

大学英语选修教材

The Software of the European Mind

西方文化

张纹祯 李景琦 孙晓 主编



天津大学出版社

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前 言

为了适应我国高等教育发展的新形势,深化大学公共英语课程的教学改革,提高教学质量,满足新时期国家和社会对人才培养的需要及国际交流的需要,提高大学生英语语言综合应用能力,特别是提高文化素养,天津大学文法学院大学英语教学二部增加了特色精品课程的比重,面向全校各非英语专业本科二年级学生,于第三学期开设这门公共英语选修课。

本书主要介绍两希文化(Greek & Hebrew),帮助学生了解西方文化起源、人文主义思想等,分 10 单元学习,每单元安排有常识预习、专题讲座、复习反馈和自主拓展四个项目,使学生通过一个学期的学习对西方文化是在希腊文化基础上吸收希伯来文化形成、发展起来的文化背景有一定的了解,增加学生相关的信息量和词汇量,提高英语水平,激发学生的文化学习热情,增长知识、开阔眼界;同时,大家通过学习培养宽容地对待异国文化的态度。

大英二部选修教材建设项目组

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Unit One



warming-up 常识预习

1. What countries are included in “the West”?
2. What are the two major cultural influences over the European mind?
3. What civilization have the Crusades brought into Western culture?
4. Talk about something you know of the West-East contrast during the Cold War.
5. What can be represented by a Celtic knot symbol?
6. Can you give some examples of English terms with Greek or Latin roots?



lecturette 专题讲座

West Is West

It is impossible to embrace the cultures of the entire Western civilization between the covers of one book, we have endeavored to make a reasonably balanced selection.

By *The Software of the European Mind* we refer to cultures of European origin, or simply Western Culture, which implies a Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian cultural influence, concerning literary, philosophic, artis-

tic and scientific themes and traditions, as well as the cultural social effects of Germanic migration. A Biblical cultural influence in spiritual thinking, customs and either ethic or moral traditions has been further developed during the Middle Ages, so has an ancient Greek civilization during the Renaissance.

Our stereotyped view of “the West” has not been labeled geographically. “The West” today would normally be said to include Europe as well as Japan, the developed countries.

The Classical West

The Greeks felt they were civilized and saw themselves as something between the wild barbarians of most of Europe and the slavish Easterners. Ancient Greek science, philosophy, democracy, architecture, literature, and art provided a foundation embraced and built upon by the Roman Empire as it swept up Europe, including the Hellenic World in its conquests in the 1st century BC. In the meantime, however, Greece, under Alexander, had become a capital of the East, and part of an empire. The idea that the later Orthodox or Eastern Christian cultural descendants of the Greek-speaking Eastern Roman empire are a happy mean between Eastern slavishness and Western barbarism is promoted to this day, creating a zone which is both Eastern and Western depending upon the context of discussion.

For about five hundred years, the Roman Empire maintained the Greek East and consolidated a Latin West, but an East-West division remained, reflected in many cultural norms of the two areas, including language. Eventually the empire came to be increasingly officially split into a Western and Eastern part, reviving old ideas of a contrast between an advanced East, and a rugged West.

With the rise of Christianity in the midst of the Roman world, much of

Rome's tradition and culture were absorbed by the new religion, and transformed into something new, which would serve as the basis for the development of Western civilization after the fall of Rome. Also, Roman culture mixed with the pre-existing Celtic, Germanic and Slavic cultures, which slowly became integrated into Western culture starting, mainly, with their acceptance of Christianity.

The Medieval West

The Medieval West included at its broadest both the "Latin" or "Frankish" West, and the Orthodox Eastern part, where Greek remained the language of empire. More narrowly, it was Catholic (Latin) Europe. After the crowning of Charlemagne, this part of Europe was referred to by its neighbors in Byzantium and the Moslem world as "Frankish".

After the fall of Rome much of Greco-Roman art, literature, science and even technology were all but lost in the western part of the old empire, centered around Italy, and Gaul (France). However, this would become the center of a new West. Europe fell into political anarchy, with many warring kingdoms and principalities. Under the Frankish kings, it eventually reunified and evolved into feudalism.

Much of the basis of the post-Roman cultural world had been set before the fall of the Empire, mainly through the integrating and reshaping of Roman ideas through Christian thought. The Greek and Roman gods had been completely replaced by Christianity around the 4th and 5th centuries, since it became the official State religion as a unifying force in Western Europe. Art and literature, law, education, and politics were preserved in the teachings of the Church. The Church founded many cathedrals, universities, monasteries and seminaries, some of which continue to exist today. In the Medieval period, the route to power for many men was in the Church.

In a broader sense, the Middle Ages, monotheism was not confined to the West but also stretched into the old East, in what was to become the Islamic world, which made its way back to Western Europe via Spain and Italy.

In the Catholic or Frankish west, the Roman law became the foundation on which all legal concepts and systems were based. Its influence can be traced to this day in all Western legal systems (although in different manners and to different extents in the common (Anglo-American) and the civil (continental European) legal traditions). The ideas of civil rights, equality before the law, equality of women, procedural justice, and democracy as the ideal form of society, were principles which formed the basis of modern Western culture.

The West actively encouraged the spreading of Christianity, which was inexorably linked to the spread of Western culture. Owing to the influence of Islamic culture, Western Europeans translated many Arabic texts into Latin during the Middle Ages. Later, with the fall of Constantinople and the Ottoman conquest of the Byzantine Empire, followed by a massive exodus of Greek Christian priests and scholars to Italian towns like Venice, bringing with them as many scripts from the Byzantine archives as they could, scholars' interest in the Greek language and classic works, topics and lost files was revived. Both the Greek and Arabic influences eventually led to the beginnings of the Renaissance. From the late 15th century to the 17th century, Western culture began to spread to other parts of the world by intrepid explorers and missionaries during the Age of Discovery, followed by imperialists from the 17th century to the early 20th century.

The Modern West

As religion became less important, and Europeans came into increasing contact with faraway peoples, the old concept of Western Culture began

a slow evolution towards what it is today. The Early Modern “Age of Discovery” in the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries faded into the “Age of Enlightenment” continuing into the 18th, both characterized by the military advantages coming to Europeans from their development of firearms and other military technologies. The “Great Divergence” became more pronounced, making the West the bearer of science and the accompanying revolutions of technology and industrialization. Western political thinking also eventually spread in many forms around the world. With the early 19th century “Age of Revolution” the West entered a period of World empires, massive economic and technological advance, and bloody international conflicts continuing into the 20th century.

Religion in the meantime has waned considerably in Western Europe, where many are agnostic or atheist. Nearly half of the populations of the United Kingdom (44%—54%), Germany (41%—49%), France (43%—54%) and the Netherlands (39%—44%) are non-theist. However, religious belief in the United States is very strong, about 75%—85% of the population, as also happens in most of Latin America.

As Europe discovered the wider world, old concepts adapted. The Islamic world which had formerly been considered “the Orient” (“the East”) more specifically became the “Near East” as the interests of the European powers for the first time interfered with Qing China and Meiji Japan in the 19th century.

During the Cold War, the West-East contrast became synonymous with the competing governments of the United States and the Soviet Union and their allies.

Despite the Western empires in the past, concepts of democracy and an emphasis on freedom have been seen as distinguishing Western peoples from non-western neighbors.

In the Middle Ages and early modern times, the concept of a separation of Church and state developed, allowing for the development of more distinctive political norms, such as the doctrine of the separation of powers, which make modern Western democracy distinct from democracy in general.

Cultural Cases

Dance, music, story-telling, and architecture are human universals, and they are expressed in the West in certain characteristic ways.

The symphony has its origins in Italy. Many important musical instruments used by cultures all over the world were also developed in the West; among them are the violin, piano, pipe organ, saxophone, trombone, and clarinet. The solo piano, symphony orchestra and the string quartet are also important performing musical forms.

The ballet is a distinctively Western form of performance dance. The ballroom dance is an important Western variety of dance for the elite. The polska, the square dance, and the Irish step dance are very well-known Western forms of folk dance.

Historically, the main forms of western music are European folk, choral, classical, Country, rock and roll, and hip-hop.

The arch, the dome, and the flying buttress as architectural motifs were first used by the Romans. Important western architectural motifs include the Doric, Corinthian, and Ionic columns, and the Romanesque, Gothic, Baroque, and Victorian styles are still widely recognized, and used even today, in the West. Much of Western architecture emphasizes repetition of simple motifs, straight lines and expansive, undecorated planes. A modern ubiquitous architectural form that emphasizes this characteristic is the skyscraper, first developed in New York and Chicago.

In art, the Celtic knot is a very distinctive Western repeated motif.

Depictions of the nude human male and female in photography, painting and sculpture are frequently considered to have special artistic merit. Realistic portraiture is especially valued. In Western dance, music, plays and other arts, the performers are only very infrequently masked. There are essentially no taboos against depicting God, or other religious figures, in a representational fashion.

Widespread usage of terms and specific vocabulary borrowed or derived from or based on Greek and Latin roots or etymologies for almost any field of arts, science and human knowledge, becoming easily understandable and common to almost any European language, and being a source for inventing internationalized neologisms for nearly any purpose.

Graeco-Roman and Judeo-Christian: 两希文化 (Greek & Hebrew)

Renaissance: 文艺复兴

barbarians: 蛮族 (未开化的 violent and not educated)

Charlemagne: 查理大帝 (742—814), 神圣罗马帝国的开国皇帝 (公元 800 加冕)

all but: almost

anarchy: no government

inexorable: impossible to stop

Meiji Japan: 明治时代的日本

motif: theme, pattern

ubiquitous: present everywhere

polska: a folk dance, common in Nordic countries



going-over 复习反馈

multiple-choice Q's

1. What integrated the Celtic, Germanic and Slavic cultures with the Roman culture into Western culture?

- A. The acceptance of Christianity. B. Greece under Alexander.
C. Latin language.

2. Who reunified many warring kingdoms after the fall of Rome?

- A. Gaul. B. Charlemagne. C. King Byzas.

3. The _____ influence (s) led to the beginnings of the Renaissance.

- A. Greek B. Arabic C. Both A and B

4. Age of Discovery refers to an early modern evolution of the Europe in _____.

- A. the 15th century B. the 17th century
C. the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries

5. Religious belief in _____ is very strong.

- A. the United Kingdom B. the United States
C. France

6. Which of the following classical style is built with a spiral scroll-like capital?

- A. The Doric column. B. The Ionic column.
C. The Corinthian column.

7. _____ is one of the very well-known Western forms of folk dance.

- A. Hula B. Polska C. Samba

8. _____ is NOT an example of the modern West skyscrapers.

- A. Taipei 101 B. 30 St. Mary Axe

C. The Willis Tower

9. What country looks like a boot at the map?

A. Britain. B. Italy. C. Norway.

essay Q's

10. What are the distinguishing characteristics of the classical West?

11. What role did the Church play in the Middle Ages?

12. What ideas were principles which formed the basis of modern Western culture?



assignments 课题作业

Prepare a brief summary on the cultures of European origin.

This assignment may be presented either as a written text or orally in class next time.



extensions 自主拓展

Learn after-class the European werewolf legends.

This text is included mainly as entertainment. Can you find similar legends in Chinese?

Werewolf legends are widespread in the West. According to them, many people possessed this kind of magical power to transform themselves into wolves by putting on a wolf belt.

Once the huntsmen organized a fox hunt and had placed a dead horse in the woods as bait for the foxes. The werewolf went there and was eating from the horse. The huntsmen surprised him and shot at him. He fled, and when they went to the house of the man they suspected of being a werewolf, they found him in bed with a bullet wound.

Another story goes like this. A young woman whose husband was often unexplainably absent came to the suspicion that he was a werewolf. One day both were working in the field. The man again left his wife. Suddenly a wolf came forth from the bushes, ran toward her, grabbed her red woolen skirt with its teeth and shook her back and forth. With screams and blows from her hay fork she drove him away. Soon afterward her husband emerged from the same bushes into which the wolf had disappeared. She told him of her frightening experience. He laughed, thereby revealing the red woolen threads from her skirt that were stuck between his teeth. She reported him to the judge, and he was burned to death.

Also a woodcutter was working in the forest with his brother. The latter went away, and soon thereafter a wolf came out of the nearby bushes. The woodcutter wounded him on his right front leg with his ax, and the wolf

retreated howling. That evening when the woodcutter returned home he found his brother in bed with his right arm hidden beneath the covers. Only after repeated threats would he reveal his arm, and on it was the same wound that the woodcutter had given to the wolf. He reported his brother, who was burned to death, too.

By using a so-called wolf strap, any person could transform himself into a werewolf. Whoever fastened such a strap around himself would turn into a wolf. If someone called out the name of a person who had turned himself into a wolf, that person would regain his human form. In earlier times there were a great many such straps, but today, along with the wolves, they seem to have been banned to Russia.

A wolf strap was a gift from the devil. A person who possessed such a strap could not get rid of it, however much he wanted to. Anyone who accepted a wolf strap also had entered into brotherhood with the devil, surrendering body and soul to him.

If real wolves were feared in earlier times, werewolves were feared all the more. A real wolf could be shot dead or lured into a so-called wolf pit, where it would perish from hunger. However, a werewolf could not be brought down with a rifle bullet, nor would it ever fall into a wolf pit.

What is the use of running around as a werewolf?

This was not done for no good reason. When the pantries and meat containers were empty, one would only have to fasten on the wolf strap, run off as a wolf, seek out a fat sheep that was wandering off toward the edge of the woods, creep towards it, seize it, and drag it into the woods. In the evening one could bring it home without anyone noticing. Or the werewolf would know when a peasant was going through the woods with a lot of money. He would ambush him, rob him, then run off across the field with the booty.

In earlier times, after the horses had been unhitched from a wagon or a plow, they would be driven out to a community pasture where they would be watched until morning by two herdsmen. Even colts were put out for the night. People took turns watching after them.

Now once it happened that one of the two herdsmen had a wolf strap. After both herdsmen had kept watch for several hours they got sleepy and laid their heads down. The first one, however, who had heard that his companion possessed a wolf strap, only pretended to be asleep, and the other one thought that he was indeed sleeping. He quickly fastened the strap around himself and ran off as a wolf. The other one got up and saw how his companion ran up to a colt, attacked it, and devoured it.

After this had happened, the wolf man came back and lay down to sleep. Toward morning they both awoke. The werewolf man was rolling around on the ground and groaning loudly. The other one asked him what was wrong.

He said that he had a horrible stomach ache.

To this the first one said, "The devil himself would have a stomach ache if he had eaten an entire colt at one time."

A woman can transform herself into a werewolf as well.

In a village there lived a woman. Her husband had been dead for a long time. The woman lived in impoverished circumstances, but nonetheless, she was always able to offer fresh meat to those who visited her.

One time a male relative came to visit her, and she offered him good fresh meat.

The man said to her, "Tell me, where did you get this nice mutton?"

The woman answered, "I'll show you. Just climb up onto the roof with the ladder that is leaning against the back of the house."

The man did what the woman asked him to do. In the distance he saw