

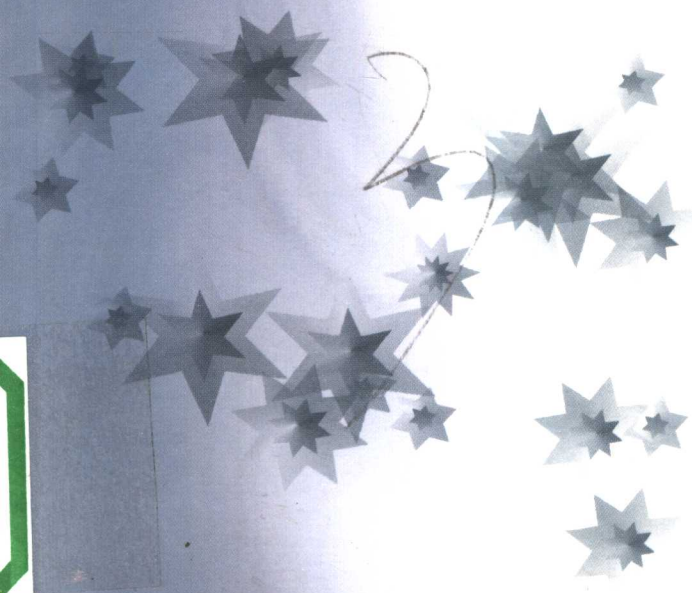
大学英语公共选修课教材

程 梅 编著

英语散文

精品赏析

南开大学出版社



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前言

学习任何一种语言，阅读是重要一环。散文作为文学作品中的奇葩，散发着独特的芳香。散文所写的常常是平日生活的琐碎见闻，点滴感思，构思不拘一格，行文信笔而书。

《英语散文精品赏析》一书是为具有中等以上英语水平的读者编选的文学读物，汇聚十六位优秀作家的二十篇英美文学史上的散文名作。这些散文全部出自名家高手，经过作家的反复锤炼，并且历经时代考验，多年来一直为人诵读，不仅内容上有益于培养读者优美的情操和高尚的理想，语言上可以使读者增强语感，提高英语的实际应用能力，而且还能增长和丰富有关英、美国的历史、文化、政治、经济等方面的背景知识。入选散文风格多样、题材各异，读者既可以把它们当作学习英语的阅读范文，也可以作为优秀文学作品而细细品味。

为了便于读者阅读和理解，每篇精彩文章都附有作者简介、妙语佳句、难点注释、参考译文和阅读赏析等五个栏目内容，体现了本书集知识性、鉴赏性、指导性于一体的特点。

知识性主要体现在“作者简介”和“难点注释”两个栏目中。“作者简介”对作者生平、创作成就与社会背景等情况进行了介绍，使读者对文章作者及其作品的背景知识有基本的了解。“难点注释”不仅对生词、难句提供中文释义，而且也对专有名词提供了一些背景资料，扩大了读者的知识面。

鉴赏性反映在“妙语佳句”中。“妙语佳句”或诗意盎然，或哲理深邃，供读者欣赏，引作人生的座右铭。

指导性实际贯穿于各个部分，但更集中体现于“参考译文”和“阅读赏析”这两部分中。“参考译文”可以帮助读者准确理解原文的思想内容，还可以使读者欣

赏到精彩的中文译文。“阅读赏析”其目的在于提高读者的阅读能力和文学鉴赏力,使读者领略到文章的精彩之处。

本书对文章进行了精挑细选,旨在让读者领略到散文优美的意境、细腻的笔调、隽永的词句和独特的韵味。

编者

2005年6月

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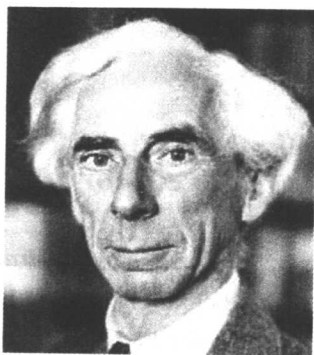
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Bertrand Russell

【作者简介】

伯特兰·罗素 (Bertrand Russell, 1872~1970), 二十



世纪最有影响力的哲学家、数学家和逻辑学家之一,同时也是活跃的政治活动家,并致力于哲学的大众化、普及化。许多人将罗素视为时代的先知,而与此同时罗素的许多政治立场却又是十分有争议性的。1950年罗素获诺贝尔文学奖,以表彰其

“多样且重要的作品,持续不断地追求人道主义理想和思想自由”。罗素还在理论教学、社会活动等方面都取得了显著成绩。罗素在哲学、教育、逻辑、经济等方面均有大量著述。著作共计70余部,包括《社会改造原理》、《自由之路》、《权力论》、《人类知识》、《教育与现代社会》、《怀疑论》、《婚姻与道德》等等。其散文特点是思想深邃,文笔汪洋。

这里为读者选取了罗素的两篇最著名的散文——《我的生活目的》(What I Have Lived For)和《论老之将至》(How to Grow Old),罗素阐述了自己的人生哲学,内容积极,激人奋进。

【妙语佳句】

1. The happiest of all lives is a busy solitude. 最幸福的人过的是忙碌的孤独的日子。

2. Even when the experts all agree, they may well be mistaken. 即使所有的专家都一致赞同，他们可能也错了。

3. Scientific knowledge aims at being wholly impersonal. 科学知识要求完全不受个人感情的影响。

— Bertrand Russell

【精彩篇章】

What I Have Lived For

by Bertrand Russell

Three passions, simple but overwhelmingly strong, have governed my life: the longing for love, the search for knowledge, and unbearable pity for the suffering of mankind. These passions, like great winds have blown me hither and thither¹ in a wayward² course, over a deep ocean of anguish³, reaching to the very verge of despair.

I have sought love, first, because it brings ecstasy⁴ — ecstasy so great that I would often have sacrificed all the rest of life for a few hours of this joy. I have sought it, next, because it relieves loneliness — that terrible loneliness in which one shivering consciousness looks over the rim of the world into the cold unfathomable⁵ lifeless abyss⁶. I have sought it, finally, because in the union of love I have seen, in a mystic miniature, the prefiguring⁷ vision of the heavens that saints and poets have imagined. This is what I sought, and thought it might seem too good for human life, this is what — at least — I have found.

With equal passion I have sought knowledge. I have wished to

understand the hearts of men. I have wished to know why the stars shine. And I have tried to apprehend⁸ the Pythagorean power⁹ by which number holds sway above the flux. A little of this, but not much, I have achieved.

Love and knowledge, so far as they were possible, led upward toward the heavens. But always pity brought me back to earth. Echoes of cries of pain reverberate in my heart. Children in famine, victims tortured by oppression, helpless old people a heated burden to their sons, and the whole world of loneliness, poverty, and pain make a mockery of what human life should be. I long to alleviate the evil, but I cannot, and I too suffer.

This has been my life. I have found it worth living, and would gladly live it again if the chance were offered me.

注释

1. hither and thither: 到处; 2. 反复无常的; 3. 痛苦; 4. 入迷; 5. 深不可测的; 6. 深渊; 7. 预示; 8. (古) 理解; 9. Pythagorean power: 毕达哥拉斯定理

【参考译文】

我的生活目的

伯特兰·罗素

三种简单而无比强烈的情感一直主宰着我的命运：对爱的渴望、对知识的求索和对人类苦难以承受的怜悯。这些情感如飓风一样无处不在，反复无常地吹拂着我，将我推进痛苦的深渊乃至濒临绝境。

我寻求爱，首先因为爱使人心醉神迷，为了几刻这样的幸福，我可以牺牲我的全部生命。我寻求爱，还因为爱能消除孤独，在可怕的孤独中，一个颤抖的灵魂从世界的边缘看到冰冷、深不可测的地狱。我寻求爱，因为爱使我看到了圣人们、诗人们预想的神秘美丽的小小天堂。这就是我所寻求的。尽管这对于人生来说可能过于美好了，但

至少这是我找到的。

我以同样的情感追求知识。我一直期盼着理解人类的心灵，期盼着了解星星闪烁的原因。我也试图去把握克制数字流动的毕达哥拉斯定理。这其中我得到的虽不多，但我已经获得了。

爱与知识，尽力将我引向天堂之路，但同情总是将我带回现实。痛苦的哭声在我耳畔回响。饥饿的儿童，受尽压迫的难民，成为儿子们负担的无助的老人，以及孤独、贫穷与痛苦的社会都在嘲笑着人生的本来面貌。我渴望减轻这些罪恶，但无能为力。所以，我也倍受折磨。

这就是我的生命。我发现值得一活，而且如果有机会，我会很高兴再活一次。

【阅读赏析】

人人都在追问生命的起源和意义。我们究竟为什么而生存？哲学家罗素在《自传》中开诚布公地表明了他对此问题的看法，有三种激情主宰着他的生命，即“对爱的渴望，对知识的求索和对人类苦难以承受的怜悯”。作者为世界和平及社会正义事业奋斗终身，但却认为自己无法解除贫穷与灾难给人类带来的痛苦。

全文采用了总-分-总的写作模式，思路清晰，语言质朴。

【精彩篇章】

How to Grow Old

by *Bertrand Russell*

In spite of the title, this article will really be on how not to grow old, which, at my time of life, is a much more important subject. My first advice would be to choose your ancestors carefully. Although both my parents died young, I have done well in this respect as regards my other ancestors. My maternal¹ grandfather, it is true, was cut off in the flower of his youth at the age of sixty-seven, but my other three grandparents all

lived to be over eighty. Of remoter ancestors I can only discover one who did not live to a great age, and he died of a disease which is now rare, namely, having his head cut off. A great grandmother of mine, who was a friend of Gibbon², lived to the age of ninety-two, and to her last day remained a terror to all her descendants. My maternal grandmother, after having nine children who survived, one who died in infancy, and many miscarriages³, as soon as she became a widow, devoted herself to woman's higher education. She was one of the founders of Girton College⁴, and worked hard at opening the medical profession to women. She used to relate how she met in Italy an elderly gentleman who was looking very sad. She inquired the cause of his melancholy and he said that he had just parted from his two grandchildren. "Good gracious," she exclaimed, "I have seventy-two grandchildren, and if I were sad each time I parted from one of them, I should have a dismal existence!" "Madre snaturale⁵," he replied. But speaking as one of the seventy-two, I prefer her recipe. After



Happy Old Life

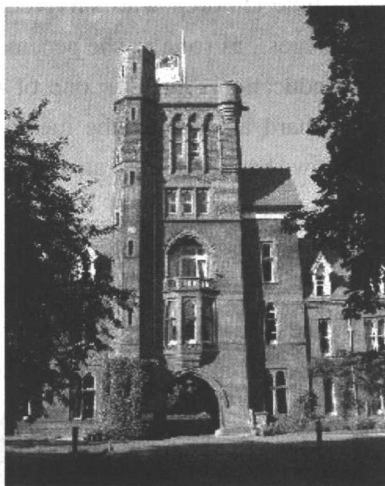
the age of eighty she found she had some difficulty in getting to sleep, so she habitually spent the hours from midnight to 3 a.m. in reading popular science. I do not believe that she ever had time to notice that she was

growing old. This, I think, is proper recipe for remaining young. If you have wide and keen interests and activities in which you can still be effective, you will have no reason to think about the merely statistical fact of the number of years you have already lived, still less of the probable brevity of your future.



Edward Gibbon (1737-1794)

Gibbon



Girton College

As regards health I have nothing useful to say since I have little experience of illness. I eat and drink whatever I like, and sleep when I cannot keep awake. I never do anything whatever on the ground that it is good for health, though in actual fact the things I like doing are mostly wholesome.

Psychologically there are two dangers to be guarded against in old age. One of these is undue absorption in the past. It does not do to live in memories, in regrets for the good old days, or in sadness about friends who are dead. One's thoughts must be directed to the future and to things about which there is something to be done. This is not always easy: one's own past is gradually increasing weight. It is easy to think to oneself that one's emotions used to be more vivid than they are, and one's mind keener.

If this is true it should be forgotten, and if it is forgotten it will probably not be true.

The other thing to be avoided is clinging to youth in the hope of sucking vigor from its vitality. When your children are grown up they want to live their own lives, and if you continue to be as interested in them as you were when they were young, you are likely to become a burden to them, unless they are unusually callous⁶. I do not mean that one should be without interest in them, but one's interest should be contemplative⁷ and, if possible, philanthropic⁸, but not unduly emotional. Animals become indifferent to their young as soon as their young can look after themselves, but human beings, owing to the length of infancy, find this difficult.

I think that a successful old age is easiest for those who have strong impersonal interests involving appropriate activities. It is in this sphere that long experience is really fruitful, and it is in this sphere that the wisdom born of experience can be exercised without being oppressive. It is no use telling grown-up children not to make mistakes, both because they will not believe you, and because mistakes are an essential part of education. But if you are one of those who are incapable of impersonal interests, you may find that your life will be empty unless you concern yourself with your children and grandchildren. In that case you must realize that while you can still render them material services, such as making them an allowance or knitting them jumpers, you must not expect that they will enjoy your company.

Some old people are oppressed by the fear of death. In the young there is a justification for this feeling. Young men who have reason to fear that they will be killed in battle may justifiably feel bitter in the thought that they have been cheated of the best things that life has to offer. But in an old man who has known human joys and sorrows, and has achieved whatever work it was in him to do, the fear of death is somewhat abject⁹ and ignoble. The best way to overcome it — so at least it seems to me —

is to make your interests gradually wider and more impersonal, until bit by bit the walls of the ego recede, and your life becomes increasingly merged in the universal life. An individual human existence should be like a river — small at first, narrowly contained¹⁰ within its banks, and rushing passionately past rocks and over waterfalls. Gradually the river grows wider, the banks recede, the waters flow more quietly, and in the end, without any visible break¹¹, they become merged in the sea, and painlessly lose their individual being. The man who, in old age, can see his life in this way, will not suffer from the fear of death, since the things he cares for will continue. And if, with the decay of vitality, weariness increases, the thought of rest will not be unwelcome. I should wish to die while still at work, knowing that others will carry on what I can no longer do and content in the thought that what was possible has been done.

注释

1. 母方的; 2. 吉朋 (Edward Gibbon, 1737-1794), 英国著名历史家, 《罗马帝国的衰落》(Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire) 的作者; 3. 流产; 4. Girton College: 戈登学院, 剑桥第一所女子学院, 创建于 1869 年; 5. Madre snaturale: (意大利语) 多么不平常的母亲啊! 6. 无感觉的; 7. 爱默生的; 8. 博爱的; 9. 卑劣的; 10. narrowly contained: 循规蹈矩地在 (两岸之间流淌); 11. 界线

【参考译文】

论老之将至

伯特兰·罗素

不管题目如何写, 这篇文章实际上谈的是如何永葆青春, 这题目对像我这把年纪的人, 更为重要。我的第一个意见是要认真选择老祖宗。虽然我的双亲死得早, 但我别的先辈在这方面还是不错的。我的

外祖父在六十七岁风华正茂时离开了人世，这是事实。但另外三位祖父母都活了八十多岁。在远祖当中，我发现只有一个没活到高龄，他得了一种现在已不多见的病，就是头给砍了。我的曾祖母活到九十二岁，她是吉朋的朋友。直到临终时，因为身心俱健仍使她的儿孙感到敬畏。我的外祖母生过十胎，其中有九个活着，一个夭折了。她经历过很多次流产，守寡后就致力于女子高等教育。她是戈登学院的创始人之一，为开创妇女从事医疗职业辛勤工作。她常谈起如何在意大利碰到一位愁容满面的老先生，她问他为什么这样闷闷不乐，他说他刚和两个孙子离别。“天啊！”她叫了起来：“我有七十二个孙子，我如果每和一个孙子离别都这样闷闷不乐，我的生活就太惨了。”“多么不平等的母亲啊！”老人回答。作为她的七十二个孙子中的一个让我发表我的意见：我认为她的办法比较好。到了八十岁以后，她发现入睡有些困难，就经常看科普书刊，从深夜看到早上三点钟。我看她从来没有时间去想自己愈来愈老这个问题，我认为这是永葆青春的好办法。只要你有广泛的兴趣和强烈的爱好，参加一些你仍然能够胜任的活动，你就没有理由去考虑你已经活了多少岁这样一个仅供统计之用的实际数字，更加不会去想你剩下的日子可能不多了。

至于健康问题，我没有什么好的意见，因为我极少生病。我爱吃什么就吃什么，爱喝什么就喝什么，困了就睡。我从来不会为了有益于健康而去搞什么活动，但我喜欢做的事，大多数是对健康有益的。

从心理学的观点，老年时期有两种危险倾向必须防止。其一是过分地沉湎于往事。一个人不应该生活在对往事的回忆之中，不应追惜那些一去不复返的好日子，不要为死去的朋友而终日悲伤。一个人必须朝前看，考虑一些有所作为的事情。有时这是不容易做到的：一个人的过去会成为一个愈来愈沉重的包袱；很容易认为自己过去的感情多么热烈，过去的思想多么敏锐。如果事实真是这样，就应该把它忘掉，如果你并不记得有这种情况，那么事情就可能并非如此。

其二是要避免缠住青年人不放，希望从青年人的活力中吸取力量。孩子们长大了，他们希望按他们的生活方式独立生活。如果你还像他们小时候那样对他们倾注你的关心，你就很可能成为他们的包袱，

除非他们特别麻木不仁。我不是说要对他们漠不关心，而是要设身处地，多为他们着想，如果有可能的话，对他们要本着善心，但不要太感情用事。动物在其子女可以独立生活时，就对他们比较冷淡，但人类由于对婴儿哺育的时间长，很难做到这点。

我想多寄兴趣于不涉及个人感情的事物上，喜欢从事适宜活动的人，其晚年就最易于过得比较惬意。他们在这方面长时间积累的经验就能够富有成果；而他们在经验中产生的智慧也就可以发挥作用而不会成为累赘。叫成年的孩子不要犯错误是没有用的，因为他们根本不信你的话，而且，犯错误本身就是教育的重要组成部分。但是如果你不能寄兴趣于不涉及个人感情的事物上，你就会感到生活很空虚，除非你把心思都花在子孙身上。假使如此，你必须了解到，虽然你对孩子们还可以给予物质上的帮助，如给他们补贴一笔钱，为他们织几件毛衣，你可千万别指望他们很乐意和你在一起。

有些老人由于怕死而惶惶不可终日，年轻人怕死还情有可原。年轻人害怕他们还没有享受到生活所能给他们的最美好的东西就战死沙场，因而感到愤愤不平；他们这样想是有理由的，老年人已经饱尝生活中的甘苦，在工作中也已尽力而为，如果他们还怕死的话，那就有点不光彩了。最好的解决办法——至少我个人是这样想的——是使你的兴趣愈来愈广泛，愈来愈不局限于自身，最终你的“自我”这堵墙就会逐步消退，个人生命将愈来愈成为宇宙生命的一部分。人的一生就该像一条河——起初是涓涓细流，循规蹈矩地在两岸之间流淌。它逐渐地变得热情奔放，迅猛异常，越过巨石覆在瀑布上飞下悬崖，愈来愈宽：两岸消失了，河水安详地流淌着，最后与大海汇合在一起，看不到任何界线，毫无痛苦地失去它单独的存在。一个人如果能够这样看待他的生命，到晚年就不会因为怕死而受尽煎熬。因为他所关心的事物，仍然存在于人世间。并且，一个人随着生命力的衰退，愈来愈感困倦，永远地安息也就会被安然接受了。我希望我在工作的时候死去，并且在死时知道我未竟的事业后继有人，能为自己没有虚度一生而聊以自慰。