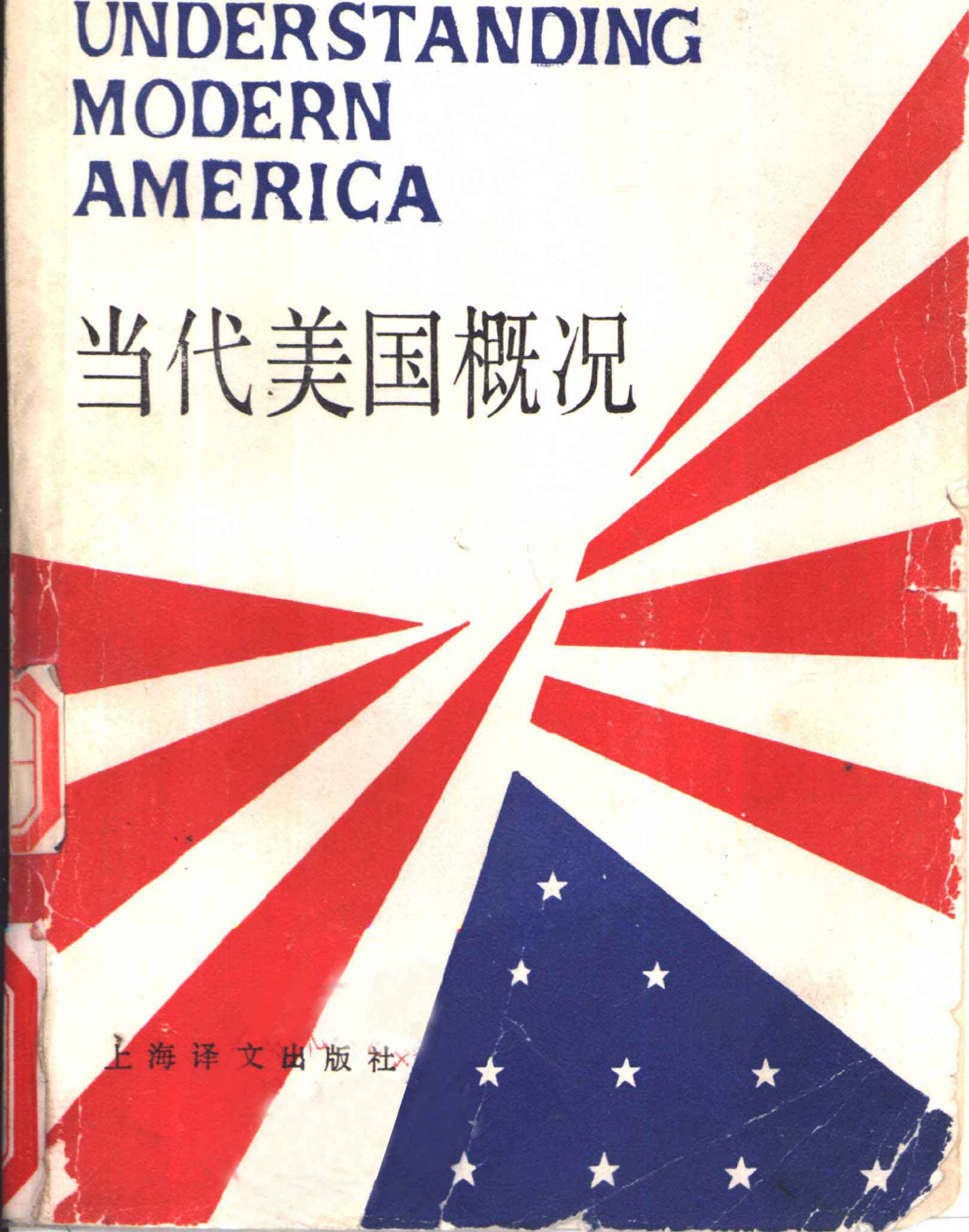


高等学校试用教材

# UNDERSTANDING MODERN AMERICA

## 当代美国概况

上海译文出版社



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# Understanding Modern America

by

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## 前 言

《当代美国概况》是由解放军外国语学院美国研究中心编写，经国家教委高等学校外语专业教材编审委员会审定通过的一本我国高等外语院校通用教材。本教材旨在我国实行对外开放政策的新形势下，向学生提供有关美国的背景知识，唤起学生对美国研究的兴趣，初步培养学生研究美国的能力，以便使他们将来能更好地为我国的现代化事业服务。

本教材共二十章，可供高年级学生一个学期使用。每章分为正文和阅读材料两部分。正文由编著者自行编写，比较系统地介绍了美国有关领域的概貌；阅读材料选自美国当代出版的各种书刊，使学生加深对正文的理解。正文后附有若干讨论题，供学生思考讨论，掌握有关章节的要点。书末有“美国总统”、“美国节假日”等附录，便于查阅。

本教材较全面地介绍了美国的政治、经济、文化、社会、外交、军事等各个方面，以第二次世界大战以后为侧重点，除适用于英语本科生以外，对英语研究生以及其他对美国感兴趣的同志也有一定参考价值。

本教材由韩振荣副教授编写第一、八、十、十三和十七章，乐瑞夫副教授编写第二、十五和二十章，王珏琳副教授编写第三、四和十九章，严维明副教授编写第五、六、七、九、十一、十二、十四、十六和十八章。

在本教材的编写过程中，得到了许多同志的关心和帮助。尤其是冯翠华教授审阅了全文，提出了许多宝贵的改进意见。美国经济学家谢诗豪博士、我院美国研究中心主任陈树裕教授也审阅了全文。另外，我院胡斐佩教授和薛汉荣副教授对本书编写工作给予了

ABH/38/07

大力支持。在此，谨向他们表示衷心的感谢。

本教材由三位专家审订。主审人：北京外国语学院 邓 炎 昌 教授；审稿人：四川大学历史系顾学稼教授和中国社会科学院美国研究所严四光副研究员。他们花了大量时间，仔细审阅了全文，提出了许多宝贵意见。东北师范大学戎逸伦教授也为本书的审稿做了大量工作。我们谨向他们表示深切的谢意。

有关美国的知识范围极广，本教材不可能包括这门学科的所有重要方面，加以编著者水平有限，即使在已经涉及的范围内也难免存在不少错误和缺点，希望老师和同学们在使用过程中多多提出宝贵意见。

**编著者**

1988年2月

## FOREWORD

For the implementation of scholarly interest in the West, the Chinese students would certainly need to learn more of the United States.

With an understanding of the history and heritage, the trials and tribulations of the United States, Chinese students would be enabled to become better citizens of tomorrow, and can contribute more adequately to China's modernization.

In an effort to reinvigorate the teaching and learning of the United States, the four scholars at PLA Foreign Languages University have made a valuable contribution for genuine understanding of America — to rediscover the nation on the other side of the Pacific.

As an American scholar of Chinese ancestry, I feel privileged to have the opportunity to review this initial and incipient work in American Studies.

This text with readings is hereby dedicated to all students who wish to learn the American scene in different areas of endeavor. Moreover, it will serve the dire needs of English language majors in the most applicable manner for practicum.

This compilation, needless to say, deserves merits and recognition. I trust that future editions would be warranted for updating such an important work.

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Research Economist, U.S.A.

## CONTENTS

### FOREWORD (by Francis Shieh)

I.	A NATION OF NATIONS.....	1
	Reading: 1. Early Immigration and Mining	
	2. "Crocker's Pets": Railroad Construction	
	3. At Ellis Island	
II.	THIS IS AMERICA .....	26
	— Major Geographical Features of the United States	
	Reading: Land of New Beginnings	
III.	SEPARATION OF POWERS .....	55
	Reading: Principles of the American Constitution	
IV.	BIPARTISAN POLITICS .....	83
	Reading: The New Shape of American Politics	
V.	THE AMERICAN INDUSTRY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY .....	108
	Reading: The Corporation and the Stock Market	
VI.	"THE WORLD CHAMPION IN AGRICULTURE" ...	130
	Reading: 1. The Farm Problem	
	2. Family Life Takes Beating in Farm Crisis	
VII.	THE FEDERAL RESERVE SYSTEM.....	152
	Reading: How the Federal Reserve System Came Into Being	
VIII.	AMERICA ON WHEELS AND WINGS .....	169
	Reading: The Great American Transportation Mess	
IX.	MODERN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY IN THE	



UNITED STATES .....	192
Reading: 1. "One Giant Leap for Mankind"	
2. A Nuclear Nightmare — the Three Mile Island Accident	
X. A SYSTEM OF NO SYSTEM.....	219
— American Education	
Reading: 1. The Lure of Learning	
2. A Look at Community Colleges	
XI. THE ROLE OF MASS MEDIA IN AMERICAN LIFE ...	243
Reading: What the Poils Tell Us	
XII. A TENDENCY TOWARD REACTIONISM.....	264
Reading: 1. Can the Klan Come Back ?	
2. Why Was I Blacklisted ?	
XIII. "WE SHALL OVERCOME".....	282
Reading: 1. I Have a Dream	
2. A Nation Apart	
XIV. NEW LEFT AND COUNTERCULTURE.....	307
— the American Youth Movement in the 1960s	
Reading: 1. The Love Affair with Labels	
2. Dropouts with a Mission	
3. America on Drugs	
XV. URBANIZATION AND SUBURBANIZATION .....	330
— the Story of American Cities	
Reading: Cities, Suburbs, and Return to the Country	
XVI. THE EVOLUTION OF THE AMERICAN FAMILY .....	347
Reading: Women at Odds	
XVII. A BUILT-IN STABILIZER .....	368
— Social Security in America	
Reading: Medicare's Broken Promise	
XVIII. SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE.....	392

— Religions in the United States

Reading: 1. Being Catholic in America

2. The Mormons

XIX. CORNERSTONES OF POSTWAR AMERICAN FOREIGN POLICY .....	414
--	-----

Reading: 1. The Sources of Soviet Conduct

2. Nuclear Weapons and Foreign Policy

XX. STAR WARS AND U.S. NUCLEAR STRATEGY .....	439
---	-----

Reading: Grand Compromise

正文内容提要 .....	457
--------------	-----

APPENDIX I .....	474
------------------	-----

THE PRESIDENTS OF THE UNITED STATES

APPENDIX II .....	475
-------------------	-----

AMERICAN HOLIDAYS

BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	478
-------------------	-----

## I. A NATION OF NATIONS

In trying to answer the question who is an American, the Frenchman Crèvecoeur wrote, "He is either an European or the descendent of an European, hence that strange mixture of blood, which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an English man, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman, and whose present four sons have now four wives of different nations." Though far from accurate, the answer brings forth one basic feature of the United States: it is a country of immigrants or the descendents of immigrants from almost every country in the world. Even its natives, the American Indians, are generally believed to be descendents of Asian hunters who came to America about 40,000 years ago by way of a land bridge between Asia and Alaska which is now the Bering Strait. So who else could claim to be a native?

Though immigration has been a continuous process in U.S. history, different people came at different periods of time in waves. The seventeenth and eighteenth centuries saw the arrival of mainly the English. By as late as 1790, over four fifths of the white population were said to be of English origin. About the same time, another wave of "immigrants" of an entirely different nature flooded the North American continent-black slaves were shipped here from Africa in enormous numbers. When the first census was taken in 1790, about 700,000 blacks were living in the United States as compared with the nation's total population of about 4 million.

These two waves were followed by a much greater one in the nine-

teenth and twentieth centuries which bore a multinational and multiracial character. First the Irish, the Germans, then people from southern and eastern European nations, from Asia and Latin America, from all over the world, all swarmed to that legendary "land of opportunity" to seek a better fortune. Quite a number succeeded. However, stories of humiliation, persecution and even death are as well-known as those of success. Still, for whatever reason, the influx of immigrants shows no sign of decline. In 1984 alone, more than 500,000 people were admitted into the United States as immigrants. The total number of immigrants throughout U. S. history amounts to more than 44 million. All this has resulted in the unique diversity of the American people, which can be broken down into the following major racial and ethnic groups:

#### I. American Indians.

As is mentioned above, American Indians were by far the earliest arrivals on that vast continent and, therefore, deserve to be called natives. They got their name — Indians — by mistake. When Columbus discovered America in 1492, he and his men thought they had arrived in India, the planned destination of their voyage. So they called the people they saw there "Indians." (Actually, there are three kinds of Indians in the United States today: American Indians, Asian Indians who are the real Indians from India, and West Indians who are mostly black people from the West Indies.)

Long before the European colonization started in the early seventeenth century, American Indians had developed a civilization of their own. When they set foot on North America, the white settlers brought with them an entirely different civilization. At first, the native inhabitants generally got along well with the new comers. Indeed, they played an important role in helping the first white settlers to survive

in the new environment. But the difference between the two civilizations and the conflicting interests in land and other natural resources soon led to the deterioration of the friendly relationship. Friendship was replaced by hostility. The image of the Indian in the eyes of the whites changed from a friend into a brutal savage who practised scalping gleefully. The white policy toward the native Americans was either outright genocide (灭绝种族的屠杀) or forced removal, to drive them into "reservations" which were usually located in barren mountainous areas. The Indian sufferings from that policy can be best illustrated by the simple statistics: when European settlers first arrived, at least 1.5 million native Americans were living in what is now the United States; but by 1850 their numbers were reduced to a mere 250,000. Today, there are only some 1.4 million, still slightly fewer than about 400 years ago.<sup>1</sup>

In recent years, the Indian condition has been somewhat improved due to growing criticism of the official policy and to the increasing militancy of the Indians in their struggle for equality and more self-determination. However, the American Indians remain the most desperate and deprived minority in America. Though about one third of the Indian population now live in urban areas, the remainder still live on or near 267 reservations, where living conditions are substandard, with unclean drinking water, unheated log houses, tarpaper shacks, and even abandoned automobile bodies as homes. The average Indian receives only eight years of schooling. Unemployment generally ranges between 45 and 55 percent, but reaches 80 percent in some areas and in some seasons. About a third of the Indian population live below the official poverty line. Their average life expectancy is ten years below that of the nation as a whole.<sup>2</sup>

## II. WASPs — White Anglo-Saxon Protestants.

Until quite recently, to many people the WASP had been *the* American; his culture had represented the American culture. Though few, if any, would publicly hold onto that extreme view today, WASPs still dominate every aspect of American life. It is true that in a highly competitive society like that of the United States there are bound to be individual WASP failures. But as a group every door is kept wide open to them.

WASPs trace their origins back to the earliest British settlements in the New World at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Their ancestors came for various reasons. Those who established the first permanent British settlement in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607 were largely materially motivated. The Pilgrim Fathers who sailed from England in the *Mayflower* and landed at Plymouth, Massachusetts, in 1620 had hoped for freedom to practise Puritanism (清教) in the New World. Many others, however, came as indentured servants (契约奴) who were bound by contracts to serve their masters for a specified period of years in return for ship passage before they became free laborers. And there were even criminals who had chosen to come to the New World to try their luck instead of serving their terms in prison. Today, the descendents of all these people are known as WASPs, the most privileged group in the United States.

### III. Other whites.

Though non-WASP whites like Germans, French, and Irish started immigration to America from the very beginning of the European colonization of the New World, the overwhelming majority came in the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries. They came to escape different forms of persecution in their homelands or, more likely, to run away from hunger and hardship. Many Germans, for example, moved to the United States after the failure of the 1848 revolution;<sup>3</sup>

about a million Irish peasants were driven there by the potato famine in Ireland in the late 1840s; and hundreds of thousands of Jews escaped pogroms in Russia and managed to reach the shores of North America in the last quarter of the nineteenth century after overcoming unimaginable obstacles.

When they arrived, their experience in the new country varied greatly. Germans, French, Dutch, and other northern Europeans found it relatively easy, though not without difficulty, to be assimilated into the dominant WASP society due to a similar cultural, religious, and social background. But the difference in religious belief, in the level of social development, or in other aspects made assimilation more difficult for the Irish, the Jews, and new comers from southern and eastern Europe. They frequently encountered prejudice and even hostility on their arrival. (The Irish experience is a good example. Irish laborers — if employers would hire them at all — were offered lower wages than blacks.) Therefore, like immigrants from other parts of the world, these whites tended to live together in close-knit communities. After two, three or even more generations, some of them, mainly the upper and middle class, have succeeded in becoming part of the mainstream in American society. In fact, the United States has so far elected two presidents of Irish origin (John F. Kennedy and Ronald Reagan). But a large portion still retain their ethnic identity. Little Italy or Little Warsaw still exist in American cities; Catholicism shows no sign of decline; and Jews, with very few exceptions, still believe in Judaism.

#### IV. Blacks.

Blacks form the largest minority group in the United States, numbering over 26.5 million which represent about 11.7 percent of the nation's total population. They can be further divided into two

main groups. The larger and more significant group are descendents of black slaves from Africa. Their history in the United States has been one of sustained oppression and discrimination.

The first shiplot of blacks (about 20 in number) were brought from Africa in shackles to Jamestown, Virginia, in 1619. Within a few decades, slave trade had grown into a prosperous business as the demand for slave labor increased. The sea voyage from Africa, which usually took two months, was a living hell for the slaves. They were often packed so tightly that they could not even sit up or stand. The cruel treatment, inhuman conditions and resultant diseases on the way took a heavy toll. There were instances where more than two-thirds of the human cargo on a ship were dead by the time it arrived at a North American port; the loss of half was not at all unusual. When they arrived in the United States, the slaves were sold at public auction (公开拍卖) and set to work, mostly on plantations in the South.

In 1808, the law forbidding the import of slaves went into effect, legally bringing an end to the slave trade. But slaves continued to be smuggled in for some time. The slavery system, this peculiar U. S. institution, continued in the South until a war was fought over it. In 1863, at the height of the Civil War, Lincoln issued the famous Emancipation Proclamation, for which he has been called "the Great Emancipator." This document was followed by the Thirteenth Amendment (修正案) in 1865 which outlawed slavery within the United States.

However, equality was not achieved with the abolition of slavery. Prejudice, discrimination, and persecution persisted. After the period of Reconstruction, a series of "Jim Crow" laws, laws of racial segregation, were passed, legalizing segregation in hotels, restaurants, schools, parks, and other public facilities. In 1896, the Supreme Court issued a far reaching decision in the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case which established the doctrine of "separate but equal" for many years to come. Blacks



who showed any sign or, for that matter, even no sign of breaking those laws were frequently lynched by white racists. Politically, laws and terrorist threats again deprived the blacks of the vote.

Segregation with all its implied humiliation and brutal violence prevailed in the United States, especially in the South, for more than half a century. Then came a turning-point in 1954 when the Supreme Court ruled in the historic *Brown v. Board of Education* case that segregated schools were "inherently unequal" and ordered nationwide school desegregation "with all deliberate speed." However, the speed of desegregation was deliberately slow. That slow speed, among other things, finally gave rise to the powerful civil rights movement in the sixties, which is dealt with in Chapter XIII of this book.

The second group of blacks in the United States are recent immigrants from the West Indies and Africa. They form a relatively small proportion of the U. S. black population. In the decade between 1961 and 1970, 134,000 arrived from the West Indies. In the next decade the number more than doubled. Since 1969, blacks from the West Indies and Africa have accounted for slightly less than 10 percent of all immigration to the United States. As a group these new comers have already surpassed the living standards of the native American blacks.

## V. Hispanics.

Hispanics refer to the Spanish-speaking immigrants from Latin America, who numbered over 17.6 million in 1984. (The exact size of the Hispanic population in the United States is not known because a significant portion of it is illegal immigrants who do not complete census forms.) At present, the second largest minority group in the United States, Hispanic Americans, some demographers estimate, will total 30 to 35 million by the year 2000, or 11 percent to 12 percent of