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## 经典英语美文

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## 前 言

毋庸置疑,在国际间文化、经济、政治等日愈频繁的交流当中,英语已经成为最为广泛使用的一种语言,在沟通不同民族、国家、文化以及谋求共同发展的过程中起着非常重要的作用;在中国,人们对外语学习,特别是对英语学习大量的时间、精力和资金投入是令人吃惊的,掌握英语甚至被看作是新时期人才所必备的条件之一。在这种国际、国内背景的交互作用之下,英语教育/英语培训俨然已经成为当今中国创造财富速度最为惊人的产业之一;而围绕英语教育和培训则涌现出了形形色色的“机构”、“方法”和“派别”。然而,这些针对“应试教育”、注重“短期效应”的各色“英语”存在着明显的误区,即忽略了学习者对各类语言素材的大量摄入(input),只关注对语言本身(词法、句法、语法等)的学习。事实上,对任何一种语言来讲,语言本身,即词法、句法、语法等并不难学,而难以掌握的是“得体”(appropriate)、“达意”(communicative)、“准确”(accurate)的语言,这种得体、达意、准确的语言需要学习者对涉及对象国文化、历史、政治、宗教、哲学等领域的语言素材有大量的接触和摄入才可以达成。而文学(诗、词、歌、赋、戏剧、小说、散文等)恰恰能够给外语学习者提供丰富的文化、历史、政治、哲学背景的原始语言素材,使语言学习者更深层次地去体悟,了解对象国语言使用者的文化、历史、宗教、心理内涵,从而帮助学习者更加得体和准确地使用这种语言。在这种意义上,文学作品以其丰富的文化、历史、人文内涵给语言学习者营造了一种远离对象语使用人群和国度的真实语言情景,这便是文学所具有的“情景再造”或者“情景模拟”功能。长期的语言教学实践证明,文学作品的阅读对任何一种语言的学习来说,都是一个非常有效的途径和手段,对英语学习也不例外,这是我们编写这套“经典英语文学系列丛书”的基本出发点。

21 世纪是个更加趋于多元文化的世纪,了解不同于本国的文化,才能增强语言学习者和使用者对文化差异的敏感性、宽容性以及处理文化差异的灵活性。反映对象国历史、文化、人文风貌的文学作品对语言学习者和使用者来说,是了解对象国人文历史风貌、民族心理、风俗习惯的最便捷、最有效、最可信、最全面的资源和途径。

学习文学,广泛阅读优秀的文学作品,从中汲取营养,能够培养我们高洁的品行、博大的胸怀,帮助我们树立正确的是非观念,提升我们的修

养和趣味,从事任何工作这些都是基本的素质和要求。

然而,对于一般的英语学习者而言,英语文学浩如烟海,语言的难度又非常大,学习起来谈何容易,就更谈不上领略其中所蕴含的美和独特的韵味了。针对英语学习者的这些需要,我们组织了一批在高校专门从事英美语言文学教学和研究的专家和学者编写了《经典英语美文》、《经典英语诗歌》、《经典英语小说片段》、《经典英语朗诵读本》这四本书。每本书的篇目均选自不同时期英美文学的代表作品;为了能够使读者对所选作者、作品有一个较为准确、全面的理解,每篇均由“作者简介”、“注释”、“汉语译文”、“评析”四部分组成。作者简介涉及该作者在英、美文学历史上的地位、贡献、代表作品、作品的风格特色、流派等;注释部分主要对所选篇目中的语言难点、历史典故、文化/宗教背景、历史事件等进行简明扼要的注解;汉语译文大部分采用翻译名家的译文,也有一部分为编者自译;来自不同文化、教育、宗教、政治背景的读者对同样一部文学作品可能会有截然不同的解读和理解而使用不同的文学理论,对同样一部文学作品也可能会得出迥异的结论。在评析部分,我们尽量采用长期以来“主流”的“定评”,当然,由于评析者自己的学识和喜好,在评析部分也有极具特色的评价和新文学理论影响的痕迹。

诚然,英语文学博大精深,远非这薄薄的四本书所能囊括。可是,我们殷切地希望这套丛书能对广大读者起到“尝脔知镬”的作用,从而激发读者进一步学习英语文学的兴趣。倘若达到这样的目的,便是我们最大的欣慰。

从事外国文学研究和翻译的人都明白,对所谓“经典”文学作品的筛选从来都是见仁见智,没有严格的统一标准;而“注释”和“翻译”则是最能显现注释者和翻译者语言功力的工作。由于水平有限,不妥之处在所难免,恳请读者、同仁及专家指正,以便我们继续努力改进。

编 者

2008年2月于西安



## Of Beauty<sup>①</sup>

Francis Bacon (1561—1626)

Virtue is like a rich stone, best plain set; and surely virtue is best in a body that is comely, though not of delicate features; and that hath<sup>②</sup> rather dignity of presence, than beauty of aspect. Neither is it almost seen, that very beautiful persons are otherwise of great virtue; as if nature were rather busy not to err, than in labour to produce excellency. And therefore they prove accomplished, but not of great spirit; and study rather behaviour, than virtue. But this holds not always; for Augustus Caesar, Titus Vespasianus, Philip le Belle of France, Edward the Fourth of England, Alcibiades of Athens<sup>③</sup>, Ismael the Sophy of Persia, were all high and great spirits; and yet the most beautiful men of their times. In beauty, that of favour<sup>④</sup> is more than that of colour; and that of decent and gracious motion, more than that of favour. That is the best part of beauty, which a picture cannot express; no, nor the first sight of the life. There is no excellent beauty, that hath not some strangeness in the proportion. A man cannot tell, whether Apelles, or Albert Durer<sup>⑤</sup>, were the more trifler; whereof<sup>⑥</sup> the one would make a personage by geometrical proportions; the other, by taking the best parts out of divers faces, to make one excellent. Such personages, I think, would please nobody,

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① 本文选自培根的《论论文集》(*The Essays*, 又译《随笔》)。该书 1597 年初版时仅收 10 篇文章,经 1612、1625 年两次再版增订,共收文 58 篇,涉及哲学、伦理、道德、治学、生活等方面。文字隽永,内容精悍,论说透彻,开创了英国文学中的随笔体裁。

② hath: 古英语用法,have 的第三人称单数现在式。

③ Augustus Caesar, Titus Vespasianus; 奥古斯提与泰特思都是古罗马著名皇帝。  
Philip le Belle of France; 法王菲律浦,1285—1314 年在位。  
Edward the Fourth of England; 英王爱德华四世,1464—1483 年在位。  
Alcibiades of Athens; 亚西拜提斯,古希腊著名美男子。

④ favour: 模样,容貌。

⑤ Apelles; 阿贝尔,古代文献里描写的一位古希腊画家,其作品全部失传。  
Albert Durer; 杜勒(1471—1483),德国画家、雕刻家。

⑥ whereof: 关于那事;关于那人;关于那物。





but the painter that made them. Not but I think a painter may make a better face, than ever was; but he must do it, by a kind of felicity (as a musician that maketh<sup>①</sup> an excellent air in music), and not by rule. A man shall see faces, that if you examine them, part by part, you shall find never a good; and yet altogether do well. If it be true, that the principal part of beauty is in decent motion, certainly it is no marvel though persons in years seem many times more amiable; *pulchrorum autumnus pulcher*<sup>②</sup>; for no youth can be comely but by pardon, and considering the youth as to make up the comeliness. Beauty is as summer fruits, which are easy to corrupt, and cannot last; and, for the most part, it makes a dissolute youth, and an age a little out of countenance: but yet certainly again, if it light well, it maketh virtues shine, and vices blush.



弗兰西斯·培根 (Francis Bacon), 十七世纪英国著名政治家、哲学家和散文作家。生于伦敦一贵族家庭。剑桥大学毕业, 后入格雷法学协会学习法律。历任下议院议员、女王顾问、首席检察官、掌玺大臣、大法官兼上议院议长等要职。1621 年被控受贿免除公职, 从此居家著述。

培根的著作大致分为三类: 哲学、文学与法学。哲学方面有用英语写的《学术的进步》(*The Advancement of Learning*) 和用拉丁文写的《新工具》(*Novum Organum*)。文学方面以《论说文集》(*The Essays*, 又译《随笔》) 最为著名, 还有《亨利七世传》(*The History of the Reign of King Henry VII*)、《古今格言》(*Apophtagmes New and Old*) 及幻想游记《新大西岛》(*The New Atlantis*) 等。他还写有《法律原理》(*Maxims of Law*) 和《常用法规释义》(*The Learned Reading upon the Statute of Uses*) 等法律著作。

培根的重要著作多使用拉丁文, 意在垂之久远。他的英文随笔用笔简练, 表达明晰, 充满警句隽语, 开英国散文“格言体”先河。



① maketh: 古英语中 make 的第三人称单数形式。

② *pulchrorum autumnus pulcher*: 拉丁谚语, 意为“晚秋的秋色是最美好的”。

## 谈 美

德行犹如宝石,朴素最美;其于人也,则有德者但须形体悦目,不必面貌俊秀,与其貌美,不若气度恢宏。人不尽知:绝色无大德也;一如自然劳碌终日,但求无过,而无力制成上品。因此美男子有才而无壮志,重行而不重德。但亦不尽然。罗马大帝奥古斯提与泰特思,法王菲律浦,英王爱德华四世,古雅典之亚西拜提斯,波斯之伊斯迈帝,皆有宏图壮志而又为当时最美之人也。美不在颜色艳丽而在面目端正,又不尽在面目端正而在举止文雅合度。美之极致,非图画所能表,乍见所能识。举凡最美之人,其部位比例,必有异于常人之处。阿贝尔与杜勒皆画家也,其画人像也,一则按照几何学之比例,一则集众脸形之长于一身,二者谁更不智,实难断言,窃以为此等画像除画家本人外,恐无人喜爱也。余不否认画像之美可以超绝尘寰,但此美必为神笔,而非可依规矩得之者,乐师之谱成名曲亦莫不皆然。人面如逐部位细察,往往一无是处,观其整体则光彩夺目。美之要素既在于举止,则年长美过年少亦无足怪。古人云:“美者秋日亦美。”年少而著美名,率由宽假,盖鉴其年事之少,而补其形体之不足也。美者犹如夏日蔬果,易腐难存;要之,年少而美者常无行,年长而美者不免面有惭色。虽然,但须托体得人,则德行因美而益彰,恶行见美而愈愧。

(王佐良 译)

## 评析

本文是一篇关于“美”的经典之作,体现了培根的美学观点——美德胜于美貌。美有物质层面的美和精神内涵之美。我们赞叹名山大川的壮丽,陶醉风物景观的雄伟。这种自然或是人为的美,都只是一种纯粹的物质性美,美的主体都是无生命的物体。作为有生命的人,除了有物质构成的躯体,还有思想和灵魂。因此,审视人的美丽应该有内在和外两个尺度。

培根认为“美不在颜色艳丽而在面目端正,又不尽在面目端正而在举止文雅合度”。品德高尚、举止文雅远胜于拥有美丽的外表,内在之美重于外在之美。歌德曾说,“外表美只能取悦一时,内心美方能经久不衰。”罗丹有言,“我们在人体中崇仰的不是任何美丽的外表形态,而是那好像使人体透明发亮的内在的光芒。”一个人的美不在外表,而在才华、气质和品格。将美的形貌与美的德行结合起来,才会使美放射出真正的光辉。

本文表达简洁,内涵深刻,说理透彻。文章包含比喻、对比、例证等多种手法,用诗化的语言阐释了精辟的哲学道理,耐人寻味。

(刘晓梅)



# *A Treatise on Good Manners and Good Breeding<sup>①</sup>*

Jonathan Swift (1667—1745)

Good manners is the art of making those people easy with whom we converse.

Whoever makes the fewest persons uneasy is the best bred in the company.

As the best law is founded upon reason, so are the best manners. And as some lawyers have introduced unreasonable things into common law, so likewise many teachers have introduced absurd things into common good manners.

One principal point of this art is to suit our behaviour to the three several degrees of men; our superiors, our equals, and those below us.

For instance, to press either of the two former to eat or drink is a breach of manners; but a farmer or a tradesman must be thus treated, or else it will be difficult to persuade them that they are welcome.

Pride, ill nature, and want of sense, are the three great sources of ill manners; without some one of these defects, no man will behave himself ill for want of experience; or of what, in the language of fools, is called knowing the world.

I defy any one to assign an incident wherein reason will not direct us what we are to say or do in company, if we are not misled by pride or ill nature.

Therefore I insist that good sense is the principal foundation of good manners; but because the former is a gift which very few among mankind are possessed of, therefore all the civilized nations of the world have agreed upon fixing some rules for common behaviour, best suited to their general customs, or fancies, as a kind of artificial good sense, to supply

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<sup>①</sup> 这篇遗墨发表于 1754 年,作品秉承了斯威夫特一贯的风格,质朴中蕴含哲理,平淡中透露睿智。题目具普遍性,时隔今日看来仍不失实用性。





the defects of reason. Without which the gentlemanly part of dunces would be perpetually at cuffs, as they seldom fail when they happen to be drunk, or engaged in squabbles about women or play. And, God be thanked, there hardly happens a duel in a year, which may not be imputed to one of those three motives. Upon which account, I should be exceedingly sorry to find the legislature make any new laws against the practice of duelling; because the methods are easy and many for a wise man to avoid a quarrel with honour, or engage in it with innocence. And I can discover no political evil in suffering bullies, sharpers, and rakes, to rid the world of each other by a method of their own; where the law hath not been able to find an expedient.

As the common forms of good manners were intended for regulating the conduct of those who have weak understandings; so they have been corrupted by the persons for whose use they were contrived. For these people have fallen into a needless and endless way of multiplying ceremonies, which have been extremely troublesome to those who practise them, and insupportable to everybody else: insomuch that wise men are often more uneasy at the over civility of these refiners, than they could possibly be in the conversations of peasants or mechanics.

The impertinencies of this ceremonial behaviour are nowhere better seen than at those tables where ladies preside, who value themselves upon account of their good breeding; where a man must reckon upon passing an hour without doing any one thing he has a mind to; unless he will be so hardy to break through all the settled decorum of the family. She determines what he loves best, and how much he shall eat; and if the master of the house happens to be of the same disposition, he proceeds in the same tyrannical manner to prescribe in the drinking part; at the same time, you are under the necessity of answering a thousand apologies for your entertainment. And although a good deal of this humour is pretty well worn off among many people of the best fashion, yet too much of it still remains, especially in the country; where an honest gentleman assured me, that having been kept four days, against his will, at a friend's house, with all the circumstances of hiding his boots, locking up the stable, and other contrivances of the like nature, he could not remember, from the moment he came into the house to the moment he left





it, any one thing, wherein his inclination was not directly contradicted; as if the whole family had entered into a combination to torment him.

But, besides all this, it would be endless to recount the many foolish and ridiculous accidents I have observed among these unfortunate prose-lytes to ceremony. I have seen a duchess fairly knocked down, by the precipitancy of an officious coxcomb running to save her the trouble of opening a door. I remember, upon a birthday at court, a great lady was utterly desperate by a dish of sauce let fall by a page directly upon her head-dress and brocade, while she gave a sudden turn to her elbow upon some point of ceremony with the person who sat next her. Monsieur Buys<sup>①</sup>, the Dutch envoy, whose politics and manners were much of a size, brought a son with him, about thirteen years old, to a great table at court. The boy and his father, whatever they put on their plates, they first offered round in order, to every person in the company; so that we could not get a minute's quiet during the whole dinner. At last their two plates happened to encounter, and with so much violence, that, being china, they broke in twenty pieces, and stained half the company with wet sweetmeats and cream.

There is a pedantry in manners, as in all arts and sciences; and sometimes in trades. Pedantry is properly the overrating any kind of knowledge we pretend to. And if that kind of knowledge be a trifle in itself, the pedantry is the greater. For which reason I look upon fiddlers, dancing-masters, heralds, masters of the ceremony, &c. to be greater pedants than Lipsius<sup>②</sup>, or the elder Scaliger<sup>③</sup>. With these kind of pedants, the court, while I knew it, was always plentifully stocked; I mean from the gentleman usher (at least) inclusive, downward to the gentleman porter; who are, generally speaking, the most insignificant race of people that this island can afford, and with the smallest tincture of good manners, which is the only trade they profess. For being wholly illiterate, and conversing chiefly with each other, they reduce the whole system of breeding within the forms and circles of their several offices; and

① 荷兰政治家波罗斯·伯于斯(1531—1594)的后代。

② 贾斯特斯·利普修斯(1547—1608),尼德兰人文主义者,古典学者。

③ 朱丽叶斯·恺撒·斯卡利杰(1484—1558),意大利著名古典学者。



as they are below the notice of ministers, they live and die in court under all revolutions with great obsequiousness to those who are in any degree of favour or credit, and with rudeness or insolence to everybody else. Whence I have long concluded, that good manners are not a plant of the court growth; for if they were, those people who have understandings directly of a level for such acquirements, and who have served such long apprenticeships to nothing else, would certainly have picked them up. For as to the great officers, who attend the prince's person or councils, or preside in his family, they are a transient body, who have no better a title to good manners than their neighbours, nor will probably have recourse to gentlemen ushers for instruction. So that I know little to be learnt at court upon this head, except in the material circumstance of dress; wherein the authority of the maids of honour must indeed be allowed to be almost equal to that of a favourite actress.

I remember a passage my Lord Bolingbroke<sup>①</sup> told me, that going to receive Prince Eugene of Savoy at his landing, in order to conduct him immediately to the Queen, the prince said, he was much concerned that he could not see her Majesty that night; for Monsieur Hoffman (who was then by) had assured his Highness that he could not be admitted into her presence with a tied-up periwig<sup>②</sup>; that his equipage<sup>③</sup> was not arrived; and that he had endeavoured in vain to borrow a long one among all his valets<sup>④</sup> and pages. My lord turned the matter into a jest, and brought the Prince to her Majesty; for which he was highly censured by the whole tribe of gentlemen ushers; among whom Monsieur Hoffman, an old dull resident of the Emperor's, had picked up this material point of ceremony; and which, I believe, was the best lesson he had learned in five-and-twenty years' residence.

I make a difference between good manners and good breeding; although, in order to vary my expression, I am sometimes forced to confound them. By the first, I only understand the art of remembering and applying certain settled forms of general behaviour. But good breeding is

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① 亨利·博林布鲁克(1678—1751),英国政治家,学问渊博有文才。

② periwig:男用假发。

③ equipage:带有随从的马车。

④ valet:贴身男仆。





of a much larger extent; for besides an uncommon degree of literature sufficient to qualify a gentleman for reading a play, or a political pamphlet, it takes in a great compass of knowledge; no less than that of dancing, fighting, gaming, making the circle of Italy, riding the great horse, and speaking French; not to mention some other secondary, or subaltern accomplishments, which are more easily acquired. So that the difference between good breeding and good manners lies in this, that the former cannot be attained to by the best understandings, without study and labour; whereas a tolerable degree of reason will instruct us in every part of good manners, without other assistance.

I can think of nothing more useful upon this subject, than to point out some particulars, wherein the very essentials of good manners are concerned, the neglect or perverting of which doth very much disturb the good commerce of the world, by introducing a traffic of mutual uneasiness in most companies.

First, a necessary part of good manners, is a punctual observance of time at our own dwellings, or those of others, or at third places; whether upon matter of civility, business, or diversion; which rule, though it be a plain dictate of common reason, yet the greatest minister I ever knew was the greatest trespasser against it; by which all his business doubled upon him, and placed him in a continual arrear<sup>①</sup>. Upon which I often used to rally him, as deficient in point of good manners. I have known more than one ambassador, and secretary of state with a very moderate portion of intellectuals, execute their offices with good success and applause, by the mere force of exactness and regularity. If you duly observe time for the service of another, it doubles the obligation; if upon your own account, it would be manifest folly, as well as ingratitude, to neglect it. If both are concerned, to make your equal or inferior attend on you, to his own disadvantage, is pride and injustice.

Ignorance of forms cannot properly be styled ill manners; because forms are subject to frequent changes; and consequently, being not founded upon reason, are beneath a wise man's regard. Besides, they vary in every country; and after a short period of time, very frequently in the

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<sup>①</sup> arrear: 欠款。





same; so that a man who travels, must needs be at first a stranger to them in every court through which he passes; and perhaps at his return, as much a stranger in his own; and after all, they are easier to be remembered or forgotten than faces or names.

Indeed, among the many impertinences that superficial young men bring with them from abroad, this bigotry of forms is one of the principal, and more prominent than the rest; who look upon them not only as if they were matters capable of admitting of choice, but even as points of importance; and are therefore zealous on all occasions to introduce and propagate the new forms and fashions they have brought back with them. So that, usually speaking, the worst bred person in the company is a young traveller just returned from abroad.



乔纳森·斯威夫特(Jonathan Swift),英国十八世纪杰出的讽刺文学作者,著名的小说家,散文家。出生于爱尔兰都柏林的一个律师家庭,遗腹子。幼年家境贫寒,从都柏林大学三一学院毕业后,投靠远亲威廉·坦普尔爵士门下,曾两度担任这位退休外交家、散文家的私人秘书,先后长达十年之久。正是这段经历让他目睹官场中的种种丑恶,在此期间写出了《木桶的故事》(*A Tale of a Tub*)和《书战》(*The Battle of the Books*)这两部极富天才的讽刺作品,也奠定了其日后的写作风格。坦普尔去世后,斯威夫特受英女王安妮册封,任都柏林圣帕特里克教堂的教长。他依次支持过辉格党(Whig)和托利党(Tories),但终因看到两党的伪善,抑郁而终。

斯威夫特是英国古典主义的杰出代表,对英国的小说和讽刺文学的发展有重大影响。其代表作寓言小说《格列佛游记》(*Gulliver's Travels*)成为世界文学的经典著作之一,作者的丰富的想象与深刻的寓意轰动了当时的欧洲文坛。此外,斯威夫特的政治讽刺文章也极为有名,其中《一个小小的建议》(*A Modest Proposal*)已成为脍炙人口的佳作。其诗集也是英国文学中的珍品。斯威夫特的文风历来简洁明快,讽刺和幽默相得益彰。他的文章绝少见到各种辞藻譬喻,文章自有无华之美。他的作品语言促进了18世纪英语的规范化,也树立了散文大师的风范。





## 论礼貌与教养

礼貌即社交行为是使与我们交谈的人安之若素的一种艺术。

在一群人中,谁越不使人感到局促不安,谁就越有教养。

最公正的法律是建立在理智之上的,同样,最好的举止行为也是建立在理智之上的。有的律师将无理的东西引进了普通法,同样,许多教师也将怪诞的东西引进了日常的良好礼貌。

礼貌艺术的一大要素是,以适当的举止行为对待三种不同层次的人,即高于我们层次的、与我们同一层次的和低于我们层次的人。

例如,硬要前两种层次的人吃菜喝酒是失礼的,但是农夫和商贩必须如此对待,否则就无法使他们相信他们并非不速之客。

骄傲自大、性情粗暴、缺乏理智是有失礼貌的三大原因。如果能革除这些弊病,没有人会因为缺乏经验,或者,如某些愚人所说,因为谙于世故而礼貌不周。

要不是受到骄傲情绪或粗暴性情的误导,理智总会指引我们与人交往时谈吐得体,举止适度。我敢断言,没有人能举出一个与此相悖的事例来。

因此,我坚持认为理智是礼貌的基石。但是,由于人类之中只有为数寥寥的几个才具有理智这种禀赋,世界上所有的文明国度都同意制定最能适合他们风俗或想象的指导规范行为的规章条例,作为人为的理智以补充理性的不足。没有这种人工的理智,愚人笨伯之中举止尚属文雅的那部分人便会无休无止地挥拳相向,他们在喝得酩酊大醉时,或者在大声谈论女人和玩乐时总是这样的。并且,谢天谢地,每年之中发生的决斗几乎无一不可归咎于上述三个原因中的一个。由于这一缘故,我将对立法机构制定任何旨在禁止决斗行为的新法律深表遗憾;因为,明智的人可以有许多简捷的办法避免体面的决斗或无知的搏杀。并且,在法律尚无有效对策的地方,容忍恃强凌弱者、诈骗者和浪荡子自己采取方法来相互铲除,以求清理世界——我看不出这样做有什么政治祸害。

制定良好行为的规范形式,是为了指导调整知识肤浅的人的举止,然而这些规范形式又恰恰为这些规范形式的制订对象所破坏。因为,这些人已习惯于无必要和无休止地增加种种繁文缛节,这些繁文缛节使遵守执行的人无所适从,使所有别的人不敢赞同。现在情况已经到了这样的地步,明智的人对这些谨小慎微的人的过分客套感到更加局促不安,倒不如与农夫商贩的交谈更为轻松自如。

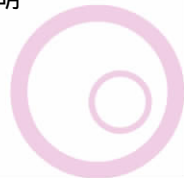




这种繁文缛节、虚礼矫饰到处可见，但是在那些以良好教养自居的女士所张罗的款待客人的餐桌上尤为荒谬。在那里，一个男子必须甘心枯坐一个钟头而无所事事，除非他铁了心敢打破这家的全部成规礼仪。这位女主人决定男人应该最喜爱吃什么和吃多少。如果这家的男主人也是同样的禀性，他便会在饮酒时刻同样专横地发号施令。与此同时，你不得不成百上千次应答他们的种种道歉，叫你无法消受。尽管在风尚高雅的许多人中间，这种可笑的习气已经大为削弱。但是，尤其是在乡间，它的流弊仍广。我曾听到一位诚实的先生说，他曾4天被强留在乡间友人的家里，终日忙于藏匿靴子、锁上马厩之类矫揉造作的礼节，结果简直想不出，从他来时到他去日的全部逗留时间内，有任何一件不违背他本意的事，仿佛是朋友的全家人都结成一伙来折磨他。

除此之外，我在这帮繁琐礼仪的不幸信奉者之间所观察到的愚蠢可笑的事便真是多得不胜枚举。我曾看见一个过于殷勤的蠢小子，急匆匆奔上前去，为一位伯爵夫人开门，以免除她的举手之劳，那时候伯爵夫人几乎为之厥倒。我记得在一次宫廷的生日宴会上，一位贵妇人向邻座的客人行礼如仪，突然移动手肘，仆人手中的一小盘酱油便泼洒在她的头饰和缎子衣服上，那时她那副气急败坏的样子有多狼狈。荷兰使臣伯于斯先生的政治才能和礼貌举止一样非凡，有一次带了个13岁的儿子到宫中赴宴。父子两人不管把什么菜装进盆子，都要首先挨次传给在座的每一个人，所以在整个进餐时间里我们没有一分钟的安宁。最后他们的盆子不巧猛烈相撞，瓷盆碎裂成20多块，在座的有半数人身上被甜食和奶油溅湿。

就像在各种艺术和科学中，有时甚至在商业买卖中都存在着迂腐陈规一样礼貌行为中也有迂腐陈规。迂腐陈规确切地说是对我们所乞求的知识过分夸大。那种知识愈是无聊，陈规旧矩就愈见严重。由于这一原因，我把拉琴的、教跳舞的、掌礼的、当司仪的等人，看做是比利普修斯和年长的斯卡利杰更有过之而无不及的学究迂夫。据我所知，这样一类迂夫，宫中可以说是大有人在。我的意思是，从风度像绅士一般的领宾员到有绅士一般风度的守门人在内，这些人一般说来是不列颠岛所能产生的最微不足道的人群，毫无礼貌可言，而礼仪却偏偏是他们自称拥有的唯一行当。他们斗大的字不识半升，仅仅在同类人之间相互交谈，将教育培养的整个系统压缩到他们所从事的几项职能的形式和圈子之内。由于他们从不为王公大臣所注意，因此无论出现何种变革，他们照样生死作息，对得到任何程度的宠幸和褒奖的人都极尽阿谀逢迎之能事，对其他的人则一概粗暴无礼。所以，我早就得出结论，礼貌并不是宫廷里生长出来的花草；因为，如果是的话，那些明





达事理足以慧眼识人的人,那些长期以来专司此职的人早就把它们一一采摘起来了。对于那些侍奉王子、参与议事或为他家庭招待客人的文武大臣来说,这些人只是一群匆匆的过客,无权声称比旁人的举止更为高雅,甚至也无须向风度优雅的领宾员请求指教。所以我知道,就礼貌而言,人们休想在宫中学到什么;只有在衣冠楚楚的重要场合或许能有教益,这方面宫廷侍女的权威之见应该与走红的女演员的意见受到同等的重视。

我还记得吾公博林布鲁克勋爵告诉我的一节故事:他有一次前往登岸处,迎接统治意大利的萨伏伊王室的尤金王子,以便引他晋见女王陛下。王子说他担心那天晚上不能去见女王,因为霍夫曼先生(他当时就站在旁边)已经禀告殿下,由于王子头上束着佩鲁基男子假发,因而未必能受到接见。王子的服饰用品尚未送来,他曾试着在随从僮仆之间借一个长的假发,但无结果。吾公将此事视为笑话,径自带着王子去见女王。为了此事,吾公还受到全体绅士领宾员的指责,正是从他们之中,枯燥沉闷的霍夫曼老先生,法国皇帝陛下的驻外公使,了解到了这条重要的礼仪准则。我相信,这是他 25 年驻外任职期间学到的最重要的一课。

我将礼貌和教养区分开来,尽管为了表达的多样化,我有时不得不把它们混为一谈。关于前者,我只懂得记住和实施行为规范方面若干约定形式的艺术,但是好的教养所包含的面要广得多;因为,除了需要数量可观的文字材料使一位绅士有能力阅读剧本和政治小册子外,它还需要广博的知识,其数量决不少于跳舞、搏斗、狩猎、巡游意大利、驾驭良驹烈马和讲法语所需要的知识,更不要说一些次要的、低等的技能,它们更容易获得。因此,好的教养和好的举止的差别在于,前者不可能不经过刻苦学习而光凭出色的理解能力而获得。至于礼貌方面,不需别的帮助,仅靠适量的理性即能告诉我们良好礼貌的各个方面。

关于这个题目,除了列举有关良好礼貌基本要素的若干细节之外,我想不出还有什么更为有用的了。忽略和违背这些细节将大大扰乱这个世界的和谐交往,因为那样就会在大多数的人群中播下相互干扰造成不安的一连串因素。

作为礼貌的一个必要部分,首先,无论在自己的家里,还是别人的寓所或第三个地方,无论是寒暄客套还是履行公事或娱乐消遣,都要严格遵守时间。这条规则尽管是常识所要求的规定,我所认识的最为杰出的大臣却是最不遵守这条规则的人。于是,他的事务加倍沉重地压在他身上,使他永远不堪应付。我过去常嘲笑他礼貌不周。我曾认识不少驻外大使和国务大臣,他们智力有限,却仅仅凭借严格准时而政绩不凡,赢得好评。如果在别





人为你效劳时你认真守时：那会成倍地加重他的责任感；如果你在独立行事时疏于守时，那会显出你的愚蠢甚至不领情义。如果上述两种情况同时出现，你使你的同僚或下属为伺候你而又使他们久等，那将是傲慢无礼和不公正。

不了解礼貌形式未必能视为失礼，因为礼貌的形式经常在变化，于是，由于它缺乏理性的基础而常为明智的人所不屑。此外，礼貌形式还因国而异，而且过了一段时期，在同一国家也时常发生变化。因此，一个旅行者每经一地时，先是对当地的礼貌习俗陌生无知，而等到他回家时，他对自己地方的礼貌习俗也感到同样陌生。随时变化的礼貌形式毕竟比容貌姓名更容易被人记住或忘却。

确实如此，浅薄的年轻小伙子从国外带回来许多无礼的行为，其中以对礼仪形式的盲从最为严重，也较其他无礼行为更为突出。他们认为这些礼仪形式不仅可供选择使用并且还至关重要，在各种场合把他们带来的新形式新花样到处热情介绍鼓吹。因此，一般说来，一群人中最没有教养的要算新近回国的年轻旅行者。

（侯维瑞 译）

## 评析

斯威夫特的散文简洁有力，明白晓畅；字里行间都透露出其行文标准——“适当的字眼放在适当的地方”。他与约翰·德莱顿(John Dryden)，丹尼尔·笛福(Daniel Defoe)等一起为英国散文树立了健康朴实的楷模与传统。他的运笔极其灵巧，非常善于调用语言夹叙夹议，文字随场景、气氛、口吻变化而亦庄亦谐，文情也随之忽雅忽俗。但却是寓谐于庄，恭敬的笔调说出的是荒诞的故事，朴实的文字讲述的是深刻的道理。

西方批评家曾有人说，斯威夫特的讽刺有如烈火一般，所经之处，寸草不留。可见言语之犀利。斯威夫特的讽刺的确是卓尔不群，自成一体。这点在他的很多政论文中已有充分展现。但一代语言宗师的文字魅力远不止于此。讽刺固然可以增加阅读的趣味，而平实则更引人深思。这篇文章是在斯威夫特去世后发表的。读者在文中看到的是一番娓娓道来，不温不火的规劝。英国也属礼仪之邦，一贯讲究礼数。在19世纪中叶的英国，礼仪似乎是修养的代名词。斯威福特却把礼节与礼貌区分开，将礼貌与理性和教养相提并论。旨在提醒人们，接人待物要内外兼修；真正有礼之人，实则渊博知性之士，懂得因人因事而变，举止适度，决不是唯独讲究繁文缛节这





么简单。

文章开门见山,指出礼貌便于人际交往。但是物极必反,走到虚礼矫饰的地步,“倒不如与农夫商贩的交谈更为轻松自如。”斯威夫特早年追随坦普尔爵士时常出入上流社会,所见所闻是其日后写作的谈资笑柄。但在篇文章中斯威夫特式锋芒毕露的讽刺已不知去向,留给读者的是轻松幽默的语言背后不着痕迹的启示。虽说是论说文字,读起来却毫无学究气。议论时侃侃而谈,观点鲜明且偶露锋芒;叙事时生动活泼,清淡描写而有声有色,故全篇章法起伏跌宕,不显板滞。在结构上也颇见特色,短句与长段并用,文若连环,节节相扣,几经转折而逐步深化。时隔两个多世纪,如今再看这篇文字,裨益之处仍熠熠在目,这便是大师的魅力!

(孟利)

