

The background of the entire cover is a stylized illustration of the Statue of Liberty. She is depicted in a greenish-blue hue, holding a torch aloft in her right hand and a tablet in her left. The statue is set against a backdrop of the American flag, with the stars and stripes rendered in a slightly blurred, artistic manner. The overall color palette is dominated by reds, whites, and blues, with the green of the statue providing a central focal point.

(Illustrated)

*You Can Read
American History*

你能用英文读懂的
美国历史 (插图版)

编著 Andrew Grant [美]

王若平

审订 杨守忠

航空工业出版社

(Illustrated)
You Can Read
American History

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前言

一、21 世纪有知识的中国人要通读一本由美国人编写的美国历史书

如果把拥有 2000 年文明史的英国比作一个成年人，那么历史只有 200 年的美国最多可算做一个小孩子。这么一个小孩子竟完成了许多文明古国上千年、甚至几千年才能完成的业绩，迅速成为西方世界的霸主，这不能不令很多人对它产生兴趣。

美国具有全球性的经济、政治和文化影响力，一直是世界关注和讨论的焦点。美国经济高度发达，全球任一国家的货币都与美元挂钩，美国的证券市场被认为是世界经济的晴雨表。美国现是联合国安理会五个常任理事国之一，其影响力渗透到全球每个角落，成为很多世界“游戏规则”的制订者。美国的平均教育水准极高，联合国的调查显示美国的教育水准目前列为世界第一。在世界排名前 20 名大学中，美国占 17 所；超过 80% 的诺贝尔奖得主都在美国工作。

美国发展到现在，绝非无缘无故而是有其深刻原因的。在中国逐步走向繁荣的今天，作为一个有知识的中国人读懂由美国人写的美国历史是一种解读美国、解读世界的最佳途径。

二、在中国三亿学英语大军中，很多人是英语“假懂症”患者

三亿中国人在二十年中大张旗鼓地学英语。但今天能说得上真正熟练掌握、运用英语的人有多少？能不能说有三万个都是个非常严肃的问题。从非英语专业到英语专业，从小孩到成人，英语学习者们似乎都养成了一种不好的习惯，英语明明读不懂，自己却不知不懂，或不懂装懂。起初大都出现假懂症状，语义理解仅仅是按英语字面堆砌汉字，心中不知所言何意，或文意讲起来很不通顺，诘屈聱牙。多年英语学下来，一般不知向人请教，或自己深抠。最后竟得出一个荒谬的结论来安慰自己：英语本来就是个别别扭扭的语言。继而由于自己所处的社会地位很容易出现装懂的情况，从来不敢承认自己英语有读不懂的情况，更不敢坦言几乎每篇英语报刊文章自己都会有不解之处。这是中国人在 21 世纪学英语的常态。

我这里讲一个典型的例子。我的一个朋友是美籍华人，丈夫是美国人。她专门从事美国文学研究，英语造诣很深，经常在《时代》(Times)、《经济学家》(Economist) 上发表文章，也曾用英语在国外发表过自己的自传，近年在中国名牌高校教书。有一次我和她探讨读原著的问题：“您的学生读原版的《简爱》(Jane Eyre) 能理解多少？”“看大概意思行，很多细节都读不懂。”“看不懂为什么还装出一副津津有味样子？”“学校里多年来都这么教，要学生早点看原著。其实我心里非常清楚，虽说是英语专业的研究生，但也很难彻底看懂原著，台阶太高了！更何况是本科生。”确实，学生不这么学也有压力，不看原著让人小瞧自己。最初撒这种谎可能是儒家文化中的害羞所致，后来久而久之，习惯成自然了。就像被人问起“你吃了吗”即使没吃也都答吃了，其实一看就知道多半没吃。

我姐姐是 1978 年入学的大学生，上大学前基本没学过英语。上大学后她很努力地随堂学英语，每次英语考试成绩在班上名列前茅，两年后英语课结束，英语成绩优秀，她当时以为英语学好了呢，到工作后才知道英语“假懂”。

有一次我们班级里放外国电影，某一时屋子里哄堂大笑，我问了问前排的几个同学，“你们都听懂英文对白了吗”，他们不置可否，一脸疑惑。听外国人讲课，或和他们聊天，我观察很多学生的笑容都是伪装的。听美国之音，好长时间终于抓住了几个词，也在那装能听懂。

学校里的情况尚且如此，更何况社会呢。整个中华民族的英语学习者也不知道怎么搞的，仿佛得了英语“假懂症”。这就像《皇帝的新装》在全国大范围上演，参演者是达以亿计的英语学习者。经典作品的现实意义就是这么大！

亲爱的读者，假如你读书还有看前言的习惯，假如你此刻在看我的这篇文章，你问问自己是不是也是一个英语“假懂症”患者？

凡是得了这种病的人，学英语的状态必然是囫圇吞枣、消化不良。长此以往，英语水平持续性的、甚至绝望性的不能提高，最后只能以失败告终。

归根溯源，是不当的教材、不正确的方法、浮躁的态度把几亿学英语的大军引向了不归之路。对于英语“假懂症”的治疗原则主要有两点：一、要注意英语学习的难度梯度。选择的读物不能太难，不要搞英语“大跃进”，不能学了几篇教材课文，就直接去读原著；二、阅读的量要大，要通过阅读大量的难度适宜的读物一步一个脚印地提高。三、不能只为学英语而学英语，阅读的材料本身要有趣，对自己今后的发展有用。一旦读者找到了读懂英语的乐趣，英语成为提高生存技能的工具，可以说就走上英语成功之路。唯有“有趣”和“有用”才能把英语学习进行到底，才能真正学会英语，最终享受到掌握英语的益处。

三、本书特色

美国历史虽短暂，却充满故事。本书英文部分由多年来一直从事历史研究的美国作家执笔，以西方人的视角，深入浅出地介绍了从殖民地时期到二战后美国历史上的重大事件和传奇人物。

本书用英语中最常用的词汇写成，避免了多数历史书语言艰深、晦涩、乏味的情况；采用英汉对照的模式，您在阅读英文遇到疑问时，可以翻阅相对应的中文译文作参考；还配有相对应的插图，使您能够对不同地域和各个时期人物和事件有更直观的感受。

笔者的目的就是让具有初、中级英语水平的人能用英文读懂由美国人编著的美国历史书。

亲爱的读者，如果您想拥有一段真正读懂大部头的、价值非凡的英语原版书的经历，那么就从本书开始吧。

王若平 于北京

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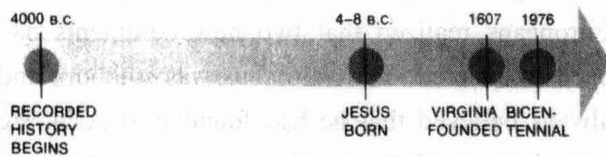
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The Beginning of the Americas

The Discovery of America

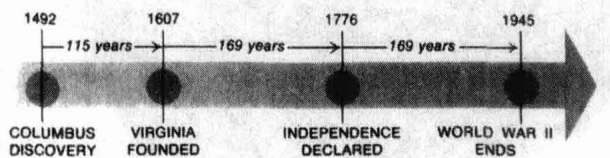
Several billion years ago, the earth came into being. The western world began about six thousand years ago, only a minute in the history of the earth.

Nearly five hundred years ago — only a second in the history of the world—the American continents were discovered by Europeans. This huge achievement, one of the most important in the history of man, forever changed the future of the world.



Though North and South America became many different countries, the most powerful of these countries was the United States. The United States has changed the rest of the world because of its belief in freedom, equality and its great opportunities for the peoples of foreign countries. The development of its huge economy has made the United States a leader in the world. Its developments in science, technology, and culture have changed the lives of people everywhere.

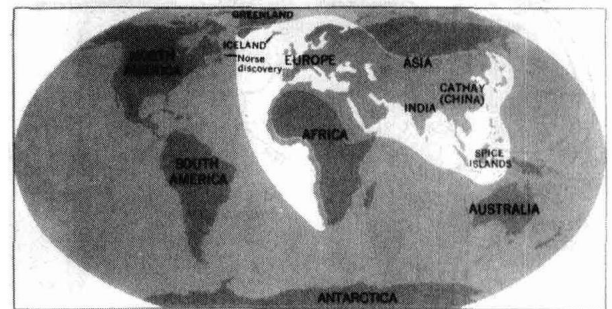
The American Republic is still young. It started with many advantages. It began rich in land and nature, and had very few other people living on it.



Even though the U.S. has had an excellent history, it, like Greece and the Roman Republic, may have difficult times in its future and lose its power. Perhaps another country will become the leader in the world soon.

Finding the Americas

It took a long time for Europeans to find the American continents and divide them into many countries. America was discovered because the countries of Europe wanted products from the Far East—countries such as China, India and Indonesia. However, these products were too expensive to bring to Europe. They had to be carried far distances across both land and sea. Businesses in Europe wanted to find a cheaper way to get the valuable products of the Far East, like gold and spices, to Europe to sell for high profits.



THE WORLD KNOWN TO EUROPE, 1492

In 1295, after a stay of twenty years in China, Marco Polo, an Italian, returned to Europe. Several years later, he told the story of his travels. Marco Polo's book, with its beautiful descriptions of China, caused Europeans to want a quicker way to the riches and treasures of East Asia. In this way Marco Polo helped in the discovery of the Americas.

The desire to find a fast way to East Asia was strong, but people did not have the tools to find a short path through the oceans. Fortunately, the European Renaissance of the 14th century was a time of great technological development. Tools like the compass and printing press helped educate many people about sea travel. Also, the Renaissance made the people in Europe feel excited about adventure.

Portuguese Explorers

In the 14th century, many countries developed great power in Western Europe. The first countries

2



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was round. He thought that traveling west over the Atlantic to East Asia would be faster than going east around Africa.

The Spanish king and queen were interested in his idea and gave Columbus three small ships, seamen and money. His travels were hard because many of his seamen were afraid that the world was flat and that they would fall off the side. However, on October 12, 1492, after sailing for six weeks, he saw land—a small island near America. A new world was opened to Europe.

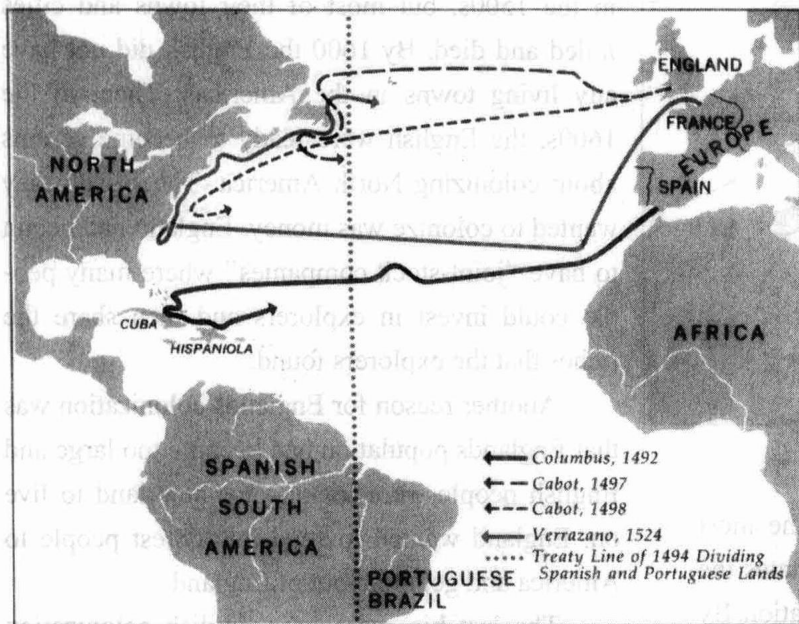
Columbus's discovery was great, but he did not reach his goal. He instead found a huge land blocking the way to East Asia. Many years later, Europeans realized that two new continents had been discovered. Yet Columbus was stubborn and always believed that he had found East Asia. He named the people he met there "Indians", because he believed he was in India.

It is important to know that these “Indians”, or Native Americans, were the true discoverers of America. They had lived on the continent for many centuries. Many Native American groups, or “tribes”, had a strong culture and society, but they did not have strong political organization or strong ideas about private land. Because of this the white Europeans easily took the Native Americans land from them.



NORTH AMERICAN INDIAN TRIBES AROUND 1500

This map shows many different Native American tribes. More than 200 tribes were divided by location, language, and culture.



IMPORTANT TRAVELS OF DISCOVERY

Spain, Portugal, France, and England received the greatest profits from the Americas, but Italians, notably Christopher Columbus of Genoa, did much of the earliest exploration.

The Spanish Conquerors

Soon Europe understood that the American continents had many riches of their own. Spain and Portugal divided up the land of South America in the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494); Spain received most of South America, and Portugal got the land that is now Brazil.

In the 1500s Spain became the largest exploring and colonizing country. Two famous Spanish explorers of this time were Vasco Balboa, who was the first European seaman to get to the Pacific Ocean by crossing over the American Continent. When he reached the Pacific in 1513 he said that all the lands in the ocean were now owned by Spain!

Ferdinand Magellan left Spain in 1519 with five small ships. All of them but one were destroyed and he was killed in the Philippines. The one ship that survived made it all the way around the world and back to Spain in 1522.

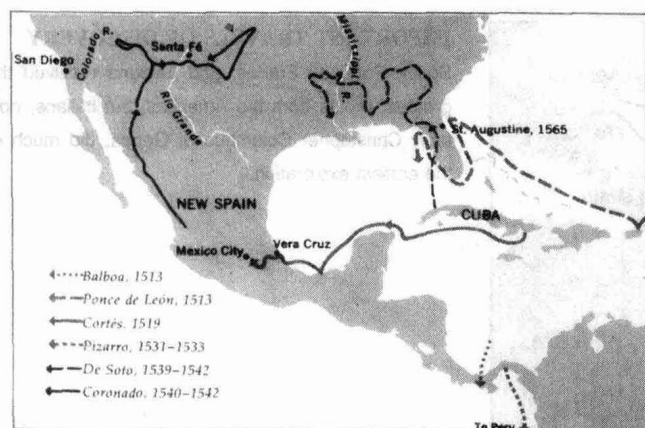
Spain also began to explore North America. In 1513 Juan Ponce de Leon found Florida. He was looking for a magic kind of water that made people live forever, but was instead killed by a Native American arrow. Francisco Coronado explored what is now Arizona and New Mexico looking for

cities that were made of gold! He was the first European to find one of the United States natural wonders: the Grand Canyon.



Drawing of a Spanish Conqueror.

In some ways, the Spanish conquerors helped found the United States. They explored many areas of the Americas and found a lot of silver and other riches. Then the English also wanted the riches that the Spanish had found and began to explore and colonize America. Eventually the English started to become stronger than the Spanish in North America.



SPANISH EXPLORATIONS AND CONQUESTS

Though England eventually became the most powerful country in what is now the United States, the Spanish also had a large effect on its colonization. By 1574, thirty-three years before the first English people built a town in Virginia, there were about two hundred Spanish cities and towns in North and South America and a total of 160,000 Spanish people. They also set-up two famous universities in 1551, one in Mexico City and the other at Lima, Peru. Also the Spanish, compared with the English, created a bigger and richer empire, and it lasted twenty-five years longer than the British Empire in the Americas.

England begins to Colonize

The English began to colonize North America

in the 1500s, but most of their towns and cities failed and died. By 1600 the English did not have any living towns in the Americas. Then, in the 1600s, the English were ready to become serious about colonizing North America. The reason they wanted to colonize was money. England had begun to have "joint-stock companies" where many people could invest in explorers and then share the riches that the explorers found.

Another reason for England's colonization was that England's population had become too large and English people were looking for new land to live on. England wanted to send its poorest people to America and get them out of England.

The last big reason for English colonization was that many people wanted religious freedom. Religion in England was changing quickly and many people were not happy with the changes and thought that they could live more freely in America.

Sir Francis Drake and the Spanish Armada

In the mid-1500s, English pirates began attacking Spanish ships all over the world and stealing their gold and silver. In 1580, Sir Francis Drake, the most famous of these pirates, was honored by Queen Elizabeth for his attacks on Spanish ships.



North Carolina Indians

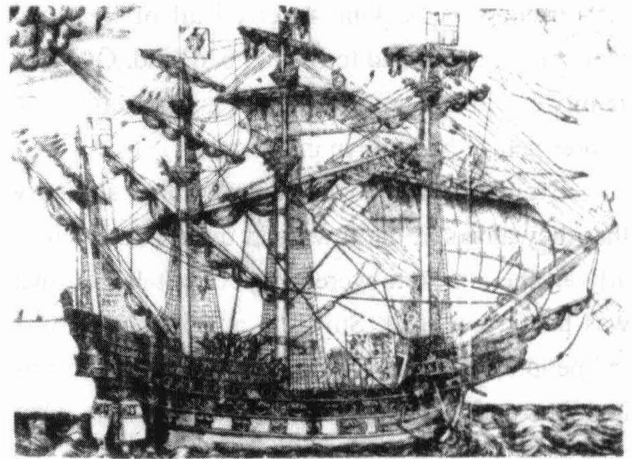
Queen Elizabeth angered the Spanish more by sending English troops to the Netherlands to help the Protestant Dutch win independence from Catholic Spain.



Elizabeth I (1533-1603) was a successful ruler. She never married ("The Virgin Queen"), although many men proposed to her.

In 1588, King Philip II of Spain sent his navy of about 130 ships to attack England. The English used smaller, faster ships to defeat the Spanish. Then strong storms caused the Spanish to flee. Spanish honor suffered deeply.

The defeat of the Spanish Navy made England the strongest naval power in the North Atlantic. With this power England was able to make, supply and protect her colonies. The English began to settle on the east coast of North America, which before was Spain's land. England's colonization was sped up in 1603 when Queen Elizabeth died and England and Spain signed a peace treaty. This treaty allowed England to use more of her boats to colonize America. Also England's victory gave the people a high self-confidence and hope for a rich future for their country.



An English Ship Used to Fight the Spanish Navy.

England Starts Jamestown

In 1606, a joint-stock company, known as The Virginia Company of London, began a settlement in North America. The colony was created to find gold. In 1607, Jamestown, Virginia was selected as the colony's site. The early years at Jamestown were hard. Forty colonists died coming to America and three hundred more died in the first winter in America. The settlers could have lived through the winter, but they used too much time looking for gold when they should have been finding food. Only 60 people survived into the second year. Disease, hunger and Indian attacks caused many people to die. By 1625, of the 8000 people who came to Jamestown, only about 1200 people lived.

Life in Virginia became better once people started growing tobacco and selling it to England. Tobacco brought a lot of money to the colony, but it was bad for the soil and needed many workers to grow. This created a need for slaves.

In 1619, the first ship full of slaves came to Virginia and sold about twenty black Africans. By 1650, there were 300 blacks in Virginia, and more than 600 by 1700. Slavery became very important to the economy of Virginia.

In 1624, the king of England, James I, made Virginia into a colony ruled by the English king. This made many people in Virginia angry, because