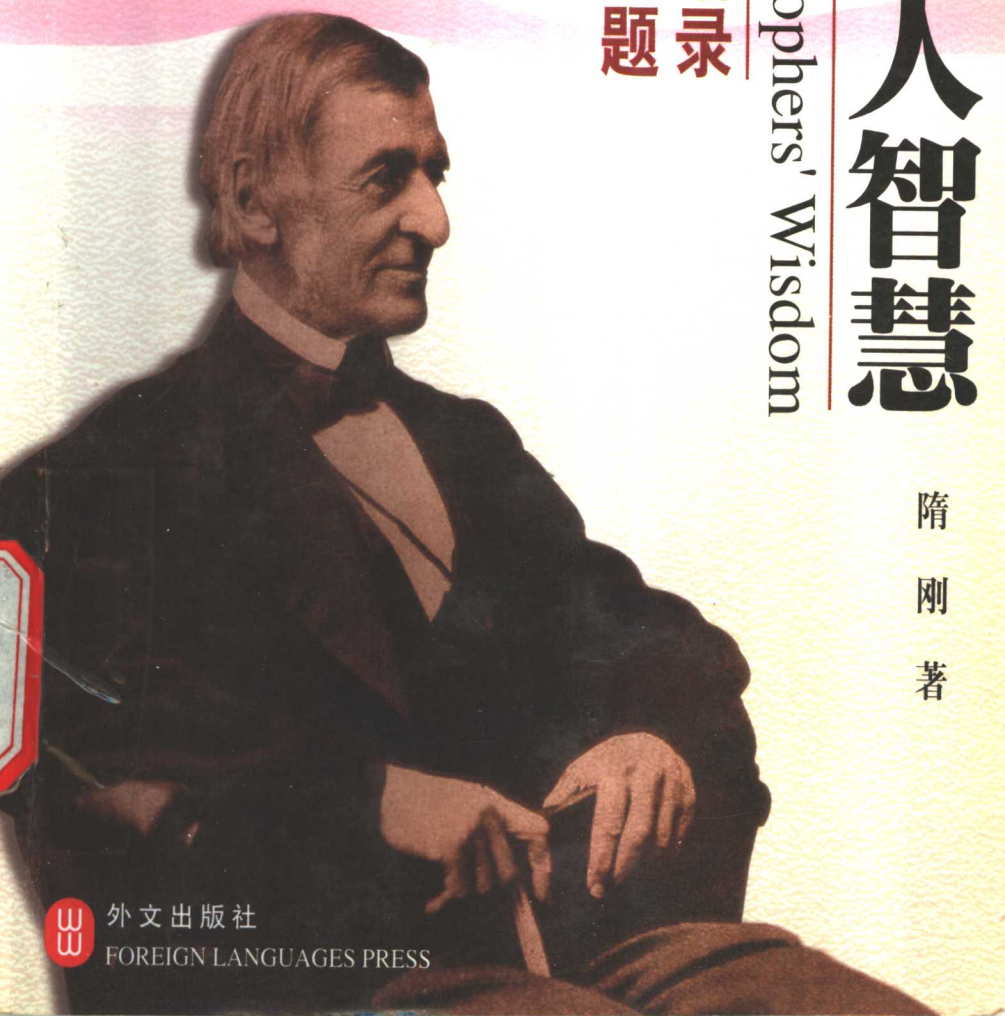


美国哲人智慧

American Philosophers' Wisdom

读美国哲人语录
谈人类共同话题

隋刚 著



外文出版社

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Foreword

前言

读美国哲人语录，谈人类共同话题

本书包括两个部分。

第一部分“漫谈生活哲理”（“Free Talks on the Philosophy of Life”）由二十个单元构成，其中每个单元的体例如下：

- ① 美国哲人拉尔夫·华尔多·爱默生（Ralph Waldo Emerson）的语录 [英语]
- ② A 和 B 两人涉及爱默生语录的对话 [英语]
- ③ 注释 [汉语]

第二部分“美国哲人语录”（“Quotations from American Philosophers”）由六个单元构成，含六位美国哲人语录和注释。

本书中所摘引的美国哲人语录具有普遍意义以及现实意义，文字质朴，比喻贴切，形象地讲述人生哲理，能给当代人以深刻的启迪。这些语录涉及以下主要内容：自我与自然、个人与社会、虚无与信仰、虚伪与诚实、人性与神性、理智与情感、欢乐与痛苦、贪婪与自制、肉体与灵魂、假恶丑与真善美、物质财富与精神财富、世俗关怀与终极关怀，等等。在美国哲人的话语里，没有浮躁和焦虑的心情的流露，唯有坦然和平静的心情的体现；没有武断生硬的学阀妄言，唯有深入浅出的类比解析；没有对人的弱点的矫情袒护，唯有对人的生命本质的真诚关注。美国哲人是勇于并善于创造美好生活的强者和智者。他们稳步走向内心，深入研究自我，获取自知，并通过知己去知彼，省视普遍人性。他们是

有敏锐的观察力、丰富的想象力和独特的创造力，揭示了自然界和人类社会生活中蕴涵的深刻哲理。

本书试图用通俗易懂的英语口语阐明美国哲人语录的思想观念和精
神实质，用轻松幽默、由浅入深的对话及漫谈形式帮助国内众多的英语
学习者理解美国哲人语录的丰富内涵，进行富有成效的思考，从而加深
对真善美的认识，选择合情合理的价值取向，不断地充实自己的心灵，
提升自己的品格，提高自己的思想修养和精神生活质量。为使自己在商
品经济大潮的冲击下不至于晕头转向，人必须拥有一块净土来安置灵魂，
否则就会随波逐流，痛失崇高感、安全感和稳定感，惶惶不可终日，无
法感受真正的幸福，无法掌握自己的命运。

我不知道：人伟大不伟大；我只知道：人需要有自己的精神的家——
无论物质家园多么富饶，都掩饰不住精神资源的匮乏。

我不知道：人渺小不渺小；我只知道：太阳和月亮都不是人的创造
——人有权生活在无垠的宇宙，但毫无理由自大骄傲。

我不知道：人幸运不幸运；我只知道：人最初是处于一片混沌——
人不劳而获就有了地球这个家，是先出现水土空气后出现人。

我不知道：精神家园是需要建造还是需要寻找；我只知道：它应该
有神圣的内涵和朴素的外表——它应该不受岁月的骤雨侵蚀，应该不被
历史的疾风吹倒。

我不知道：精神家园的地基应该多么牢固；我只知道：它必须承载
灵魂的重负——有依托的灵魂自会喜乐平安，无依托的灵魂难免忧惧痛
苦。

我不知道：人应该怎样迈进精神家园的门槛；我只知道：人应该永
远自信勇敢——相信自己理智与情感的综合选择，奋力挣脱虚无与堕落的
双重阻拦。

我不知道：一个人的精神家园应该有多大面积；我只知道：它应该以宽容忍耐作藩篱——每个人都需要和睦相处的邻居，也需要自我空间的安谧。

我不知道：人能否共享同一个精神家园；我只知道：每个人都拥有自己的选择权——精神家园既是寄托个人灵魂的庭院，又是履行社会义务的工作间。

我不知道：人能否永久地住在同一个精神家园；我只知道：精神家园决不是随意进出的客栈——真正的信仰需要持之以恒的真诚，真正的信仰需要全心全意的奉献。

我不知道：天堂和地狱位于何处；我只知道：每个人的灵魂的旅程都从人间起步——虽是不同的个体却有相同的起点，虽有相同的起点却有不同的归宿。

隋刚

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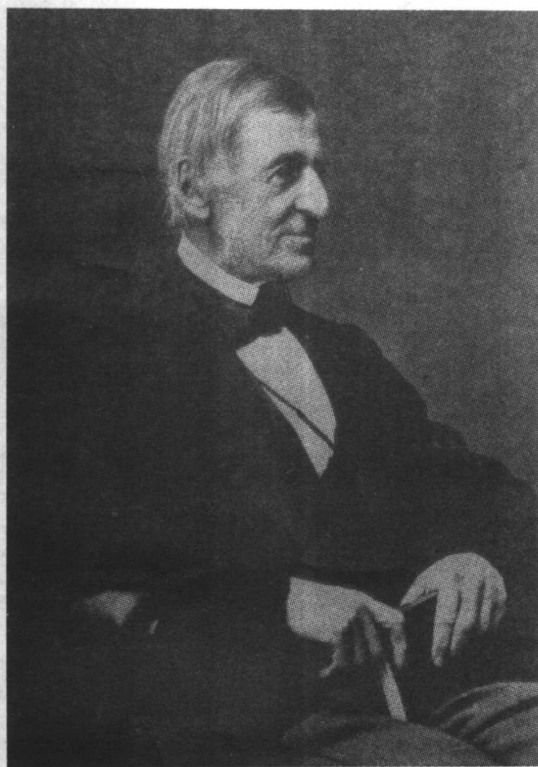
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Free Talks on the Philosophy of Life 漫谈生活哲理



Ralph Waldo Emerson
拉尔夫·华尔多·爱默生

Man and Nature

人与自然

Quotations

To speak truly, few adult persons can see nature. Most persons do not see the sun. At least they have a very superficial seeing. The sun illuminates only the eye of the man, but shines into the eye and the heart of the child. The lover of nature is he whose inward and outward senses¹ are still truly adjusted to each other; who has retained the spirit of infancy² even into the era of manhood. His intercourse with heaven and earth, becomes part of his daily food. In the presence of nature, a wild delight runs through the man, in spite of real sorrows.

— Ralph Waldo Emerson³

Dialogue

A: Where are you going?

B: I'm going to the suburbs for an outing.

A: A good choice. It's sunny today... Do you see the sun?

B: Of course, I do. Do you think I'm blind?

A: What do you see in the sun?

B: Nothing but bright sunlight. What does that make me?

A: It makes you a superficial⁴ seer, according to Ralph Waldo Emerson, a 19th-century American philosopher.

B: OK, OK. Maybe I have a very superficial seeing, and can only get sight of the most obvious facts. But what's a "profound" seeing like?

A: A "profound" seeing enables you to see the most subtle truths in the most obvious facts. For example, if you're sensitive, imaginative—and profound enough, you may see a primary source of life in the sun; you may see the power of creation in the sun; you may see the beauty of enlightenment⁵ in the sun; you may see the human hope for moral elevation⁶ in the sun; you may see the spiritual essence of nature in the sun...

B: What's the use of seeing all these things? I feel I live very well without thinking about them. I know the sun provides solar energy⁷, keeps the earth warm, makes plants grow, creates the seasons, rainbows and tides⁸, and helps us tell time...What's more, I've heard about the ancient sun-worship rituals⁹—I've heard about the Greek sun

god Apollo and his gold arrows¹⁰; I've heard about the Chinese myth of the ten suns appearing by turns in the sky and proceeding on a dragon-drawn chariot¹¹ ride; I've even heard about the Eskimo¹² folktale of the sun, a beautiful girl named Malina, carrying a torch across the sky while being chased by the moon, her brother Aningan...But, personally, I just take the beauty of the sun for granted—I just want to enjoy it.

A: I never intend to make you a sun-worshiper, but I do intend to make you see more in the sun, in nature, and in yourself. You're quite satisfied with your own life, aren't you? Don't you want to make it better? Don't you want to live more wisely? In a sense, the quality of your life depends on what you see, and the improvement of your life depends on your greater vision¹³ or seeing. Seeing is understanding. Seeing is believing. Seeing gives rise to faith. Only when you see the symbolic values of nature can you enjoy its beauty to the fullest. Only when you see the sublime¹⁴ as your goal can you set out to pursue it.

B: I get your message. What do you think I should do to sharpen my eyes and have a better seeing?

A: Did you see well when you were a child?

B: Yes, I did. I saw everything to be simple, clear and pure, but I'm dim-sighted¹⁵ now.

A: Symbolically¹⁶, as a child, you saw everything to be simple, clear and pure, because you yourself were simple, clear and pure. Your innocence¹⁷ allowed you to see things in their true light. You were curious to see. You were excited to see. You were ready to see. You kept your soul wide open to receive all the fascinating things in total

response to nature. At that time, your vision and reason were one; your perception and intuition¹⁸ were one; your heart and head were one. You were carefree, you were visionary, and your sense of sight wasn't limited to your physical eyes. Unfortunately, you've lost your innocence and your innate¹⁹ capability to see well in the process of growing up into an adult. So, for you—and for many other adults, including me, a spiritual return to childhood is needed.

B: How can I possibly return to childhood spiritually?

A: Try to simplify²⁰ your life into something manageable. Try to clear your mind about the genuine happiness of human existence. Try to free your soul from various kinds of worldly bondage²¹. What's more, a return to childhood means a return to nature.

B: How so?

A: In Emerson's eyes, nature is always as simple, clear and pure as childhood, and therefore man needs to go to nature, meditate²² on it, and communicate with it in order to be taught, inspired, and blessed.

B: Somehow you've reminded me of the American Indians' attitude towards nature. They take only the necessities of life²³ from nature; they treasure the rivers, mountains and forests; they adore²⁴ the land as Mother Earth.

A: Yes. They lead a simple and healthy life. I guess man is drawn to nature consciously or unconsciously. Isn't your outing a journey back to nature?

B: Oh, definitely.

A: At home and abroad, more and more urban dwellers have

awakened to the importance of nature, and acknowledged its powerful spiritual influence on them. They embrace the traditional ideal of living in harmony²⁵ with nature as well as the contemporary ideal of living in harmony with the city; they try to find some concrete good in nature to improve their own psychic²⁶ health in a practical way.

B: Well said. Keep going, and tell me more.

A: It's really important for urban dwellers to learn from their cultural traditions, come into close contact with nature, and find psychically significant common ground²⁷ between and among themselves to avoid being socially isolated²⁸ and mentally split²⁹. They need to create visions of human and cosmic unity³⁰ by emphasizing the spiritual links between and among human individuals and natural objects in order to rediscover the value of the "self-awakening" and "self-strengthening" principles, which can be used to build up psychic health and lessen the stress of social isolation in an urban setting.

B: You're right. Now I seem to understand the implications of the ever-growing green space of the city. Probably it shows that urban dwellers have a tendency to resist being cut off from nature, the source of life. They attempt to reunite themselves with nature in all possible physical and spiritual ways, surfing, skiing, camping, climbing mountains, keeping pets, cultivating a garden, or meditating on trees, flowers, or grasses.

A: True. They take delight and seek consolation³¹ in embracing nature. Hopefully, they can establish a relationship of trust between nature and themselves, and communicate meaningfully with nature to strengthen themselves psychically. In a sense, self-knowledge and

psychic health both rest on an imaginative understanding of the harmony between nature and man.

B: You're so profound.

A: I'm certainly not so profound as Emerson. I've read his books, and got my own mind enlarged.

B: Later on I will frequently go for a mental outing in Emerson's books, just as you do, to see more spiritual wonders, and hopefully have a larger mind—at least the same size as yours.

Notes:

- 1 inward and outward senses: 内心的感悟和肉体的感觉
- 2 the spirit of infancy: (未泯的) 童心
- 3 Ralph Waldo Emerson: 美国哲人拉尔夫·华尔多·爱默生(1803-1882)是超验主义者(transcendentalist)。他信奉维系宇宙万物的超灵(the Over-soul), 揭示大千世界表象背后的精神实质, 强调人与大自然之间的精神联系。
- 4 superficial: 浅薄的
- 5 enlightenment: 启蒙; 照明
- 6 elevation: 升华
- 7 solar energy: 太阳能
- 8 rainbows and tides: 彩虹和潮汐
- 9 sun-worship rituals: 太阳崇拜的仪式
- 10 the Greek sun god Apollo and his gold arrows: 古希腊太阳神阿波罗和他的金箭
- 11 dragon-drawn chariot: (中国古代神话里) 天龙拉的车
- 12 Eskimo: 爱斯基摩人的
- 13 vision: 远见; 想象力
- 14 the sublime: 崇高的事物
- 15 dim-sighted: 视力模糊的
- 16 symbolically: 在象征意义上说
- 17 innocence: 天真; 单纯
- 18 intuition: 直觉
- 19 innate: 天生的; 固有的
- 20 simplify: 简化
- 21 worldly bondage: 世俗的束缚
- 22 meditate: 深思; 反省
- 23 the necessities of life: 生活必需品
- 24 adore: 崇拜
- 25 harmony: 和谐
- 26 psychic: 精神的; 心理的
- 27 common ground: 共性
- 28 isolate: 隔离; 孤立
- 29 split: 分裂; 分离
- 30 human and cosmic unity: 人类大同与宇宙大同
- 31 consolation: 安慰