

《Spirits 为什么有“烈酒”的意思？》

英语中有许多表示酒的单词,如alcohol,booze,drink,liquor都可以泛指酒类.除此之外,spirits也可以指烈性酒.Spirit有"精神,心灵,灵魂"的意思,那么酒精和灵魂有什么关系?为什么烈性酒可以用spirits表示?



[Photo/Pexels]

According to VinePair, one theory suggests that we call some liquors spirits because of alcohol's association with one spirit in particular: the Holy Spirit, which, together with God and Jesus, forms the Holy Trinity in most Christian denominations. This theory is based primarily on certain places in the Bible where the effects of the Holy Spirit are juxtaposed with alcohol's effects. In the New Testament, for example, when Jesus's disciples are "filled with the Holy Spirit" during Pentecost and begin to speak in other languages, some bystanders jokingly write off their strange behavior as a symptom of having drunk too much wine.

据VinePair网站称,一种理论认为,某些酒被称为"spirits",是因为酒精与圣灵有特

殊的关联，圣灵与上帝和耶稣一起构成了大多数基督教教派的三位一体。这种说法主要基于《圣经》，在某些篇章中圣灵的作用与酒精相同。例如，在《新约》中，当耶稣的门徒在五旬节期间“被圣灵充满”并开始说其他语言时，一些旁观者会戏称他们的奇怪行为是喝多了的表现。

A more likely explanation has to do with the etymology of the word alcohol, which is thought to have come from either of two old Arabic words. As Scientific American reports, the first option is al-ghawl, which literally means spirit and is even mentioned in the Qur'an as a spirit or demon that imbues wine with its intoxicating effects.

更有可能的一种解释是，与单词alcohol（酒精）的词源有关，人们认为alcohol源自两个古老的阿拉伯单词中的任一个。据《科学美国人》报道，第一种可能是al-ghawl，其字面意思是灵魂（spirit），《古兰经》中提到，al-ghawl是一种鬼魂或恶魔，能使葡萄酒产生醉人的效果。

Though that origin story seems logical enough, the second option, al-koh 'l, is pretty plausible, too. The word al-koh 'l described an eyeliner made from a black powdery mineral called stibnite. Since the method of transforming stibnite into makeup was similar to how people distilled liquids, al-koh 'l may have gotten co-opted to mean “anything that was distilled.” When alcohol showed up in English during the 16th century, it was used to describe the spirit or essence distilled from some other substance, as in “alcohol of wine.” All things considered, it's not surprising that people eventually just started calling those spirits “spirits.”

虽然上述起源故事似乎很合乎逻辑，不过，第二种可能也相当合理，即spirits与al-koh 'l的词源相关。Al-koh 'l指一种眼线笔，它是由一种被称为辉锑矿的黑色粉状矿物制成的。由于将辉锑矿转化为化妆品的方法类似于人们蒸馏液体的方法，因此al-koh 'l可以指“任何蒸馏过的东西”。16世纪，当alcohol在英语中出现时，这个词被用来描述从其他物质中蒸馏出的精髓（spirit）或精华，如“alcohol of wine（葡萄酒的精华）”。综上所述，人们最终将这些酒称为“spirits”也就没什么奇怪的了。

说到烈性酒，就不得不提到中国的白酒。它与白兰地、威士忌、伏特加、朗姆酒和金酒一起并称为世界六大蒸馏酒。那么中国白酒的英文该如何翻译呢？

多年来，中国白酒缺乏一个官方的准确的英文名称，比如Chinese spirits（中国白酒），Chinese distilled spirits（中国蒸馏酒），Chinese liquor（中国烈酒）等都称为“中国白酒”。

经与海关总署税收征管局（京津）多次沟通，中国酒业协会于2020年4月25日正式向海关总署提出申请，建议将海关商品名录中中国白酒的英文名字由原来的“Chinese distilled spirits”更改为“Chinese Baijiu”。2021年1月11日，这一翻译方式正式官宣。

除了白酒，其他种类的酒用英文怎么说呢？一起来看《公共服务领域英文译写规范》给出的翻译吧：

米酒 Rice Wine
黄酒 Yellow Rice Wine或Shaoxing Wine
洋酒 imported Wines and Liquors
红葡萄酒 Red Wine
白葡萄酒 White Wine
啤酒 Beer
果酒 Fruit Wine
开胃酒 Aperitifs

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