

美国缪斯：诗与诗论

American Muses: Poetry and Poetics

耿纪永 编著

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内 容 提 要

本书选取美国文学中在理论上最具创新意识、实践中开一代诗风的代表诗人 25 家,诗作 100 余首,诗论 12 篇,集作品与诗学批评于一体,可供高年级本科生、研究生英诗选读和美国诗歌与诗论等课程选做教材,亦是一部美国诗歌研究的重要参考书。

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前 言

美国诗歌的历史,如果从安妮·布拉德斯特里特(Anne Bradstreet, 1612—1672) 1650年出版的《近来北美出现的第十位缪斯》算起,只有300多年,然而却涌现出了惠特曼、狄金森、庞德、艾略特、威廉斯及金斯堡等众多举世公认的一流诗人,在诗歌大国——中国也拥有众多的读者。因此,国内大多数高校也都开设了诸如“美国诗歌”或“英美诗歌”的研究生或本科生相关课程。

目前,关于美国诗歌的教材基本上沿用了过去国内英美文学教材编写的路子,主要是提供了诗歌文本和一些注释或简评,往往缺少诗人创作理论和诗歌批评的内容。本书编者根据为研究生和本科生开设“美国诗歌”和“英语诗歌”课程的实际需要出发,选取了25家代表诗人的100余首诗作,除了通常教材所包含的内容(如诗人简介、诗歌文本、注释及题解等)外,特别增加了两个部分:一是选取了12位独具创新意识的诗人的12篇诗论;二是为每个单元设计了“研究指南”,选介国内外最具代表性的评论观点,以期加深对诗歌的理解,同时也为进一步研究提供指引。

本书作为一本教材,虽算不上科研成果,但囿于编者的学识、资料等限制,如果没有一些师友的鼓励和帮助恐难完成。本书在成书前以讲义的形式曾在该院研究生和本科生教学中试用。2012年10月在同济大学主办的全国美国文学年会上,南京大学的张子清教授建议编者将讲义整理出版。2013年加州大学伯克利分校的著名诗人、学者罗伯特·哈斯教授,欣然邀请本人到该校作为访问学者从事美国诗歌研究,本人得以利用伯克利丰富的藏书,充实和修订了部分内容。在本书编写过程中,我的研究生张洁、刘恒、朱龙梅及姜建建等,在题解撰写、文字录用等方面也协助做了不少工作,在此一并表示感谢。最后还要感谢上海市教委科研创新项目(13ZS022)和同济大学研究生院为本书的编写和出版提供了及时的资助,感谢同济大学出版社编辑老师的辛勤付出。

由于本人学识有限,该书的错误与不足在所难免,欢迎读者批评指正,以期今后改正和完善。

编 者

2016年6月

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1. Anne Bradstreet (1612–1672)

Introduction

Anne Bradstreet was born in Northampton, England, daughter of a gentlewoman named Dorothy Yorke and of Thomas Dudley, a nonconformist minister who managed the business interests of the earl of Lincoln. Educated by private tutors in the earl's households, she married Simon Bradstreet, a future governor of the Massachusetts Bay Colony, in 1628. In 1630, Bradstreet immigrated to America with her husband and parents. When she first came to the colonies, she “found a new world and new manners,” as she later remembered. “But after I was convinced it was the way of God I submitted to it and joined to the church of Boston.” While caring for her growing family (she had eight children), she continued to write. A volume of poems was published in London in 1650. Entitled *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America*, the book was published by Bradstreet's brother-in-law without her knowledge (or so he claimed). It sold very well; a second edition, containing numerous corrections and additions, appeared six years after her death.



Anne Bradstreet was considered by many to be the first American poet. Her poetry was mostly based on her life experience, and her love for her husband and family. Her style is deceptively simple, yet speaks of a woman of high intelligence and ideals who was very much in love, and had unconditional faith. While it was difficult for women to air their views in the 17th Century, Anne Bradstreet did so with ease, as her rich vocabulary and polyvalent knowledge brought a lyrical, yet logical quality to her work which made it pleasant for anyone to read.

Selected Reading A

The Author to Her Book

Thou^① ill-formed offspring^② of my feeble brain,
Who after birth didst^③ by my side remain,
Till snatched from thence by friends, less wise than true,
Who thee^④ abroad, exposed to public view,
5 Made thee in rags, halting to th'^⑤ press to trudge,
Where errors were not lessened (all may judge).
At thy^⑥ return my blushing was not small,
My rambling brat^⑦(in print) should mother call,
I cast thee by as one unfit for light,
10 Thy visage^⑧ was so irksome^⑨ in my sight;
Yet being mine own, at length affection would
Thy blemishes amend, if so I could.
I washed thy face, but more defects I saw,
And rubbing off a spot still made a flaw.
15 I stretched thy joints to make thee even feet^⑩,
Yet still thou run'st^⑪ more hobbling than is meet;
In better dress to trim thee was my mind,
But nought^⑫ save home-spun cloth, i'^⑬ th'^⑭ house I find.

① thou; you.

② Note that she considers her poetry to be her child, a metaphor which runs throughout the poem which perhaps only a fond mother would have used. Certainly no male writer at the time would have developed such a metaphor.

③ didst; did.

④ thee; you.

⑤ th'; the.

⑥ thy; your.

⑦ brat; child; specifically an ill-mannered annoying child.

⑧ visage; face, appearance. This extended metaphor of washing the face of her poems is a marvelous example of the tedious process of revision.

⑨ irksome; wearisome.

⑩ feet; pun on metrical feet, meaning that she wanted to make the meter more regular.

⑪ run'st; run.

⑫ nought; nothing.

⑬ i'; in.

⑭ th'; the.

In this array 'mongst^① vulgars^② mayst^③ thou roam.
 20 In critic's hands, beware thou dost^④ not come,
 And take thy way where yet thou art^⑤ not known;
 If for thy father asked, say, thou hadst^⑥ none;
 And for thy mother, she alas is poor,
 Which caused her thus to send thee out of door.

About the Selection

《作者致自己的诗集》写于作者第一本书发表之后，叙述了作者因作品未经同意而出版，而产生不安的情感。通过拟人和隐喻的修辞方法，作者把这本书喻为一个孩子，便于读者对这首诗的复杂情感有一个完整的理解。对这本书了解和指导的需要，好似一个父母必须照顾和抚养一个孩子。有时羞愧和爱会伴随着一个不完美的孩子，但这一切最终会在作品产生之后烟消云散。随着诗歌的发展，作者也由不安、懊悔转向骄傲，但最后还是以悔恨收尾。

Research Guide

1. In “The Author to her Book,” a poem about the book published in 1650 as *The Tenth Muse, Lately Sprung up in American*, Bradstreet identifies her book as her child. In so doing, she recognizes the authority Puritan mothers exercised in criticizing their children, while demonstrating her power as a writer by criticizing her book as if it were a child. In conformity with the Puritan ideal of female humility, Bradstreet apologizes for the imperfections of her own that are manifest in her child — “Thou ill-form'd offspring of my feeble brain” — and in conformity with the Puritan mode of harshly affectionate mothering, she recalls how hard she worked to improve her child — “I stretch thy joynts to make thee even feet.” (Porterfield 1992: 114)

2. In “The Author to Her Book” the sexualized language is evident from the beginning, as Bradstreet evokes the common convention among Renaissance writers — the metaphor of reproduction. [...] Bradstreet extends the metaphor of the poem as her child by using language to personify the poem as a body, but the image of “joynts” and “feet” also refers to the technical features of lyrical poetry, a poetic form often written in iambic pentameter, with rhyming stanza patterns where “feet” measure the accented and unaccented syllables in a single line. [...] By claiming and flaunting responsibility for

① 'mongst; amongst, among.

② vulgar; common people; average readers.

③ mayst; may.

④ dost; do.

⑤ art; are.

⑥ hadst; had.

the text as a single mother who alone produced the offspring, Bradstreet takes full responsibility as author, undermining the claim she establishes in the beginning of the poem that it was her friends who “exposed” the text to public view. Bradstreet becomes the fallen woman who has succumbed to seduction, producing a child out of wedlock. Yet, it is not the image of a fallen woman that the reader sees. Controlling the image, Bradstreet quickly forces the reader to see her instead as a good mother who warns her child about the “vulgar” world and as a poor victim forced by society, since she has no husband, to provide for herself by entering into the forbidden marketplace. Self-authorizing herself in such a way, Bradstreet justifies her “home-spun art” and daringly challenges her critics’ sentiments about female authorship. (Engberg 2010: 11-12)

3. The poem serves as an apt and witty introduction to this new book because domestic imagery is a strong component of many of the new poems, which are much more personal than the stiffer, more formal and academic works of the first edition. Further, these references to the domestic are ironic because they both embody “feminine” discourse and serve as a vehicle to transcend that limited discursive field. (Elliot 1994: 241)

Selected Reading B

To My Dear and Loving Husband

If ever two were one, then surely we.
 If ever man were loved by wife, then thee;
 If ever wife was happy in a man,
 Compare with me, ye^① women, if you can.
 5 I prize thy love more than whole mines^② of gold,
 Or all the riches that the East doth hold.
 My love is such that rivers cannot quench^③,
 Nor ought^④ but love from thee give recompense^⑤.
 Thy love is such I can no way repay;
 10 The heavens reward thee manifold^⑥, I pray.

① ye: the second-person, plural, personal pronoun (nominative).

② mines: In the original versions, “mines” is capitalized. It may simply emphasize vast wealth. Until almost the early nineteenth century, rules for capitalization were not standardized, and writers often capitalized nouns for emphasis.

③ quench: to put out, as a fire; to satisfy a thirst; to suppress, inhibit.

④ ought: anything.

⑤ recompense: compensate, pay for, return in kind, repay.

⑥ manifold: many times, a great deal; marked by diversity or variety.

Then while we live, in love let's so persever^①,
That when we live no more, we may live ever.

About the Selection

《致我亲爱的丈夫》写于 1641 年至 1643 年之间。这首诗给读者展现了清教徒对待爱情、婚姻和上帝的态度。诗中作者宣示了她与丈夫之间伟大的爱情。比起任何人间财富，作者更重视他们之间的爱情。诗的第一节多次使用 if 从句，逻辑论证了作者发自内心的情绪。第二节通过隐喻和一些宗教意象来抒发自己的内心。最后一节，回到理性的本质。他们的爱是如此长久，即使在死后也将一直存在。这是一个悖论，符合清教徒神学和伟大的爱情诗。

Research Guide

1. Anne Bradstreet had small patience with the Petrarchan convention in which a poet adores his lady from afar. [...] For Anne Bradstreet, the ideal love finds its consummation and continuation in marriage. The importance of marriage for her as for all Puritans, was increased by the belief in the family as the basic unit of government in both the state and the congregation. Especially in New England the state was considered to be made up of families, who were expected to exercise control over their members. Thus marriage was important to the state, but essential to marriage was love. God had commanded man and wife to love one another; hence the duty to love was a part of the marriage contract. Though marriages were usually arranged by Puritan families on the basis of social rank, young people were not forced to marry where they felt love would be impossible. (Stanford, 1974: 19)

2. Her work is influenced, first of all, by the ideas circulated generally among all educated people of the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, ideas of the nature of man and the universe and of politics that differ markedly from those we hold today. Beyond these, her work reflects the Puritan religious concepts with which she was thoroughly indoctrinated; it shows, too, a remarkable sensitivity to the forms and genres which she inherited from the Elizabethans and which were being developed by other seventeenth-century writers. But above all, Anne Bradstreet's entire canon represents the struggle between the visible and the invisible worlds. Earth and the things of earth had on her a solid grasp. (Stanford, 1974: i)

3. 女诗人在这首题为《献给我的亲爱的丈夫》^②的诗中，感情完全超越了宗教信仰和天规戒

① The archaic verb "persever" imports the idea of abiding continuity transcending death. In addition it repeats the key term "ever," used in each of the poem's three opening lines as well as the concluding line.

② 此处为引文，诗名译法与编者不同。

律,像一只出笼的鸟,在自由的宇宙中快活地翱翔。无论受社会和传统所制约的生活环境如何,人们总能在自己的感情世界里保留一块私有的天地,以使自己倍受羁束的想象能有自由伸张的余地,自己近乎僵固的感情能有迸发的处所。作为艺术家的安妮·布雷兹特里特,尤其珍惜自己所保留的私有艺术角落,以使自己的艺术自我能够成长和得以表达。于是我们发现,安妮·布雷兹特里特并非只用一种声音讲话。(常耀信,1998:31)

Supplementary Reading

Verses upon the Burning of our House July 10th, 1666

In silent night when rest I took
For sorrow near I did not look
I wakened was with thund'ring^① noise
And piteous^② shrieks of dreadful voice.
5 That fearful sound of "Fire!" and "Fire!"
Let no man know is my desire.
I, starting up, the light did spy^③,
And to my God my heart did cry
To straighten me in my distress
10 And not to leave me succourless^④.
Then, coming out, behold a space
The flame consume my dwelling place.
And when I could no longer look,
I blest His name that gave and took,
15 That laid my goods now in the dust.
Yea, so it was, and so 'twas^⑤ just.
It was His own, it was not mine,
Far be it that I should repine^⑥;
He might of all justly bereft^⑦
20 But yet sufficient for us left.

① thund'ring: thundering.

② piteous: pitiful.

③ spy: see.

④ succourless: helpless.

⑤ 'twas: it was.

⑥ repine: complain.

⑦ bereft: (past tense and past participle of bereave) completely without.

When by the ruins oft^① I past
 My sorrowing eyes aside did cast,
 And here and there the places spy
 Where oft I sate and long did lie:
 25 Here stood that trunk, and there that chest,
 There lay that store I counted best.
 My pleasant things in ashes lie,
 And them behold no more shall I.
 Under thy roof no guest shall sit,
 30 Nor at thy table eat a bit.
 No pleasant talk shall e'er be told,
 Nor things recounted done of old.
 No candle e'er^② shall shine in thee,
 Nor bridegroom's voice e'er heard shall be.
 35 In silence ever shalt^③ thou lie,
 Adieu^④, Adieu, all's vanity.
 Then straight I 'gin my heart to chide^⑤,
 And did thy wealth on earth abide?
 Didst fix thy hope on mold'ring^⑥ dust?
 40 The arm of flesh didst make thy trust?
 Raise up thy thoughts above the sky
 That dunghill^⑦ mists away may fly.
 Thou hast^⑧ a house on high erect,
 Framed by that mighty Architect^⑨,
 45 With glory richly furnished,
 Stands permanent though this be fled.
 It's purchased and paid for too
 By Him who hath^⑩ enough to do.
 A price so vast as is unknown

① oft; often.

② e'er; ever.

③ shalt; shall.

④ Adieu; Goodbye.

⑤ I 'gin my heart to chide; I begin to scold my heart.

⑥ mold'ring; mouldering.

⑦ dunghill; a heap of dung.

⑧ hast; have.

⑨ Architect; it refers to God here.

⑩ hath; has.