

英汉对照·英美经典文学丛书

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经典小品文选粹

张强 陈莉 编译

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《英汉对照·英美经典文学丛书》同广大读者见面了。她凝聚着我们的心血和殷切的期望。

我们期待她能够为我国广大读者展现西方英语文学日新月异的概貌,记录文学精英们开拓进取另辟蹊径的伟大创举,反映人类认识和追求真理的悠悠历程,启发莘莘学子对祖国命运和未来社会的思考。

中国特色的社会主义建设事业是世界文明大道的延伸和拓展。走向世界的中国需要继承全人类的优秀文化遗产,需要具有全球意识的建设者。为了迎接21世纪的巨大机遇与挑战,我国广大的青年朋友正孜孜终日地匍伏于全人类的文化田壤中,以史为镜,洞察未来,开始中华民族的又一次复兴。

英美文学是人类文明成果不可缺少的组成部分,具有较高的思想成就和艺术价值,蕴含着深刻的客观真理和历史的启迪。面向世界,走向世界意味着我们需要勇敢地拥抱世界,忧天下所忧,思人类所思,举人类大业,让中华民族的参天大树挺拔于世界民族之林。在我们前进的征途上,欧美文学的星辰将从不同

的角度和高度为我们送来思想的闪光。西方文明曲折的发展和更迭将使我们更深刻地理解中华民族的伟大和历史地位,将进一步激发我们对祖国,对民族的热爱和义不容辞的责任感。

《英汉对照·英美经典文学丛书》集各种体裁的文学佳作于一身,共分8册,依类别分为:(一)经典散文欣赏;(二)经典诗歌欣赏;(三)经典短篇小说欣赏;(四)经典电影对白欣赏;(五)经典文学故事选粹;(六)经典小品文选粹;(七)经典幽默故事选粹;(八)名人书信选粹。

这套丛书将为青年读者架起通往外国文学宫殿的天桥,是青年朋友漂游西方文学海洋的指南,是莘莘学子了解英美文学的内涵,提高文学修养的必修课。

朋友,在这个充满希望和梦幻的世界,《英美文学精品丛书》向你们走来了。让我们借助文学思想的灵光,肩负着民族的希望,去迎接新世纪的曙光。

李维光

1996年8月于武昌

前言

这是一本小品文选集,共收录英美现代小品文 43 篇。

小品文小,小到一点人事,一则笑谈,一片是非,一山一水一风月,柴米油盐酱醋茶,均可入文。小品文又可大,好的小品文往往能从一点小事中透视社会现象,剖析人生哲理;言近旨远,别有寄托,可如哲学一般深邃,历史一般真切。本书所选文章不过是英美经典小品文中的凤毛麟角,但已足以让我们看到英美人表面的差异和内在的性格特征,看到不少官场趣闻和新闻媒体中存在的一些问题,了解失业的痛苦,求职的艰难,以及人生各个阶段的心事、抉择、呐喊与麻烦,等等。包罗万象,尺幅千里,小品文里看得见整个社会与人生。

小品文不仅题材广泛,体裁和创作手法也是多种多样。从本书中就可以看到,随笔、杂谈、速写、寓言、轶事、导言、文评、政论,无一不可作为小品文的体裁;描写、叙述、说明、议论,无一不是小品文的创作手段。对话体、书信体、演讲、戏剧独白……小品文的表现样式不断翻新。有人说,小品文是不是小说的小说,不是诗的诗,倒也不无道理。

我们阅读英美文学作品大致有两重目的:一是通过这种渠道认识西方社会现象,以期给我们自己生活质量的提高和社会的进步带来有益的借鉴;二是通过阅读加深巩固我们的英语语言知识。小品文丰富鲜明的社会内容和灵活多变的创作形式恰能满足这两方面的要求。研习长篇文学巨著当然也能使我们受益非浅,但阅读短小精悍的小品文却能使我们在更短的时间内取得更为显著的提高,因而也更适合快节奏的

现代社会的要求。这也是近来各种小品文在沉寂许久以后突然热闹起来的原因之一。本书所选文章中有不少文字简洁,结构严谨,主题突出的佳作,在英美也被奉为写作的范本,相信它们也会对提高我们的阅读和写作能力带来帮助。

小品文多幽默,但幽默不是小品文的目的,于笑声中给人以启迪,发人深思,这才是幽默的宗旨。亦庄亦谐,幽默与严肃并重,这是本书所遵循的一个重要原则。

阅读小品文重在理解与欣赏,为此,本书每篇文章前设有导读,文章后附有参考译文。但编评者知识浅陋,错误疏漏之处难免,敬请读者指正。

本书在编写过程中得到华中师大英语系李维光教授的细心指教,李华田老师的热情鼓励与支持,以及英语系广大师生的多方帮助,谨此致谢。

编译者

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The English and the Americans

英国人和美国人

Edward T. Hall(爱德华·特·霍尔)

【导读】

爱德华·特·霍尔(Edward T. Hall),在美国西北大学教授人类学,发表了许多关于文化和非言语交际方式的著作。在《看不见的那一面》(*The Hidden Dimension*)一书中,他写道:“与一般的看法相反,组成我们这个国家的众多不同的团体已被证实全都令人讶异地坚持要保留他们各自独有的特点。表面上,这些团体看起来似乎全都一样并且说起话来也有些相似,但在表层之下却隐藏着在处理时间、空间、各种事物和相互关系的方式上林林种种、未加说明、难以系统化的差异。正是这些差异,尽管它们赋予了我们生活的意义,却经常在有着不同文化背景的人相互交往时造成误解,哪怕他们都是出自一番好意。”这里包含了作者一个主要的学术观点。

在下文中,霍尔告诉了我们,说着同一种语言的英美人在处理空间问题的方式上有着怎样的不同。他首先指出英美人(特别是受过教育的英国人和中产阶层的美国人)对待空间问题有着截然不同的态度,并随即道出了原因。接下来,作者先从美国人入手,具体、细致地说明了美国人在这个问题上的态度、方式和表现。然后作者再转向英国人,并作了同样的说明。最后,作者通过举例说明,认识英美两国人在处理空间问题上的差异对于增进他们相互间的了解,避免冲突,促进友谊有着深刻的意义。

霍尔的这篇文章堪称典型的“学院派”作品,从树立中心观

点到分析说明再到分析其意义而结束,全文结构合理,层次清楚。写作手法以对比为主,兼以举例、推理等多种说明手段,工整规范。语言朴实流畅,选例颇具匠心,将一个并不轻松的话题娓娓道来,如述家常。

The English and the Americans

It has been said that the English and the Americans are two great people separated by one language. The differences for which language gets blamed may not be due so much to words as to communications on other levels beginning with English intonation and continuing to ego-linked ways of handling time, space, and materials. If there ever were two cultures in which differences of the proxemic details are marked it is in the educated (public school) English and the middle-class Americans. One of the basic reasons for this wide disparity is that in the United States we use space as a way of classifying people and activities, whereas in England it is the social system that determines who you are. In the United States, your address is an important cue to status (this applies not only to one's home but to the business address as well). The Joneses from Brooklyn and Miami are not as "in" as the Joneses from Newport and Palm Beach. Greenwich and Cape Cod are worlds apart from Newark and Miami. Businesses located on Madison and Park avenues have more tone than those on Seventh and Eighth avenues. A corner office is more prestigious than one

next to the elevator or at the end of a long hall. The Englishman, however, is born and brought up in a social system. He is still Lord—no matter where you find him, even if it is behind the counter in a fishmonger's stall. In addition to class distinctions, there are differences between the English and ourselves in how space is allotted.

The middle-class American growing up in the United States feels he has a right to have his own room, or at least part of a room. My American subjects, when asked to draw an ideal room or office, invariably drew it for themselves and no one else. When asked to draw their present room or office, they drew only their own part of a shared room and then drew a line down the middle. Both male and female subjects identified the kitchen and the master bedroom as belonging to the mother or the wife, whereas Father's territory was a study or a den, if one was available; otherwise, it was "the shop", "the basement," or sometimes only a workbench or the garage. American women who want to be alone can go to the bedroom and close the door. The closed door is the sign meaning "Do not disturb" or "I'm angry." An American is available if his door is open at home or at his office. He is expected not to shut himself off but to maintain himself in a state of constant readiness to answer the demands of others. Closed doors are for conferences, private conversations, and business, work that requires concentration, study, resting, sleeping, dressing, and sex.

The middle- and upper-class Englishman, on the other hand, is brought up in a nursery shared with brothers and sisters. The oldest occupies a room by himself which he vacates when he leaves for boarding school, possibly even at the age of nine or ten. The difference between a room of one's own and early conditioning to shared space, while seeming inconsequential, has an important effect on the Englishman's attitude toward his own space. He may never have a permanent "room of his own" and seldom expects one or feels he is entitled to one. Even Members of Parliament have no offices and often conduct their business on the terrace overlooking the Thames. As a consequence, the English are puzzled by the American need for a secure place in which to work, an office. Americans working in England may become annoyed if they are not provided with what they consider appropriate enclosed work space. In regard to the need for walls as a screen for the ego, this places the Americans somewhere between the Germans and the English.

The contrasting English and American patterns have some remarkable implications, particularly if we assume that man, like other animals, has a built-in need to shut himself off from others from time to time. An English student in one of my seminars typified what happens when hidden patterns clash. He was quite obviously experiencing strain in his relationships with Americans. Nothing seemed to go right and it was quite clear from his remarks that we did not know how to behave.

An analysis of his complaints showed that a major source of irritation was that no American seemed to be able to pick up the subtle clues that there were times when he didn't want his thoughts intruded on. As he stated it, "I'm walking around the apartment and it seems that whenever I want to be alone my roommate starts talking to me. Pretty soon he's asking 'What's the matter?' and wants to know if I'm angry. By then I am angry and say something."

It took some time but finally we were able to identify most of the contrasting features of the American and British problems that were in conflict in this case. When the American wants to be alone he goes into a room and shuts the door—he depends on architectural features for screening. For an American to refuse to talk to someone else present in the same room, to give them the "silent treatment," is the ultimate form of rejection and a sure sign of great displeasure. The English, on the other hand, lacking rooms of their own since childhood, never developed the practice of using space as a refuge from others. They have in effect internalized a set of barriers, which they erect and which others are supposed to recognize. Therefore, the more the Englishman shuts himself off when he is with an American the more likely the American is to break in to assure himself that all is well. Tension lasts until the two get to know each other. The important point is that the spatial and architectural needs of each are not the same at all.

【参考译文】

英国人和美国人

有人说过,英国人和美国人是被同一种语言分开的两个伟大的民族。在那些被认为是由语言造成的差异中,英美人在用词方面的差异不及他们在语调以及其它交际方面存在的差异那么大。进一步说,他们在语言方面存在的差异也不及他们各自在处理空间、时间和各种事物的方式上的差异那么大。如果说存在有两种在处理空间及其相关问题的方式、态度都截然不同的文化的话,那它们一定是存在于受过(普通)教育的英国人和中产阶层的美国人当中。造成这种巨大分野的一个根本原因是,在美国我们按地域来区分不同类型的人和行为,而在英国,一个人的身份地位是由他所处的社会阶层来决定的。在美国,一个人的处所(包括他的家庭住址和办公地点)是他的社会地位的重要标志。从布鲁克林和迈阿密来的人没有来自新港和棕榈滩的人那么“时髦”。格林威治人和科得角人更是与纽沃克人和迈阿密人有天壤之别。曼迪逊大街和公园大街的生意要比第七和第八大街的买卖红火。而拐角处的办公室比电梯旁或长廊尽头的办公室更受人青睐。与此不同,英国人生在某个阶层,长在某个阶层,他就属于这个阶层。他要是位老爷,你在哪儿看见他他都还是老爷——即便他呆在鱼担子的柜台后面还是如此。除了这种阶级差异,在如何支配空间方面,英国人和我们美国人也有所不同。

在美国长大的中产阶层的人觉得他有权拥有他自己的房间,或至少是房间里属于他自己的一角。我调查过的美国人,在