

## Avoid the faults of your nation

Baltasar Gracian

Avoid the faults of your nation. Water shares the good or bad qualities of the strata through which it flows, and men those of the climate in which they are born. Some owe more than others to their native land, because there is a more favourable sky in the zenith. There is not a nation even among the most civilized that has not some fault peculiar to itself which other nations blame by way of boast or as a warning. It is a triumph of cleverness to correct in oneself such national failings, or even to hide them: you get great credit for being unique among your fellows, and as it is less expected of you it is esteemed the more. There are also family failings as well as faults of position, of office or of age. If these all meet in one person and are not carefully guarded against, they make an intolerable monster.

参考译文：

## 避免土生土长的缺陷

巴尔塔萨尔·格拉西安

避免土生土长的缺陷。水流之品质受河床土质之好坏的影响，人之品性受出生之气候优劣的影响。有些人会比别人更受故乡的恩泽，因为那里天清气爽。任何国家（即便是最文明的国家）都有其独特的

缺陷——正是这些缺陷，让别的国家聊以自慰或是小心防范。纠正自己的缺陷，或甚至隐藏起这些缺陷，是最明智的胜利。你在同胞中鹤立鸡群，就会赢得好的声誉，出人意料的成功总是更受钦佩。其他的缺陷则源自家庭、职位、职业和所处的时代。如果所有这些缺陷都体现在一个人身上，并且没被小心约束，那定会让他成为无法忍受的怪物。