

CLASSIC · A BEDSIDE CLASSIC · A BEDSIDE CLASSIC · A BEDSIDE CLASSIC

LEAVES

of

GRASS

by

Walt Whitman

草叶集

[美] 华尔特·惠特曼 著



Liaoning People's Publishing House, China

辽宁人民出版社



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Walt Whitman

Walt Whitman (1819-1892) was an American poet, essayist, and journalist. A humanist, he was a part of the transition between transcendentalism and realism, incorporating both views in his works. Whitman is among the most influential poets in the American canon, often called the father of free verse. His work was very controversial in its time, particularly his poetry collection *Leaves of Grass*, which was described as obscene for its overt sexuality.

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General Preface

Millions of Chinese are learning English to acquire knowledge and skills for communication in a world where English has become the primary language for international discourse. Yet not many learners have come to realize that the command of the English language also enables them to have an easy access to the world literary classics such as Shakespeare's plays, Shelley's poems, Mark Twain's novels and Nietzsche's works which are an important part of liberal-arts education. The most important goals of universities are not vocational, that is, not merely the giving of knowledge and the training of skills.

In a broad sense, education aims at broadening young people's mental horizon, cultivating virtues and shaping their character. Lincoln, Mao Zedong and many other great leaders and personages of distinction declared how they drew immense inspiration and strength from literary works. As a matter of fact, many of them had aspired to become writers in their young age. Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.) is said to take along with him two things, waking or sleeping: a book and a dagger, and the book is *Iliad*, a literary classic, by Homer. He would put these two much treasured things under his pillow when he went to bed.

Today, we face an unprecedented complex and changing world. To cope with this rapid changing world requires not only communication skills, but also adequate knowledge of cultures other than our own home culture. Among the most important developments in present-day global culture is the ever increasing cultural exchanges and understanding between different nations and peoples. And one of the best ways to know foreign cultures is to read their literary works, particularly their literary classics, the soul of a country's culture. They also give you the best language and the feeling of sublimity.

Liaoning People's Publishing House is to be congratulated for its foresight and courage in making a new series of world literary classics (Bedside Classics) available to the reading public. It is hoped that people with an adequate command of the English language will read them, like them and keep them as their lifetime companions.

I am convinced that the series will make an important contribution to the literary education of the young people in China. At a time when the whole country is emphasizing "spiritual civilization", it is certainly a very timely venture to put out the series of literary classics for literary and cultural education.

Zhang Zhongzai

Professor

Beijing Foreign Studies University

July, 2013 Beijing

总 序

经典名著的语言无疑是最凝练、最优美、最有审美价值的。雪莱的那句“如冬已来临，春天还会远吗？”让多少陷于绝望的人重新燃起希望之火，鼓起勇气，迎接严冬过后的春天。徐志摩一句“悄悄的我走了，正如我悄悄的来；我挥一挥衣袖，不带走一片云彩”又让多少人陶醉。尼采的那句“上帝死了”，又给多少人以振聋发聩的启迪作用。

读经典名著，尤其阅读原汁原味作品，可以怡情养性，增长知识，加添才干，丰富情感，开阔视野。所谓“经典”，其实就是作者所属的那个民族的文化积淀，是那个民族的灵魂缩影。英国戏剧泰斗莎士比亚的《哈姆雷特》和《麦克白》等、“意大利语言之父”的但丁的《神曲》之《地狱篇》《炼狱篇》及《天堂篇》、爱尔兰世界一流作家詹姆斯·乔伊斯的《尤利西斯》及《一个艺术家的肖像》等、美国风趣而笔法超一流的著名小说家马克·吐温的《哈克历险记》以及《汤姆索亚历险记》等，德国著名哲学家尼采的《查拉图斯特拉如是说》及《快乐的科学》等等，都为塑造自己民族的文化积淀，做出了永恒的贡献，也同时向世界展示了他们所属的民族的优美剪影。

很多著名领袖如林肯、毛泽东等伟大人物，也都曾从经典名著中汲取力量，甚至获得治国理念。耶鲁大学教授查尔斯·希尔曾在题为《经典与治国理念》的文章，阐述了读书与治国之间的绝妙关系。他这样写道：

“在几乎所有经典名著中，都可以找到让人叹为观止、深藏其中的治国艺术原则。”

经典名著，不仅仅有治国理念，更具提升读者审美情趣的功能。世界上不同时代、不同地域的优秀经典作品，都存在一个共同属性：歌颂赞美人间的真善美，揭露抨击世间的假恶丑。

读欧美自但丁以来的经典名著，你会看到，西方无论是在漫长的黑暗时期，抑或进入现代进程时期，总有经典作品问世，对世间的负面，进行冷峻的批判。与此同时，也有更多的大家作品问世，热情讴歌人间的真诚与善良，使读者不由自主地沉浸于经典作品的审美情感之中。

英语经典名著，显然是除了汉语经典名著以外，人类整个进程中至关重要的文化遗产的一部分。从历史上看，英语是全世界经典阅读作品中，使用得最广泛的国际性语言。这一事实，没有产生根本性变化。本世纪相当长一段时间，这一事实也似乎不会发生任何变化。而要更深入地了解并切身感受英语经典名著的风采，阅读原汁原味的英语经典作品的过程，显然是必不可少的。

辽宁人民出版社及时并隆重推出“最经典英语文库”系列丛书，是具有远见与卓识的出版行为。我相信，这套既可供阅读，同时也具收藏价值的英语原版经

典作品系列丛书，在帮助人们了解什么才是经典作品的同时，也一定会成为广大英语爱好者、大中学生以及学生家长们的挚爱的“最经典英语文库”。

北京外国语大学英语学院
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欧美文学研究中心主任
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张中载 教授
2013年7月于北京

Is This Book for You?

本真的诗人

——“最经典英语文库”第七辑之 《草叶集》导读

常文文

《草叶集》是美国19世纪最伟大的诗人瓦特·惠特曼（1819—1892）的代表作。作者36岁时，出版了这部诗集。之后，他一再修改此诗集，直至去世。结果，将近四十年的时间里，一共出版了好多个版本的《草叶集》。

《草叶集》里的诗作内容，没有必要的逻辑联系。有的诗表述生活哲理，有的诗则赞美人性光辉。不过，其中有些诗品表达的最重要思想，也许中国读者并不一定知道，是作者对情欲的高度认可甚至赞美。而这一点在19世纪的美国是被认为有违道德的。此外，有些诗品则采用大量象征手法、比喻手法以及沉思方式，对宗教以及精神层面，都发自内心地进行了大胆的意见抒发，对物质与肉体世界给予了拔高与认可。

对于惠特曼而言，精神契合主要依赖于身体接触。而身体，作者认为，是使得灵魂感知世界的桥梁或工具。因之，需要对身体进行赞美与歌唱，甚至崇拜。所以，在《草叶集》里，我们可以读到大量赞美身体、

情欲的诗品，这是《草叶集》的一大特点。不过，这一特点受到了当时十分保守的美国社会的质疑与冷落。进入21世纪，我们将最全版本的《草叶集》出版面世，目的旨在使读者们能看到全豹，并能更深刻地理解19世纪伟大诗人的内心世界的宏大与深刻，纠结与奋进。

惠特曼的诗歌从主题选取上，包括诗歌的语言使用方面，都很具有平民化倾向。他在创作诗歌时，刻意将诗品创作得很“美国化”。他认为，因为美国是从欧洲脱胎出来的，因此，处处都要表现出自己的“与欧洲不同”的特质才显得特立独行。于是，我们看到了他在诗歌主题选择上的刻意不同，语言上更是想尽办法读上去“美国化”。但他忘记了一点，文化基因的神秘传承性的存在。他的诗品读上去让人想到了欧洲最伟大的诗人但丁（参见“最经典英语文库”第一、三、五辑里的《神曲·地狱篇》《神曲·炼狱篇》和《神曲·天堂篇》），是但丁开创了使用平民化语言写作诗歌的先河；让人想到了沃兹华兹（Wordsworth），是沃兹华兹说出那最著名的一句话：“诗歌应努力使用平常人的语言”。不过有趣的是，惠特曼并没有将普罗百姓的语言“诗歌化”，而是把自己当作了使用平民化语言的标杆而树立起来。用他自己的话说，就是to make “an attempt to put a Person, a human being (myself, in the latter half of the 19th century, in America) freely, fully, and truly on record.” “将一个人，也就是美国19世纪后半叶的我自己的话，自由地，全面地，并且真实地记录下来。”（参阅本诗集里的*Song of the Open Road*以及*Crossing Brooklyn Ferry*）

惠特曼的创作风格一直秉承自己的主张，并且一生没有改变过。只是他所坚持的创作风格并不是传统意

义上的，而是他主观认为的最理想的“平民化风格”。感知，而不是分析，成为其诗歌创作的基础。因而，我们读到的是暗喻或象征性诗句。当然，他有时使用的诗句，与其哲学意义上的主张相违背。另外，他经常使用意义含混、外来的、甚至是自己创造的词。他之所以这样做，目的在于上面所述，标榜自己与众不同而已。

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