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关于台词的备注:

请注意这不是广播节目的逐字稿件。本文稿可能没有体现录制、编辑过程中对节目做出的改变。

Yuan Fen: 缘分

Natalie: Hello everyone welcome to Question and Answer of the week. I'm Natalie.

Yang Li: 大家好，我是杨莉。今天的你问我答节目将从四个汉语词开始，看看英国人知道不知道他们都是什么意思。

Natalie: The question comes from Joannie in China.

Insert

My name is Joannie. I have a burning question about the word yuan fen (缘分). I recently heard it has made its way into the English vocabulary like feng shui, dim sum and wok etc, is it true? If not, how do we explain this particular Chinese phenomenon to the westerners? Thank you.

Natalie: Joannie said that she has a burning question; this means she is anxious to know the answer.

Yang Li: 一个迫切的问题。

Insert

Of all these words which one do you recognize as a Chinese phrase that has made its way into the English language?

OK so I've heard of feng shui; I think it has to do with the way you place your items in your house; dim sum is like dumplings that you can have in a restaurant and a wok is like a special saucepan for frying stir-fries. I don't know what yuan fen is...

Insert

Well feng shui's become very fashionable in Britain and in other countries all around the world. So you hear about people being employed as feng shui consultants and charging a lot of money to come to your house to tell you where to put your sofa, where to put your TV, which way your doorways should enter. And I think there's a lot of good sense in there, but we do worry that sometimes some of these people might not be that well qualified.

Now have you heard about the word yuan fen?

No I don't know what yuan fen is.

Natalie: That's two of our colleagues Emily and Alice. I'm amazed at how much they know about these Chinese phrases.

Yang Li: Yes. It's clear that feng shui, dim sum and wok have already made their way into the English language, but the phrase 缘分 has not yet.

Natalie: To find out the meaning of this Chinese phrase we spoke to a bilingual expert at the BBC, Shirong.

Insert

The phrase yuan fen originally comes from Sanskrit, Buddhism. People talk about the kind of causal relationship. You know; what caused something in the previous life and that would have an impact on your next life. That's the kind of yuan. That's why in the English language very often it's translated as kind of destiny or fate. In that sense it is correct.

Yang Li: 时荣的解释非常清楚，“缘分”一词来自于佛教里的梵文，它体现的是一种因果关系。Let's have a look at the words he used.

Natalie: Sanskrit.

Yang Li: Sanskrit 梵文。

Natalie: Buddhism.

Yang Li: Buddhism. 佛教。

Natalie: Causal relationship.

Yang Li: Causal relationship 因果关系。

Natalie: In English we say destiny, fate or it was meant to be. Let's listen to that clip again.

Insert

The phrase yuan fen originally comes from Sanskrit, Buddhism. People talk about the kind of causal relationship. You know; what caused something in the previous life and that would have an impact on your next life. That's the kind of yuan. That's why in the English language very often it's translated as kind of destiny or fate. In that sense it is correct.

Natalie: You are listening to Question and Answer of the Week with me Natalie and Li.

Yang Li: 我们正在探讨如何向西方人解释缘分这个词。一般情况下可以解释为命中注定的事情。



Insert

Yuan fen is something that in English often gets translated as 'it was meant to be. It was my destiny. I was destined to be here. It's fate. It was meant to be.'

Natalie: But you can't use the phrase to describe every situation when you happen to meet someone. Listen to Shirong again.

Insert

If you talk about people just a chance meeting then it could be by luck, but very often this phrase is used in relationships. This man and woman or boy and girl are predestined to go together. They are predestined to meet, to get along and even get married.

Natalie: I agree with Shirong. It's very different whether you happen to meet someone for a short while or to marry someone for life.

Yang Li: That's right. Perhaps I could say in your case Natalie that it is by luck that you found the BBC job, but it is yuan fen that brought you and your boyfriend together. 一个是巧合, 另一个是缘分, 是命中注定的事情。

Insert

The phrase yuan fen sometimes is described in a negative sense. A boy and a girl may meet but their relationship may not last because they do not have the yuan fen. So in that sense there is another phrase in Chinese called wu yuan; you have no yuan; tough luck.

Natalie: That's interesting. So when a marriage or relationship works out then you can say that's yuan fen, that's destiny. And when it didn't work out you would say wu yuan, tough luck or no luck.

Yang Li: That's correct. Rather than trying to find a reason why a relationship didn't work out people just say well there is no yuan 无缘啊。

Natalie: I think we've pretty much answered the burning question from Joannie on the meaning of yuan fen; actually I'm beginning to like the phrase myself now.

Yang Li: Very good. I am glad that you've something nice to take away.

Natalie: You will find a lot more to take away if you log on to our website www.bbcukchina.com

Yang Li: Thanks for listening and see you next time.

Natalie: Bye.

