

主审 刘克东

# 北美文学选读

SELECTED READINGS OF NORTHERN AMERICAN LITERATURE

主 编 蒙雪梅 张 扬



哈尔滨工业大学出版社  
HARBIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY PRESS

# 北美文学选读

SELECTED READINGS OF NORTHERN AMERICAN LITERATURE

主 编 蒙雪梅 张 扬

副主编 王 洋 王艳薇 张旭晶

编 者 李慧杰 王 朏 杨宇慧 许丽莹 张 瑾

周 华 王斌宏 张 莉 刘晓辉 任 丽

主 审 刘克东



哈尔滨工业大学出版社  
HARBIN INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY PRESS

## 内容简介

本书“历史背景,文学史”和“文选”结合,全书共分为6章,美国文学各个部分按照文学史的先后顺序分成5个不同的时期,加拿大文学选了一章。书中简明介绍了美加文学从起源到20世纪的历史文化背景、文学史特点,选择代表作家和经典作品。每章包括作家生平简介、作品介绍、注释、名词解释、思考题等。本书线索清晰,希望为学生搭建美加文学框架,引导学生阅读原著,感受美加文学的人文精神和丰富的思想内涵,帮助学生开扩国际视野。

本书既可作为我国高等院校学生使用的通识课程教材,也可供广大北美文学爱好者阅读。

## 图书在版编目(CIP)数据

北美文学选读:英文/蒙雪梅,张扬主编. —哈尔滨:

哈尔滨工业大学出版社,2017.3

ISBN 978-7-5603-6441-4

I. ①北… II. ①蒙… ②张… III. ①英语-语言读物 ②文学欣赏-北美洲 IV. ①H319.4:I

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2017)第 008711 号

策划编辑 常 雨

责任编辑 李长波

出版发行 哈尔滨工业大学出版社

社 址 哈尔滨市南岗区复华四道街10号 邮编 150006

传 真 0451-86414749

网 址 <http://hitpress.hit.edu.cn>

印 刷 哈尔滨工业大学印刷厂

开 本 787mm×960mm 1/16 印张 18 字数 320 千字

版 次 2017年3月第1版 2017年3月第1次印刷

书 号 ISBN 978-7-5603-6441-4

定 价 34.00 元

---

(如因印装质量问题影响阅读,我社负责调换)

## 前 言

---

近年来,我国学者对美加文学的介绍和研究日益重视,根据 21 世纪大学英语发展要求,适应不同层次学生的发展需求,2017 年哈尔滨工业大学开设了大学英语通识课程——“北美文学选读”。文学是对时代生活的审美表现,能够培养文学阅读、理解与鉴赏能力以及口头与书面表达等语言能力。加强对文学本质的意识,能够提高学生综合人文素质,增强对西方文学及文化的理解,适应新世纪人才培养的需要。

随着各大院校对英美文学的重视,学生和读者对出版的教材——《英美文学史与选读》提出了更高的要求 and 有益的建议。因此,我们推出了修订版。修订版既保留了原教材的优点,同时适当地补充了部分文学史、作品赏析和课后习题的内容,以及书下注释。特别加入了第 6 章加拿大文学部分。

本书共包括 6 章:各章按照文学史的时间顺序化分时期,简明地介绍各时期的历史背景和文学史特点,精选了每个时期的主要作家,并介绍作家在文学史中的地位、人生经历、创作经历和代表作品。入选作品着重其经典性,力求深入浅出、通俗易懂,为学生跨进美加文学殿堂提供快捷的通道,使其在较短的时间内了解美加文学的精华。阅读优秀的美加文学作品,可以感受到英语音乐性的语调和五光十色的语汇,回味其“弦外之音”。文学作品是对人生体验的文化表征,包含对生活的思考、价值取向和特定的意识形态。阅读文学作品,是了解西方文化的一条重要途径,可以接触到支撑表层文化的深层文化,即西方文化中根本性的思想观点、价值评判,西方人经常使用的视角,以及对这些视角的批评。

本通识课程教材是一本集历史、文本于一体的文学选读教材,为学生搭建了文学学习的框架。希望在培养学生欣赏美加文学的同时,让其领略美加文学的魅力,把握文化的精髓和人文精神的脉动,提高学生的英语认知水平和人文素养。

书中疏漏与不足之处恳请读者批评与指正,以便进一步修订与完善。

编 者

2017 年 1 月

## American Literature

---

American literature owns a short history, which appeared as soon as the free capitalism showed up. The melting pot with different races and cultures formed multiple ways of thinking and expressing ideas. Such basic features as diversity, complexity, and innovativeness cultivate the important image of American literature in the world literature.

American literature began with the immigrants from different backgrounds and cultures. Till America's independence, Americans realized that they need national literature and American literature began to develop.

After the Civil War, American literature entered a period of full blooming, which shows a great diversity and variety of different cultures—a mass of numerous and prismatic content. The diversity features include freedom of personality and self-restraint, radical and reaction, puritanism and pragmatism, senior interest and bad taste, rebel and submission, elegance and vulgarity, deep and shallow, positive and cynicism, delicacy and fudge, sharp irony and dark humor, the exploration to destiny of humanity and the morbid pursuit for erotic pathology, and so forth, which exist at the same period and form sharp contrasts. As a result, American literature style has a flavor of distinct and various aesthetic feelings. Many authors are from the lower class in American society, so American literature has the rich flavor of life and local color.

Numerous excellent literary works pushed forward the world literature. Some master pieces win universal praise. American authors' sensitivity and curiosity are always maintained in different generations. Literary trends bring both positive and negative influence to world literature.

# Contents

<b>Chapter 1 The Literature of the Colonial and Puritan America</b>	1
I . Historical Background	1
II . Literary Background	3
Benjamin Franklin	7
<i>The Autobiography</i>	9
<b>Chapter 2 American Romanticism and Transcendentalism</b>	19
I . Historical Background	19
II . Literary Background	20
Unit 1 Washington Irving	24
<i>Rip Van Winkle</i>	25
Unit 2 Ralph Waldo Emerson	31
<i>Nature</i>	32
Unit 3 Henry David Thoreau	34
<i>Walden</i>	36
Unit 4 Nathaniel Hawthorne	43
<i>The Scarlet Letter</i>	45
Unit 5 Henry Wadsworth Longfellow	55
<i>A Psalm of Life</i>	56
Unit 6 Walt Whitman	58
<i>Song of Myself</i>	59
Unit 7 Emily Dickinson	61
<i>There Is Another Sky</i>	62
<i>I' m Nobody!</i>	63

<b>Chapter 3 American Realism and Naturalism</b>	65
I . Historical Background	65
II . Literary Background	67
Unit 1 Mark Twain	73
<i>The Million Pound Bank Note</i>	75
Unit 2 Henry James	100
<i>Daisy Miller</i>	103
Unit 3 O. Henry	115
<i>After Twenty Years</i>	117
<b>Chapter 4 20th Century American Literature Pre – WW II</b>	122
I . Historical Background	122
II . Literary Background	124
Unit 1 Robert Frost	128
<i>The Road Not Taken</i>	130
<i>Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening</i>	132
Unit 2 Ezra Pound	134
<i>In a Station of the Metro</i>	135
Unit 3 F. Scott Fitzgerald	135
<i>The Great Gatsby</i>	138
Unit 4 William Faulkner	155
<i>The Sound and the Fury</i>	157
Unit 5 Ernest Hemingway	160
<i>A Day's Wait</i>	162
Unit 6 Eugene O' Neill	167
<i>The Hairy Ape</i>	168
<b>Chapter 5 20th Century American Literature Post – WW II</b>	181
I . Historical Background	181
II . Literary Background	182
Unit 1 John Cheever	185

	<i>The Enormous Radio</i> .....	187
Unit 2	Arthur Miller .....	200
	<i>Death of a Salesman</i> .....	202
Unit 3	Jerome David Salinger .....	210
	<i>The Catcher in the Rye</i> .....	213
Unit 4	Kurt Vonnegut .....	223
	<i>Slaughterhouse-Five</i> .....	224
Unit 5	Joseph Heller .....	239
	<i>Catch-22</i> .....	240
<b>Chapter 6</b>	<b>Canadian Literature</b> .....	253
	I . Historical Background .....	253
	II . Literary Background .....	253
Unit 1	Margaret Laurence .....	255
	<i>The Loons</i> .....	257
Unit 2	Alice Munro .....	272
	<i>Runaway</i> .....	274
<b>参考文献</b>	.....	280

# Chapter 1

## The Literature of the Colonial and Puritan America

---

### 1. Historical Background

During the most recent of the Ice Ages, lasting from 30,000 to 10,000 years ago, an undersea ridge between Siberia and Alaska emerged from the sea, known as the Bering Land Bridge. When the melting ice submerged the bridge, about 10,000 years ago, the northeast Asians became isolated as the aboriginal Americans. They spread gradually eastwards along the edge of the Arctic Circle, eventually reaching Greenland. These hardiest of all human settlers survive today as the Eskimo.

#### 1. The First American Farmers

The earliest civilization in America developed in the coastal regions of the Gulf of Mexico during 5000 – 2500 BC. Archaeology provides evidence of these various cultures, but the only ones known about in any great detail were those surviving when the Spaniards arrived—to marvel and destroy. These were the very ancient Maya, and the relatively upstart dominant cultures of the time, the Aztecs and the Incas.

#### 2. Columbian Discovery

The arrival of Columbus in 1492 was a disaster for the original inhabitants of the American continent. Historians describe the previous American cultures as pre-Columbian culture. And the original people of the continent become known as Indians, simply because Columbus is under the illusion that he has reached the Indies.

#### 3. American Puritanism

In 1620, the famous “May Flower” shipped 102 Puritans to Plymouth to seek

fortune, to seek a paradise of their own.

American Puritans regarded the reformation of the church under Elizabeth as incomplete, and called for further purification and simplicity to church services and the authority of the Bible. They regarded themselves as chosen people of God, who embraced hardships, industry and frugality. American Puritans not only favored a disciplined, hard, somber, ascetic and harsh life and also opposed arts and pleasure who suspected joy and laughter as symptoms of sin.

American Puritanism just refers to the spirit and ideal of puritans who settled in the North American continent in the early part of the 17th century because of religious persecution. They came to the new continent with the dream that they would build the new land—an Eden on earth. American Puritans' lives were extremely disciplined and hard. They accepted the doctrine of predestination, original sin and total depravity, and limited atonement through a special infusion of grace from God. With time passing, it became a dominant factor in American life, shaping influences in American thought and American literature.

Actually it is a code of values, a philosophy of life and a point of view in American minds, also a two-faceted tradition of religious idealism and level-headed common sense. But in the grim struggle for survival after their arrival in America, they became more and more practical.

#### 4. War of Independence

American War of Independence began as a war between the Kingdom of Great Britain and thirteen British colonies in North America. The war was the culmination of the political American Revolution, whereby many of the colonists rejected the legitimacy of the Parliament of Great Britain to govern them without representation, claiming that this violated the Rights of Englishmen. The Americans responded in 1776 by formally declaring their independence as one new nation—the United States of America—claiming their own sovereignty and rejecting any allegiance to the British monarchy. In 1783, the Treaty of Paris ended the war and recognized the sovereignty of the United States over the territory bounded by what is now Canada to the north, Florida to the south, and the Mississippi River to the west.

## II. Literary Background

### 1. The Native Americans and Their Culture

The Indians created their own oral literature in their struggle with the nature, mainly including folktales, songs, sacred stories, and narrative accounts of gods and heroes. In Native American cultures, poems, “songs” called by more people, were significant in transmission of tribal history, standards of ethical conduct, and religious beliefs. Their literature was collected and published in English and inspired the imagination of later writers.

The early Native American literary legend linked the native people with plants and animals, rivers and rocks, and all things believed significant in local life, which nurtured and explored a spiritual kinship between nature and the native people. Coyote, raven, fox, hawk, turtle, rabbit and other animal characters in the stories are considered to be their relatives. In the same way, oak, maple, pine, cedar, fir, corn, squash, berries and roots were viewed as relatives, too. The Animal People and Plant People participated in the building of a history before and after the arrival of humans.

Registering historic and geographical features of native societies include informal accounts of personal events and formally recited epics, which depict the creation of the world and other living things. Native American Indians’ origin epics are the most distinctive, including *Earth Diver*, *Father Sky with Mother Earth*, *Emergence from an Underworld*, *Spider Weaving the World*, *Tricksters*, *Twins*, and *Dismemberment of a Giant*. In addition, repetition added an aesthetic value and a dramatic effect to the tale for it could help the listener to foretell what could happen to the hero.

## Selected Reading

### Love song<sup>①</sup>

I cannot bear it, I cannot bear it at all.

I cannot bear to be where I usually am.

---

① Love song: 选自居住在北美阿拉斯加的阿留申人的诗歌

She is yonder, she moves near me, she is dancing.

I cannot bear it

If I may not smell her breath, the fragrance of her.

## Song of War

(Blackfeet)<sup>①</sup>

Old man on high [Sun]

Help me,

That I may be saved from my dream!

Give me a good day!

I prey you, pity me!

## Spring Song

As me eyes search the prairie

I feel the summer in the spring

## 2. The Colonial Period

During its early days, America was British colonies of the present-day United States. Therefore, its literary tradition begins as linked to the tradition of English literature. However, a unique American characteristic is considered a separate path and tradition.

The New England colonies were the center of early American literature. Before the Revolutionary War, the first American literature was not literature—in the form of poetry, essay, or fiction—but rather an interesting mixture of travel accounts and religious writing.

### (1) Puritan Literature

By far the most common form is the writing related to Biblical teachings, or

---

① Blackfeet: 黑脚族, 历史上的印第安黑脚族以捕猎野牛为生, 生活在现今美国蒙大拿以及加拿大阿尔伯塔。黑脚族视太阳为生命之神, 是他们祈祷的对象。诗歌中对“怜悯”的祈求表达了对太阳的敬畏和依靠。诗歌中勇士因梦到即将到来的战斗而焦虑, 因而祈求神灵的帮助

sermons, that the church leaders wrote—the Puritan idealism and the literature served either God or colonial expansion or both.

Basis of American literature is the dream of building an Eden of Garden on earth. Early American literature was mainly optimistic because they believed that God sent them to the new continent to fulfill the sacred task so they would overcome all the difficulties they met at last. Another important form of writing from this period is the histories. These books, like Bradford's *History of Plymouth Plantation*, tell about the Puritan life.

People also wrote many poems, which were hidden and lost because people often considered poetry to be an inferior form of writing and not totally acceptable to Puritan thinking. One of the most significant poets from this period was Anne Bradstreet (1612 – 1672). Her poems in *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America* (1650) reflected the concerns of women who came to settle in the colonies, and in all her poems, however, she shows her strong belief in God.

The influence of Puritanism on American literature roughly are the spirit of optimism bustles out the pages of many writers, and symbolism as a technique has become a common practice in the writing of many American writers; simplicity had left an incredible imprint on American Writing.

## (2) Symbolism

Lots of American writers liked to employ symbolism in their works, typical way of Puritans who thought that all the simple objects existing in the world connoted deep meaning. Symbolism means using symbols in literary works. The symbol means something represents or stands for abstract and deep meaning.

Style: simple, fresh and direct, tight and logic structure, precise and compact expression, avoidance of rhetorical decoration, adoption of homely imagery, simplicity of diction. The rhetoric is plain and honest.

Purpose: early American literature tends to be pragmatic and highly theoretical.

Form: diary, autobiography, sermon, letter.

The first notably American literature was written by Captain John Smith. His reports of exploration were strongly shaped by a New World consciousness. In *Jamestown*, the first colony, he emerged as the leader, traded with Indians. His

description of the new world stimulated colonial investment and lured settlers to the new world, among them the puritans who used his maps and surveys in seeking a New Jerusalem in America he had named "New England." He was once captured by Indians. His tale of capture and salvation has become one of the most potent of all American myths. He is the chief source of what we know about the Virginia Indians before they were conquered and all but destroyed by the White.

Characteristics of works in colonial period Puritanism is to shape American life and literature as well as minds of Americans. The works is utilitarian, polemical, or didactic. In content, the literature of the colonial settlement served either God or colonial expansion both; their religions subject and imitation of English literature.

### 3. Revolutionary Period

#### (1) The Age of Reason (1794 - 1796)

In the 18th century, people believed in man's own nature and the power of human reason. With Franklin as its spokesman, the 18th century America experienced an age of reason. During the revolution itself, poems and songs such as "*Yankee Doodle*" and "*Nathan Hale*" were popular. Major satirists included John Trumbull and Francis Hopkinson. Philip Morin Freneau also wrote poems about the war's course. Among the most renowned was the work *Common Sense* (1776) of Thomas Paine. It's the ringing call for the decoration of liberty. He also wrote *Crisis* and *The Age of Reason*. The pamphlets helped complete the debate that resulted in America's separation from England. The most important document from this period was a single sheet of paper called *The Declaration of Independence* (1776), mainly written by Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin.

#### (2) Early National Literature

During the period of American Revolution War, American national literature came into being. The war helped the first important American prose writers and poets grow up both culturally and artistically and led to the independence of national literature. American people began to understand the meaning of being a real "American". In the post-war period, Thomas Jefferson's *United States Declaration of Independence* solidified his status as a key American writer. The Federalist essays by Alexander Hamilton, James Madison, and John Jay presented a significant historical discussion of American

government organization and republican values. Fisher Ames, James Otis, and Patrick Henry are also valued for their political writings and orations. Much of the early literature of the new nation struggled to find a uniquely American voice in existing literary genre, and was also reflected in novels. European forms and styles were often transferred to new locales and critics often saw them as inferior.

## Benjamin Franklin (1706 – 1790)

### Appreciation

*Benjamin Franklin's 13 Virtues* 《本杰明 - 富兰克林的 13 项美德》

1. Temperance 节制: Eat not to dullness and drink not to elevation.
2. Silence 沉默: Speak not but what may benefit others or yourself. Avoid trifling conversation.
3. Order 秩序: Let all your things have their places. Let each part of your business have its time.
4. Resolution 决心: Resolve to perform what you ought. Perform without fail what you resolve.
5. Frugality 节俭: Make no expense but to do good to others or yourself; i. e. Waste nothing.
6. Industry 勤奋: Lose no time. Be always employed in something useful. Cut off all unnecessary actions.
7. Sincerity 诚实: Use no hurtful deceit. Think innocently and justly; and, if you speak, speak accordingly.
8. Justice 正义: Wrong none, by doing injuries or omitting the benefits that are your duty.
9. Moderation 中庸: Avoid extremes. Forebear resenting injuries so much as you think they deserve.
10. Cleanliness 整洁: Tolerate no uncleanness in body, clothes or habitation.
11. Chastity 贞洁: Rarely use venery but for health or offspring; Never to dullness, weakness, or the injury of your own or another's peace or reputation.

12. Tranquility 冷静: Be not disturbed at trifles, or at accidents common or unavoidable.

13. Humility 谦逊: Imitate Jesus and Socrates.

Benjamin Franklin was one of the founding father of the United States of America and the most important American thinkers during the revolutionary period, who stood as the epitome of the Enlightenment and as the versatile embodiment of rational man.

Franklin was a printer, author, diplomat, philosopher, scientist, and a greatest statesman, who did the most to make the United States a free and independent country. He exemplifies the Age of Enlightenment, whose image is an archetypal American success that has since become part of American popular culture. The Scottish philosopher David Hume called him America's "first great man of letters". Franklin was the embodiment of American dream. His major works: *The Autobiography*, *Poor Richard's Almanac*: It contains a large number of practical sayings about life. It was a particularly influential book in the early American literature.

## Brief Introduction

Autobiography is a branch of literature which is an account of a person's life. The essential difference between a novel and autobiography is this: The novel "uses" real experience as the raw material for fiction by inventing plots and characters.

*The autobiography* is the simple yet fascinating record of a man rising to wealth and fame from a state of poverty and obscurity into which he was born, the faithful account of the colorful career of American's first self-made man. The style readily reveals that it is the pattern of Puritan simplicity, directness and concision. The American dream and sense of optimism are shown in Franklin's works. The wilderness filled the Puritans with the hope of restoring the Garden of Eden, and looked like the "Promised Land" with which God rewarded His chosen people. Thus for a long time the hope kept floating before the people, keeping them happy and optimistic about the future.

Part One portrays Franklin as a young man in Boston and Philadelphia. Part Two the controversial "art of virtue" section. Franklin recounts his youthful attempt to achieve "moral perfection." Part Three reveals how the adult Franklin uses his principles of conduct in order to perform his roles as a scientist, philanthropist and politician, partially due to his ability to self-promote.

*The Autobiography* simply presents with a more elegant and formally ordered version of the writer's experiences and memories, which is an embodiment of Puritanism and Enlightening spirits. It establishes in literary form the first example of the fulfillment of the American Dream and was one of the premier autobiographies in the English language and the prominent work that mythologizes a hero of the American Revolution, which tells us today what life was like in 18th century America and also a reflection of 18th century idealism.

Franklin's *Autobiography* has received widespread praise, both for its historical value as a record of an important early American and for its literary style, which is often considered the first American book to be taken seriously by Europeans as literature and towers over other autobiographies as Franklin towered over other men.

## Selected Reading

### The Autobiography<sup>①</sup>

TO HIS SON

Twyford<sup>②</sup>, at the Bishop of St. Asaph's, 1771

Dear Son<sup>③</sup>, I have ever had a pleasure in obtaining any little anecdotes of my ancestors. You may remember the enquiries I made among the remains of my relations<sup>④</sup> when you were with me in England and the journey I undertook for that purpose. Imagining it may be equally agreeable to you to know the circumstances of my Life—many of which you are yet unacquainted with—and

① 选篇节自《自传》的第一部分,其一为该书的开场白,其二描述富兰克林离开哥哥初到费城时的情形。1723年,17岁的富兰克林两手空空、独自一人来到费城,这是他逐步走向成功的一个重要转折点

② Twyford: 伦敦西南约50英里(1英里=1.609344千米)处的一个村落。富兰克林在此写作《自传》的第一部分

③ Dear Son: 指富兰克林的儿子威廉·富兰克林(1731-1813),当时任新泽西州州长。但在独立战争中威廉·富兰克林是忠于英国的保皇派

④ the remains of my relations: 仍然健在的亲属。1758年,富兰克林曾携子访问祖先在英国的故乡