm some people.



The number of people living in severe poverty near the end of the 20th century was larger than the entire population of the world in A. D. 1500.

II. Cultural Differences and Globalization

1. Cultural Differences

Although we human beings have a lot in common, we differ in many aspects of our cultures. Take patterns of subsistence for example. People living in different areas or environment have different patterns of subsistence. People living in tribes, for instance, commonly practice horticulture (gardening) or pastoralism (animal herding). Most of Vanuatu's population engages in subsistence agriculture. Nomadic herders in Mongolia follow a traditional way of life, journeying with livestock and living in yurts. And Ethiopians still use beasts of burden on many of their farms.



Farmers on Pentecost Island in northern Vanuatu harvest yams, one of Vanuatu's primary food crops.

Actually cultural differences exist everywhere. They affect people's way of thinking and living. They affect how they view the world and themselves. Even in everyday life, cultural differences show up from the moment we open eyes to the moment we have dreams.



For instance, when greeting an acquaintance, we Chinese may say "Where are you going?" without the intention of knowing where exactly the one is really going while the westerners may say "Hi" instead. When getting help from our family members or a close friend Americans seldom fail to say "Thank you" while Chinese may consider it unnecessary to express gratitude in words. When having their meals easterners use chopsticks and more often than not hold their bowls in hands while Westerners use spoons and forks and think it unacceptable to hold bowls in hands. In the case of wedding ceremonies Chinese usually think red suits more preferable for the bride as the color red symbolizes merriness and happiness while Americans think white more preferable as it symbolizes purity and beauty.