

*Selected Readings of British & American Poems*

# 英美诗歌选读

蒋洪新◎编著



湖南师范大学出版社  
Hunan Normal University Press

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# 前 言

本书在 2004 年出版后被国内部分院校用为教材,2009 年被评为湖南省普通高等学校优秀教材。关于英语诗歌与诗论的选本国内外已出版了一些颇有影响的书籍。例如:在国外,亚历山大·W·爱立森教授等主编《诗歌诺顿选本》(*The Norton Anthology of Poetry*, Edited by Alexander W. Allison etc., W. W. Norton & Company, Inc, New York, 1975);唐纳德·艾伦和沃伦·托尔曼主编《美国新诗学》(*The Poetics of the New American Poetry*. Edited by Donald Allen & Warren Tallman, Grove Press, Inc, New York, 1973)。在中国,王佐良教授主编《英国诗选》(注释本)(上海译文出版社,1993 年)。这些选本在当时既筛选了英语诗歌的精华篇章,又为英美文学的教学提供了好的教材。美国学者罗伯特·E·斯皮勒及其合作者说过:“每一代人至少应当编写一部美国文学史,因为,每一代人都理应用自己的观点去阐释过去。”按此说法,文学史应随时代的变迁要做适当的改写,那么,我们有关诗歌和诗论的选本也应根据时代的发展做相应的改编,因为“江山代有才人出,各领风骚数十年”。另外,这些选本若应用于中国英语专业的英美文学教学还需要做某些方面的改善。这是因为:其一,这些诗歌选本在英美两国各有偏重,美国人偏重选美国诗;而英国人偏重选英国诗;其二,外国人的选本与中国的具体教学环境亦不甚相符;其三,在这些选本里诗歌选读与文学史、文本阅读与作品赏析、诗歌与诗论基本上相互脱节。本教材突破了国内外英美诗歌与诗论编选教材的传统模式,尝试适合中国学生学习英美诗歌的新途径,力争达到三个提高:有利于提高学生的英美文学的阅读与鉴赏能力;有利于提高英语专业学生的思维能力与人文素质;有利于提高文学爱好者的想象能力和创造能力。鉴于此,在该教材的编写过程中我们注重如下几个方面:

一、选材上涵盖了英美两国的许多经典作品,全书共十七个单元,前七个单元按照诗的基本构成要素和诗的类别来编排;后十个单元按照诗歌流派和重要诗人产生的时间顺序来编排,从古典主义诗歌到当今英美诗坛的发展潮流一目了然,自成体系。

二、该教材注重互动式的教学理念,每个单元包括四个部分:Ⅰ. 作品选读(*Selected Reading*);Ⅱ. 文学知识(*Literary Knowledge*);Ⅲ. 补充阅读(*Supplementary Reading*);Ⅳ. 研究指南(*Research Guide*)。编者本着从实践(即选读)到理论(文学知识),又从理论(文学知识)回到实践(即练习与课外拓展阅读、研究指南)的认识论原则,在每个单元教学中,教师先从文本欣赏示范,后提出问题由学生讨论,再提升到相关的文学理论层次,然后提供补充阅读,由学生当堂操练,最后延伸到课外的阅读、研究和写作。这样教师的讲解与学生的讨论、阅读理解与作品分析、文本阅读与理论提升、课内教学与课外自学融为一体,互为促进。

三、该教材用中英文编写,讲求实用,全书共十七个单元,恰好吻合英语专业本科生和研究生教学在一个学期安排的课时(本科生教学与研究生教学可根据学生的程度进行裁选),

每个单元用两个课时基本上完成课堂教学任务,教材的后面还附有“怎样写诗歌方面的论文”和“英美诗歌选读测试样卷”,以及“英美诗歌流派简介”等,这样为本科生写论文和准备研究生考试提供一些参考背景知识。

编辑该书之难主要有:一是对书的体例之策划。该书的体例设计无疑有湖南师范大学出版社英语编辑李阳先生的出谋划策之功劳。该书能付梓出版还有周玉波先生、肖湘愚先生、肖君华先生的鼎力支持。二是该书虽名之为《英美诗歌选读》,但该书覆盖面较宽,借鉴和参考的书籍不少,它容纳了诗的翻译、诗人的照片、诗歌的选文、诗论的摘取、文学的赏析以及作为研究指南的参考书目,本书已在每个单元之后列举了所借鉴和参考的书籍,这些编者和作者的智慧启迪和知识产权令我铭记和永远感谢!

该书在成书之前以讲义稿的形式已在我院本科生和研究生教学中试用,在教学中学生们提出了一些好的意见,教学相长,学生们始终是我最好的朋友!在成书过程中,我的许多老师与朋友提供了资料上和思想上的启发:叶维廉(Wai-lim Yip,美国加州大学圣迭哥分校教授)、罗森堡(Jerome Rothenberg,美国诗人)、唐纳德·威士麟(Donald Wesling)(美国加州大学圣迭哥分校教授)、迈克尔·戴维森(Michael Davidson)(诗人、美国加州大学圣迭哥分校教授)、蒋坚松(湖南师范大学教授)、刘英凯(深圳大学教授)。在本书修订过程中,清华大学刘世生教授、湖南师范大学刘学明教授、湖南师范大学易艳萍博士、湖南科技大学吕爱晶博士等提出了很好的修改意见。在此,一并表示衷心感谢!

本书是湖南省社科规划办所批准的省社科基金项目“英语诗歌与诗论”、湖南省学位办所批准的省研究生精品课程建设项目“英美诗歌”的资助项目的结题,这两项资助的金额不多,但解决了我不少购买书籍和复印资料的费用,在目前诗歌受到忽略的年代,资助的本身远高于其经济意义,在此特地向提供资助的两家单位表示感谢!本书部分材料的版权分别属于不同的个人或机构,请各版权持有者通过出版社与本书编者联系处理。

由于本人的学识有限,该书的错误与不足在所难免,愿读者批评指正,以期今后改正。

编者  
于湖南师范大学外国语学院

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## 第1单元/Unit 1

## 什么是诗? /What Is Poetry?

## 作品选读 Selected Reading

## ◆ 诗人简介/About the Poet

Wallace Stevens(1879 —1955) was born in Reading, Pennsylvania. As a special student at Harvard, he became president of the student literary magazine, *the Harvard Advocate*, but he did not want a liberal arts degree. Instead, he became a lawyer. Later he rose to the position of vice-president of the Hartford Accident and Indemnity Company. At the age of 44, he published a book of poems, *Harmonium*. His critical essays, collected in *The Necessary Angel* (1951). His *Collected Poems* (1954), published on his seventy-fifth birthday, won major prizes and belated recognition for Stevens as a major American poet.

## ◆ 选文/Selection

**Anecdote of the Jar**

I placed a jar in Tennessee,  
And round it was, upon a hill.  
It made the slovenly wilderness  
Surround that hill.



The wilderness rose up to it,  
And sprawled around, no longer wild.  
The jar was round upon the ground.  
And tall and a port in air.  
It took dominion everywhere.  
The jar was gray and bare.  
It did not give of bird or bush,  
Like nothing else in Tennessee.

◆题解/About the Selection

坛子的轶事

我把一只坛子置于田纳西，  
圆圆的，立于山巅。  
它使凌乱的荒野，  
围排着那山。

荒野朝它涌起，  
在四周匍匐，不再荒莽。  
坛子圆圆地立在那里，  
高高的，气宇非凡。

它君临四方，  
坛子灰色的而无装饰。  
它既无鸟，也不长灌木，  
不像田纳西别的事物。

(蒋洪新 译)

斯蒂文斯认为现代社会最缺乏信仰和秩序，唯有依靠文学和艺术来振兴，而诗人应成为建设现代社会的英雄，他的使命就是在想象的世界和现实的世界之间架起一道桥梁。诗中的“坛子”是人造的、非自然的产品，无疑倾注了诗人的个人理想，同时也饱含着象征意义。诗的大背景是带有原始风味的西部荒野，四周是“凌乱的荒野”，仿佛一片混沌。然而，当诗人将一只坛子置于山巅，这个世界发生了改变，奇迹出现了：“它使凌乱的荒野，/围排着那山。/荒野朝它涌起，/在四周匍匐，不再荒莽。”这首短诗注入了诗人斯蒂文斯对诗与现实的看法。“坛子”虽然粗糙，但经过艺术的想象，可以使荒芜的世界变得有秩序，同时，艺术的本身也要依靠现实

和自然作为背景,才能增加其生命力。

### ◆注释/Notes

1. anecdote: short, interesting or amusing story about a real person or event
2. dominion: authority to rule; effective control

### ◆思考题/Questions

1. When you first read this poem, what's your general impression of it?
2. Why does the poet entitle this poem as "Anecdote of the Jar"? What does the image "jar" stand for?

## 文学知识 Literary Knowledge

### ◆诗歌基本知识/Some Basic Knowledge of Poetry

#### What Is Poetry?

Poetry is as universal as language and almost as ancient. The most primitive peoples have used it, and the most civilized have cultivated it. In all ages, and in all countries, poetry has been written by all kinds and conditions of people, by soldiers, statesmen, lawyers, farmers, doctors, scientists, clergymen, philosophers, kings, and queens. In all ages it has been especially the concern of the educated, the intelligent, and the sensitive, and it has appealed, in its simpler forms, to the uneducated and children. Why? First, because it has given pleasure. People have read it or listened to it or recited it because they liked it, because it gave them enjoyment. But this is not the whole answer, poetry in all ages has been regarded as important, not simple as one of the several alternative forms of amusement, as one man might choose bowling, another chess, and another poetry. Rather, it has been regarded as something central to each man's existence, something having unique value to the fully realized life, something that he is better off for having spiritually impoverished without. To understand the reasons for this, we need to have at least a provisional understanding of what poetry is —provisional, because man has always been more successful at

appreciating poetry than at defining it.

No one has adequately defined poetry. The poets speak abstractly and romantically when defining their domain. For example, Samuel Taylor Coleridge called poetry, “the best words in the best order.” John Keats stated to a friend: “I look upon fine phrases like a lover.” William Wordsworth said, “Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings: it takes its origin from emotion recollected in tranquility.” P. B. Shelley stated, “Poetry, in a general sense, maybe defined to be the expression of the imagination.” Byron defined poetry as “the lava of the imagination to prevent an eruption”. Poe, “the rhythmical creation of beauty”; Arnold, “a criticism of life”. Rossetti called a sonnet a “Moment’s Monument” and Carl Sandburg, too, emphasized the importance of “Precious Moments”. On the other hand, beware the dangers and difficulties of words, T. S. Eliot said in his “Easter Coker”, “Trying to learn to use words, and every attempt/ is a wholly new start, and a different kind of failure/ because one has only learnt to get the better of words/ for the thing one no longer has to say, or the way in which/ one is no longer disposed to say it . And so each venture/ is a new beginning, a raid on the inarticulate/ with shabby equipment always deteriorating.” Dylan Thomas called his making of poetry a “Sullen Art”. The average reader sees poetry as, “the literature that is written in some kind of verse form”. Perhaps it is sufficient to say that poetry is literature that is not prose. Yet, most people recognize that some literature labelled poetry is not so and that some prose is poetic. Merely setting sentences in verse form does not make poetry. Therefore, poetry must have some requisites. Aside from the basic demand that poetry “say something”, or as Robert Frost made a classic reply, “Poetry is the kind of thing poets write.” Poetry is characterized by the following elements: a musical effect created by rhythm and sounds, a precise and fresh imagery, and multiple levels of interpretation suggested by the connotation of the closer words and by allusions. A poem, however, should not be regarded as a marriage of technical devices and meanings, but, for convenience’s sake, the elements of poetry will be focused on separately in this book so that a student can devote his/her attention to the effects achieved by certain poetic convention.

(Adapted from *Sound and Sense*, p. 3. *AP/Clep English-Analysis and Interpretation of Literature*, p. 81.)

## ◆ 诗论/Selected Readings of Criticism on Poetry

◎ Aristotle (384—322 B.C.)

**Two Causes of Poetry**

Poetry in general seems to have sprung from two causes, each of them lying deep in our nature. First, the instinct of imitation is implanted in man from childhood, one difference between him and other animals being that he is the most imitative of living creatures, and through imitation he learns his earliest lessons; and no less universal is the pleasure felt in things imitated. We have evidence of this in the facts of experience. Objects which in themselves we view with pain, we delight to contemplate when reproduced with minute fidelity: such as the forms of the most ignoble animals and of dead bodies. The cause of this again is, that to learn gives the liveliest pleasure, not only to philosophers but to men in general; whose capacity, however, of learning is more limited. Thus the reason why men enjoy seeing a likeness is, that in contemplating it they find themselves learning or inferring, and saying perhaps, "Ah, that is he." For if you happen not to have seen the original, the pleasure will be due not to the imitation as such, but to the execution, the coloring, or some such other cause.

Imitation, then, is one instinct of our nature. Next, there is the instinct for "harmony" and rhythm, meters being manifestly sections of rhythm. Persons, therefore, starting with this natural gift developed by degrees their special aptitudes, till their rude improvisations gave birth to poetry.

(*Poetics*, IV)

◎ Samuel Johnson (1709—1784)

**The Business of a Poet**

The business of a poet is to examine, not the individual, but the species; to remark general properties and large appearances; he does not number the streaks of the tulip, or describe the different shades in the verdure of the forest. He is to exhibit in his portraits of nature such prominent and striking features as recall the original to every mind, and must neglect the minuter discriminations, which one may have remarked and another have neglected, for those characteristics which are alike obvious to vigilance and carelessness.

But the knowledge of nature is only half the task of a poet; he must be acquainted likewise with all the modes of life. His character requires that he estimate the happiness and misery of every condition, observe the power of all the passions in all their combinations, and trace the changes of the human mind as they are modified by various institutions and accidental influence of climate or custom, from the sprightliness of infancy to the despondency of decrepitude. He must divest himself of the prejudices of his age or country; he must consider right and wrong in their abstracted and variable state; he must disregard present laws and opinions, and rise to general and transcendental truths, and which will always be the same.

( *The History of Rasselas , Prince of Abyssinia* )

## 补充阅读 Supplementary Reading

⊙ Archibald Macleish

### Ars Poetica

A POEM should be palpable and mute  
As a globed fruit

Dumb  
As old medallions to the thumb

Silent as the sleeve-worn stone  
Of casement ledges where the moss has grown—

A poem should be wordless  
As the flight of birds

A poem should be motionless in time  
As the moon climbs

Leaving, as the moon releases

Twig by twig the night-entangled trees,

Leaving, as the moon behind the winter leaves,  
Memory by memory the mind—

A poem should be motionless in time  
As the moon climbs

A poem should be equal to:  
Not true

For all the history of grief  
An empty doorway and a maple leaf

For love  
The leaning grasses and two lights above the sea—

A poem should not mean  
But be.

### ◆ 注释/Notes

1. Archibald MacLeish (1892—1982) was born in Glencoe, Illinois, and educated at Yale, Harvard, and Tufts Universities. After World War I, in which he served as a captain in the artillery, MacLeish returned to teach in the Harvard Law School. Subsequently, he left teaching to practice law in Boston, but gave up a successful practice because “he never could believe in it”. He wanted to write poetry. In 1923 he left for Paris with his wife and children in order to submerge himself in the literary atmosphere of that city and to write his own poetry in his own way. “I speak to my own time/ to no time after,” he wrote and dated the beginning of his life from the year 1923. While in France, MacLeish produced three volumes of poetry—*Streets in the Moon* (1926), *The Hamlet of A. MacLeish* (1928), and *New Found Land* (1930)—the success of which was assurance that his decision to turn from law to poetry had indeed been

a wise one. After he returned to the United States, he published his narrative poem, *Conquistador* and became a member of the staff of *Time and Fortune* magazines. In 1939 MacLeish was appointed Librarian of Congress and received an honorary degree from Yale. These honors soon brought to him other advancements in his career, and in 1944 he was appointed public relations counsel in the office of the Secretary of State. Although MacLeish won a Pulitzer Prize for a narrative poem, his poetic reputation rests largely upon his lyric poetry such as *Poems* (1924—1933), and *Collected Poems* (1917—1952), for which he won a second Pulitzer Prize in 1953. In his poetic writing MacLeish reflects a certain indebtedness to Ezra Pound, T.S. Eliot, and Carl Sandburg. Yet the lasting value of his poetry rests upon a lyrical gift and a phrasing of rhetoric which is his alone. Instead of inhabiting a poet's ivory tower, MacLeish has shown interest in political movements, worked at different occupations, and investigated different professions. This involvement with the currents of everyday life is reflected in the sensibility of his poetry, much of which is a satiric commentary on 20th century life. (by Carl Bode)

2. palpable : that can be felt or touched

### ◆ 思考题/Questions

1. As usual a poem should be written in words, but in this poem in what sense can a poem be “wordless”? What images are created in this poem?
2. Is there any distinction between the meaning of a poem and its being?
3. The title of the poem is Latin, meaning “the Art of Poetry”. It is traditionally used as the title for works on the philosophy of poetry. What is the poet's philosophy of poetry? Do you agree? Give your reason.

⊙ From “Song of Myself”

### Walt Whitman

I am the poet of the Body and I am the poet of the soul,  
The pleasure of heaven are with me and the pains of hell are with me,  
The first I graft and increase upon myself, the latter I translate into a new  
tongue.

I am the poet of the woman the same as the man,

And I say it is as great to be a woman as to be a man,  
And I say there is nothing greater than the mother of men.

### ◆注释/Notes

1. **Walt Whitman** (1819—1892) was born on Long Island, son of an impoverished farmer. He spent his early years as a school teacher, a temperance propagandist, a carpenter, a printer, and a newspaper editor on the *Brooklyn Eagle*. He started writing poetry in youth, sometimes declaiming his lines above the crash of waves on New York beaches. Apparently he was also inspired to write wide, spacious, confident lines by attending performances of Italian opera. His self-published *Leaves of Grass* (1855) won praise from Ralph Waldo Emerson and gained Whitman readers in England. For the rest of his life,



美国诗人惠特曼

he kept revising and enlarging it, ceasing with a ninth or “deathbed edition” in 1891—1892. Americans at first were slow to accept Whitman’s unconventionally open verse forms, his sexual frankness, and his gregarious egoism. The poet of boundless faith in American democracy, Whitman tempered his vision by his experiences as a volunteer hospital nurse during the Civil War (described in his poems *Drum-Taps* and his wartime letters). Before he died he saw his work finally winning respect and worldwide acceptance. Whitman’s influence on later American poetry has been profound, both by the example of his open forms and by his bold encompassing of subject matter that had formerly been considered unpoetic.

2. graft: a piece cut from one plant and bound inside a cut in another, so



that it grows there(移植)

### ◆思考题/Questions

1. Who is the “I” in this poem?
2. Do you think Whitman’s historical background and his life affect his poetic style?
3. Explore the various possible meanings of “I”, the poet-speaker, and an imagined person.

## 研究指南 Research Guide

### ◆拓展阅读书目/List of Further Reading

#### 1. “*Republic: Book X*”(《理想国》第十卷)

当代西方哲学家怀海特说:“整个西方哲学只是柏拉图的一个脚注。”《理想国》是他的一部重要著作,本单元所推荐的《理想国》第十卷主要讨论文艺创作中摹仿问题以及艺术的功用问题。柏拉图认为:理念世界是第一性的,感性世界是第二性的,艺术世界是第三性的。一切诗人、画家都是摹仿者。诗人在创作中很可能受情感的鼓舞,偏离理性,将观众引入歧途。因此他主张对诗人进行限制,若诗人不守规矩,可将他逐出“理想国”。同时他提出,只要诗“不仅能引起快感,而且对国家和人生都有用”,就可以让它存在。

#### 2. “*The Mirror and the Lamp: Introduction*”(《镜与灯》导论)

《镜与灯》是当代美国批评家 M·H·艾布拉姆教授的名作。该书的导论对整个西方文艺理论做了一个全面的回顾和总结,从历史发展的角度阐述了“摹仿说”、“实用说”、“表现说”和“客观说”在各历史时期的兴衰和实际运用的利弊,使读者对西方文艺理论和文学批评史有了一个明晰的、全面的认识。另外,艾教授明确地提出文学批评四大要素的理论,即(1)作品;(2)宇宙;(3)作家;(4)读者,以及这四大要素在上述的四大理论中各自所占的比重。艾教授的批评四大要素论已被学术界普遍采用。(李赋宁)

### ◆讨论题/Topics for Discussion

1. This unit provides so many poets’ definitions of poetry. Whose idea do you agree to most? Why?
2. Compare Plato, Aristotle and Confucius’s remarks about poetry.
3. M. H. Abrams in his *The Mirror and the Lamp* advocates four theories to