

安徽省高等学校“十一五”省级规划教材

英语国家社会与文化

(上)

The Society and Culture of Major English-speaking Countries (I)

主编 / 夏蓓洁



中国科学技术大学出版社

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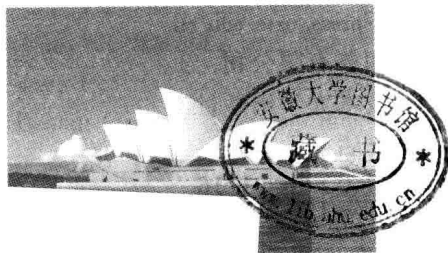
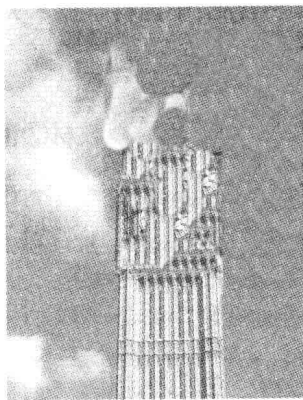
(上)

The Society and Culture of Major English-speaking Countries (I)

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内 容 简 介

《英语国家社会与文化》(上、下册)介绍英国、爱尔兰、澳大利亚以及新西兰、美国和加拿大的地理、历史、种族、政治、经济、教育、外交、媒体和日常生活等主流社会文化现象,内容涵盖截至2011年底相关国家的最新发展状况。本套教材以文化全球化为背景,选材注重追溯文化生成原因,穿插各国社会文化的异同比较以及“文化间性”现象,有助于培养学习者的思辨与跨文化交际能力。教材内容详实、语言简练、编排新颖,各单元既融会贯通又独立成篇。每单元包括单元目标、正文、难点解释、文化回顾、补充读物以及词汇注释六个部分,既便于自学也便于个性化的课堂设计。

本套教材适合于应用型本科院校和高职高专英语专业二、三年级学生以及具有同等英语水平的自学者使用。

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Preface

前 言

《英语国家社会与文化》(上、下册)系顺应英语专业教学改革的需求,针对传统必修课“英语国家概况”的最新要求而编写的。本套教材介绍英国、爱尔兰、澳大利亚、以及新西兰、美国和加拿大等主要英语国家的地理、历史、政治、经济、种族、教育、外交、媒体与日常生活等主流社会文化现象,适合于应用型本科院校和高职高专英语专业二、三年级学生以及具有同等英语水平的自学者使用。

有关文化的定义多于百种,人们普遍认为文化主要包括物质文化、制度文化和价值观文化等内容。语言是文化的载体,外语学习者对于目标国文化的学习能力因其语言程度而异。本套教材针对中高等英语水平的学习者,适度介绍主要英语国家的基本国情和物质文化,重点介绍制度文化和价值观文化,旨在帮助学习者了解英语国家社会与文化的基本概况与主要特征,提高学习者对文化差异的敏感性和包容性,并为其今后的专业学习奠定基础。教材通过介绍各英语国家之间的相互影响并对比分析政治和教育等领域的异同等,帮助学习者理解文化的共通性和差异性,提高辩证思维和批判能力。与以往同类教材相比,本套教材力求反映相关国家社会与文化的最新发展状况,并且注重引导学生进行中外文化比较,这有助于学习者从宏观上把握中国在世界文化中的作用和地位,增强民族自信,拓展其国际化视野,进而提高跨文化交际的有效性。

为了便于学习者自主学习和讨论式、探究式等学习活动的开展,以及教师个性化课堂教学的设计,本套教材在编制体系上做了以下新的尝

试,以期达到语言学习与文化研究相结合的目的。

第一,本套教材以主要英语国家的地理关系和历史发展为线索,结合课程设置要求,分为上、下两册。上册介绍英国、爱尔兰和澳大利亚;下册介绍新西兰、美国和加拿大。每册共16个单元,可供一学期的教学使用。

第二,本套教材根据学习者的语言水平,控制词汇量和语法难度,力求语言简练,以促进学习者获取信息的能力,提高其阅读兴趣。

第三,本套教材内容新颖、全面,关注热点。各单元既融会贯通又独立成篇,内容选取相关国家截至2011年底的重大社会文化现象,以提高学习者关注时事的意识以及理论联系实际的能力。

第四,本套教材内容编排灵活丰富,每单元包括六个部分:

1. 单元目标(Unit Goals),突出各单元学习重点,有利于学习者实施目的性阅读;

2. 正文(Text),以现状为主,兼顾历史,便于学习者追溯文化生成原因;

3. 难点解释(Explanations),对正文中的部分历史和文化现象提供补充说明,帮助读者理解正文内容;

4. 文化回顾(Culture Review),考察学习者对各类社会文化现象的了解与把握情况,同时设有主题讨论等任务,旨在推动学习者以英语为媒介梳理相关文化信息和社会现象,加深对正文的理解;

5. 补充读物(Supplementary Readings),针对正文的某个主题提供背景信息或相关介绍,有助于学习者进一步理解相关主题的文化意义和渊源(授课老师可根据实际教学情况决定是否将补充读物的部分或全部内容纳入课堂教学);

6. 词汇注释(Vocabulary),旨在帮助学习者清除阅读障碍,提高阅

读效率。

本套教材同时设有附录,补充说明主要英语国家的相关事实和资料,以提高教材的实用性和工具性。参考答案可供自学者使用。

本套教材由夏蓓洁和冉志晗分别担任上、下册主编。参加编写的还有王小琼、余荣琦和澳籍华裔祁建新女士。具体分工如下:夏蓓洁编写英国部分的8个单元并负责教材的整体设计和编审;冉志晗编写美国部分的8个单元并负责教材的内容编排及审校;余荣琦编写爱尔兰部分的3个单元和加拿大部分的5个单元;王小琼编写澳大利亚部分的第12、13单元和新西兰部分的3个单元;祁建新女士编写澳大利亚部分的14、15和16单元。同时,祁建新女士还提供了澳大利亚和新西兰的部分素材,王小琼和余荣琦分别校对了书稿。

参编人员在学习相关国家主要官方网站的同时,也参考了近年来国内外出版的同类书籍,在此对相关编著者表示衷心的感谢。同时,特别感谢安徽大学外语学院洪增流教授及合肥工业大学外语学院任静生教授在本教材编写过程中给予的学术支持和悉心指导。

参加本套教材编写的人员均为长期从事“英语国家概况”教学的一线教师,并且具有在英国、美国、澳大利亚生活和学习的经历,因而能够最大限度地利用各种资源,实现教材的编写目的。编写人员为教材呕心沥血,力求完美,希望教材能够得到广大师生的认可。但是,疏漏之处在所难免,欢迎各位同行专家及广大读者批评指正,以便不断完善。请将您的宝贵意见和建议发邮件至:xiapeijie@hfu.edu.cn; ranzhihan99@yahoo.com.cn。

编者

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Contents

目 录

Preface	1
Chapter 1 The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	1
Unit 1 A Brief Introduction to the UK	3
Unit 2 British Ways of Life	20
Unit 3 Religions and Beliefs in the UK	44
Unit 4 British Government System	68
Unit 5 Political Parties and Elections in the UK	88
Unit 6 Education in the UK	109
Unit 7 The UK Economy	135
Unit 8 British Foreign Policies	155
Chapter 2 The Republic of Ireland	177
Unit 9 Land, People and History of Ireland	179
Unit 10 The Culture of Ireland	192
Unit 11 Irish Political System and Economy	207
Chapter 3 The Commonwealth of Australia	229
Unit 12 Land, People and History of Australia	231
Unit 13 From Racism to Multiculturalism	252
Unit 14 Australian Social Values and Lifestyles	269
Unit 15 Education and Economy of Australia	283
Unit 16 Australian Political System	299
Appendices	315
Appendix 1 Reference Keys to Comprehension Tasks	317
Appendix 2 Symbols of the UK	318
Appendix 3 Symbols of the Constituent Countries of the UK	319
Appendix 4 British Prime Ministers Since World War II	320
Appendix 5 A Calendar of British Holidays	322
References	323

Chapter 1 The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland



- Unit 1 A Brief Introduction to the UK
- Unit 2 British Ways of Life
- Unit 3 Religions and Beliefs in the UK
- Unit 4 British Government System
- Unit 5 Political Parties and Elections in the UK
- Unit 6 Education in the UK
- Unit 7 The UK Economy
- Unit 8 British Foreign Policies

Unit 1 A Brief Introduction to the UK

Unit Goals

- ☆ To learn about the geographical features of the UK;
- ☆ To understand the multicultural nature of the British society;
- ☆ To understand the position and influence of the UK in the world.

Text

The United Kingdom, or the UK, is officially called the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Together with many smaller islands, it comprises the Island of Great Britain (England, Scotland and Wales) and the one-sixth of the northeastern part of the Island of Ireland (Northern Ireland).

Traditionally known as the British Empire on which “the sun never sets”, the country helps shape the modern world and plays an important role as one of the members of the European Union, the UN Security Council, North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the “Group Eight (G8)” as well. It is highly developed in economy, **preeminent** in the arts and sciences, and sophisticated in technology. In general, the British **subjects** enjoy a high standard of living compared to those living in the rest of the world.

Confusing Terms

The United Kingdom is a “country of countries”. It constitutes the majority part of the British Isles, including England, Scotland and Wales in Great Britain and Northern Ireland, along with various other islands such as the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man, each of which has their own laws and jurisdiction systems. It is important to be aware of not only these geographical distinctions but also the strong sense of identity and nationalism felt by the populations of these four nations. In fact, national identity and citizenship is not always the same thing in the UK. Although everyone in the UK has a British citizenship, the

native whites there have varied ethnic origins, nationalities and cultural traditions. However, the UK is often, incorrectly, referred to as the British Isles, or Great Britain or England. Then, what are the British Isles? What is the difference between England, Great Britain and the United Kingdom?

The British Isles

The term of “the British Isles” refers to a geographic area consisting of Great Britain and Ireland along with about 5,000 **adjacent** small islands. It is not a political area, as is sometimes thought of.

Great Britain

“Great Britain”, or just “Britain” in short, is not only a geographical term but also a political one. As a geographical term, it refers to the island northwest of France and east of Ireland that comprises the main territory of the United Kingdom. Politically, Great Britain may also refer to the island itself, together with a number of surrounding islands which comprise the territory of England, Scotland and Wales. Therefore, it is not right to refer to the sovereign state of the UK as “Great Britain” or “Britain”.

The British

The term of “the British” does not necessarily mean “the English”. However, in practice, the term “English” is frequently used to refer to the British, which is inappropriate and insulting to those who are not from England. “The British” collectively refers to any people from Great Britain or the UK, including not only the “English” from England but also those from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. As a matter of fact, people from England, Scotland and Wales prefer to be referred to as “the English”, “the Scottish”, and “the Welsh” respectively, as opposed to the more generic term like “the British”.

England

England is a single country within Great Britain. It is one of the four constituents of the UK. “England” is often mistakenly referred to the whole United Kingdom, the entire Island of Great Britain or the British Isles because of its dominance in Great Britain and the UK. As the largest part of the UK, England holds about 84 percent of the population of the entire United Kingdom and geographically covers approximately 57 percent of Great Britain. Moreover, the English language, originated from the English, is the official language of the UK and the first language of the vast majority of the population. Although the Welsh

and Scots have their own languages, English is more frequently used in both countries. London, the capital of England, is also the capital and the largest city in the UK. It has been the ruling center of government for the United Kingdom since 1707. Today, London is the culture center with the wide selection of galleries, theatres and museums. It is the home to all the major British newspapers, TV stations, and it is the business and the financial center of the nation. Since London is a huge weight in Britain's economic and cultural life and the rest of the country lives in its shadow to a large extent, it's not difficult to understand why many people assume that British people are "the English" unless specified otherwise.

Geography of the UK

The United Kingdom is a small nation in physical size with an area about 243,000 square kilometers. The mainland UK is separated from Ireland by the Irish Sea. The only land border connecting the UK to another country is between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland. Encircled by seas on all sides, it is aloof from the European continent by the North Sea and the English Channel.

Although the UK is geographically a part of Europe, the British, when they are in Britain, tend not to regard themselves as Europeans. To them, Europeans are those rather excitable foreigners from the other side of the English Channel, who speak a language other than English. Besides, Europe is the "Continent", a place of interest for British tourists and the source of almost all the wars in which the UK has ever been involved. As a result, this geographic separation created a sense of psychological isolation among its inhabitants. Up to today, the Britons still sometimes feel cut off even though the airlines and Channel Tunnel have linked Britain with European continent.

The landscape of the UK is quite varied. The Island of Great Britain is divided into the lowland zone and the highland zone by an imaginary line running through England from the River Exe on the southwest coast to the mouth of the River Tees on the northeast coast.

The lowland zone in the south and east consists mostly of rolling plains. It is a great plain with a gentle, undulating surface and extensive areas of almost level ground. It has a milder climate and better soils for farming and receives less rain and more sunshine than the highland zone. For thousands of years the lowland zone has been extensively inhabited, farmed and grazed. The metropolis of

London and most of the large British cities are located in this area. **Pennine Chain** of mountains in England extends down into northern England and further into the southwestern **peninsula**. It is sometimes called the backbone of England since many of England's major industrial areas lie on its flanks, where there are many coalfields. To the west of the northern **Pennines** are the Cumbrian Mountains, a mountainous **dome** of ancient rocks deeply eroded by glaciers, known as the Lake District, which is famous for its lakes and scenic beauty.

The highland zone in the north and west, covering Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland and parts of England, consists to a large extent of rugged hills, mountains and eroded areas frequently broken by valleys and plains. This area is cooler than the lowland zone and receives more rainfall and less sunlight. Therefore, farming is impossible in many of the places.



The Landscape of the UK

Like the rest of northern Europe, the UK is warmed by the Gulf Stream flowing out of the North Atlantic Ocean although it is located as far north in latitude as eastern Siberia. Prevailing southwest winds moving across this warmer water provide moisture and moderating temperatures to the British Isles. The surrounding waters moderate temperatures year-round, making the UK warmer in winter and cooler in summer than the other areas at the same latitude. The climate of Britain thus varies greatly with seasons and location but on the whole it can be described as temperate maritime, mild, chilly and often wet. Rain or overcast skies can be expected for up to 300 days per year, which makes Britain **lush** and **green**.

The Multicultural UK

Today the UK has a total population about 60 million. In spite of its relatively small size, the UK is highly populated with an estimated population density of about 250 persons per square kilometers in 2005, but the population is unequally distributed over the four countries; England more or less constantly makes up about 83.6 percent of the population, Scotland roughly 8.6 percent, Wales around 5 percent, and Northern Ireland about 2.9 percent.

For thousands of years the geography, climate and the history of invasion have affected settlement in the UK. The mild and wet climate ensured thick forests rich in **game** as well as rivers and streams abundant with fishes, which were available to the prehistoric hunters and gatherers. In the first few centuries, as a part of the Roman Empire, Britain was regarded as a cold, remote and distant part of the ancient Roman Empire and relatively few Romans were motivated to move there. Preindustrial settlements clustered in southern England where the climate was milder, the growing season was longer and the rich soil and steady rainfall produced bountiful harvests. With the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth century, its population grew enormously in the areas with rich resources beneath the ground, particularly coal, even though these resources were sometimes located in the colder, harsher northern regions of England or the western lowlands of Scotland.



The Multiracial UK



Set of 6 Great Britain Stamps Showing British Cuisine in a Multi-cultural Society

A Multiracial Society

As a blend of many different ethics and races, people of the UK may trace their ancestry to the different groups of the early invaders. Historically, the present UK once experienced invasions by the Roman Empire, Germanic Anglo-Saxons, Scandinavian Vikings and the French-speaking Normans, which have greatly influenced the composition of the British population.

Before the first century AD Britain was made up of many tribal kingdoms of the Celtic people, who are considered the aboriginal people of the UK. Between the fifth and seventh centuries AD, the Germanic Anglo-Saxons invaded and overwhelmed Britain. They chose to settle on the plains of England because of the mild climate and rich soil there. Later, they either absorbed the Native Britons, the Celts, or pushed them to the western and northern edges of Britain. As a result, their language became the basis of the everyday vocabulary in modern English. Since then, the Anglo-Saxon, who was generally tall, blond and blue-eyed, has become the most predominant stock in Britain. After the Anglo-Saxon conquest, the Celts remained in Wales, Scotland, Ireland and the West Country (the southwestern peninsula of Britain). Today, the geographic separation between the Germanic Anglo-Saxons and the Celts has been broken down as people migrated and intermarried over the centuries. The Celtic languages are still in use to some extent and the Celtic culture is still celebrated.

During the ninth century, a substantial number of Scandinavians, most of whom were Vikings, raided and settled in Great Britain and Ireland. By then the Anglo-Saxons had established their agricultural and Christian communities, and they eventually succeeded in **subduing** and integrating the Scandinavians into their

kingdoms. In 1066, the Normans and the French-speaking invaders of the Norse origin conquered England and became the last major group adding to the ethnic component of the British population. Later, waves of other foreigners and refugees immigrated to Britain for religious, political or economic reasons. For example, the Protestant French sought refuge in the seventeenth century, sailors of the African ancestry arrived in the eighteenth century, and Jews from the central and Eastern Europe immigrated in the late nineteenth century and during the 1930s and late 1940s.

For a long time, the UK was principally a very **homogenous** white society. However, since World War II, it has become increasingly diverse as it has accommodated large immigrant populations, particularly from its former colonies such as India, Pakistan and the West Indies. The minorities—Chinese, Asian Indians, Pakistanis, Africans and the Caribbean people of African ancestry—went to the UK in substantial numbers after 1945. In the 1990s, immigration from the South Asian subcontinent (India and Pakistan) stabilized but that from African countries continued to rise. These newly added ethnic groups tend to live in the more urban and industrial areas of England, especially in London, Birmingham and Leeds. It is estimated that 60 percent of the black Britons live in the London area along with 41 percent of the Asian Indian population.

According to the 2001 census, the United Kingdom is an overwhelmingly white dominant society. The ethnic composition of the British population includes 92.1 percent of the native whites, 2 percent of the black, 1.8 percent of the Indian, 1.3 percent of the Pakistani, 1.2 percent of the mixed, and the 1.6 percent of others. Nowadays, the British society is becoming even more diverse. People from all cultures and ethnical backgrounds are found in every corner of the country. If one walks down a street in the country, especially in some big cities, it is not uncommon to see people with different hair, skin and eye colors. These diverse groups of people have connections to every continent of the world. Their ethnic origins have been complicated by immigration, intermarriage and constant relocation in this highly developed industrial and technological society. In fact, the mixture of ethnic groups and cultures has made it difficult to define “Britishness” and the debate rages within the nation as to what now really constitutes being a “Briton”.

A Tolerant Society

The UK is generally a prosperous, well-educated and tolerant society.

People from different ethnic and racial backgrounds have contributed in their own way to the shaping of the multicultural UK. Unlike the United States which is also a multi-racial society, the ethnic differences in the UK have sparked relatively little violence and hostility. The Race Relations Act of 1976 makes it illegal to discriminate against anyone because of his race, color, nationality or origin and it is a criminal offense to incite racial hatred. However, the economic and social disadvantages of the minorities are the major factors which have caused significant riots in the UK; the tension between the predominant white police force and the poorest ethnic communities, the competition between the unskilled whites and the unskilled workers from ethnic minorities, and the resentment of the white middle-class businessmen, particularly smaller shopkeepers, against the keen competition presented by the Asians who tended to work longer hours with support from their family members and ethnic community in running their businesses.

In the past few decades, the UK has seen remarkable progress in the integration of diverse ethnic groups into the workforce and in the socialization of the minorities into the broader society. Today, percentages of employment for various ethnic minorities, and whites are generally similar. Many individuals from ethnic minorities hold managerial and professional positions and several even sit in the Parliament. Some local and national government programs have been developed to seek fairness and justice for the ethnic minorities. Educational programs and the law bolster equal opportunities for each of the British people.

A Multilingual Society

English is the official language of the United Kingdom, and it is the first language of the vast majority of its citizens. In the past, the use of language was extremely important to the class structure of the country, and the regional accents and slangs were considered as substandard English. The educated English people, regardless of their class origins, strived to free themselves of regional or local accents in order to sound like educated English-speaking people. On the contrary, many local people such as Cockneys in East London and people in the northern England enjoy their particular way of speaking, regarding it warmer and friendlier than the Standard English.

Nowadays, approximately 80,000 Scots living in the remote **fringes** of Scotland speak Scottish Gaelic, a type of the Celtic language. Scottish people appreciate the