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A Handbook of Critical Approaches to Literature

文学批评方法手册 第4版

Wilfred L. Guerin
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外语教学与研究出版社
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藏书章

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Wilfred L. Guerin 等 著

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文学犹如丰富多彩的艺术殿堂。走进这座殿堂，不同的人会做出不同的反应。这些反应既可以是感受，也可以是推理。感受是对作品的欣赏，推理是对作品的批评。T.S.艾略特认为，“批评像呼吸一样不可避免，当我们阅读一部作品并感受它的激情时，我们不可能只是连接通过我们脑海的东西而不进行批评。”因此，如何欣赏文学殿堂里的艺术作品，评判它们的优劣好坏，无疑需要相应的知识和方法。《文学批评方法手册》就是提供文学批评入门的一本佳作。

最近几十年来，在文学和文化研究领域，批评和理论已经变得非常引人注目，它们不再是文学和文化研究的辅助方法，而是本身变成了研究的目的。正如康奈尔大学著名教授乔纳森·卡勒在《构建符号：批评及其机制》(Framing the Sign: Criticism and Its Institutions, 1988)中所说，“以前批评史是文学史（由伟大作家促成的、不断改变的文学观念的故事）的组成部分，但是……现在，文学史变成了批评史的组成部分。”这一在21世纪逐渐形成的戏剧性变化表明，批评和理论在大学里提供了文学和文化研究的总体框架。

有些文学学者和作家对这种转变感到不满，他们认为这种转变脱离了文学，脱离了文学本质和文学关注的主要问题。这些人被称作“反理论主义者”，他们强调为文学而研究文学。也许这种观点乍看起来不无新意，但却存在着一个不容忽视的问题：它本身事先设定了一种文学的定义，并推行某种仔细探究文学的方式——为文学而研究文学。换句话说，这种反理论的立场本身就依赖于某些不加审视的、可以争论的文学和批评的理论。实际上，任何一种观点都不可能脱离理论，即使所谓的“常识”也是如此。因为在文学研究中，那些被视为“自然的”、“常识的”方式，靠的是一套潜在的理论指令，只是这些指令已经“融化在血液中，落实到行动上”，无须在实践中再作证实而已。

其实，从古代到现在，文学批评和理论的历史一向充满不同观念和意见的争论，但归根到底是关于“文学”和“解释”问题的争论。从历史上看，关于解释有多种不同的认识方式，例如：客观的文本分析、道德评价、情感反

应、文学价值，以及文化批判，等等。同样对文学的认识也是如此，人们根据不同的方式来界定文学，例如：再现现实、表达作者的内心世界、道德教化、净化感情，等等。批评和理论的历史包括许多这种不同的论点。而那些“反理论主义者”，大多坚持非常不同且常常矛盾的对文学和解释的理解。这些冲突不仅表明了批评和理论领域充满了活力，而且也表明了它的复杂性。它是一个由持久的争论和问题构成的广袤世界，不仅包含关于文学、语言、解释、文类、风格、意义和传统等观念，而且也包含关于主体性、族裔、种族、性别、阶级、文化、民族、意识形态、机制和历史时期等观念。

从总体上看，传统批评的基础是一种认识论和本体论的确定性，认为作者、文本和读者之间的关系是确定的。每一种批评形式，都侧重于一个不同的方面。例如：传记批评强调作者，历史或社会学的批评强调背景，新批评强调文本自身，道德—审美批评强调文本与现实之间的关系。它们一般都接受广义的文学模仿论，就是说，对于生活和人类的生存状况，文学总是以这种或那种方式放映并提供所谓的“真实”。文学的任务是描写生活，以潜在的方式描写经验和情感，而批评的任务是揭示这种描写的真实价值和意义。

模仿论把语言作为一种透明的媒体，认为现实可以通过语言以美学的方式再现，并超越其文字的表述。这种语言观又与一种普遍的世界观相联系：人是世界的中心，认识是经验的产物。经验先于表达它的语言，语言只是表达它的工具。按照这种看法，文学是杰出个人的集体产物，他们能以语言表达人类普遍的、永恒的真理。换句话说，文学是少数精英的行为。

当代的批评和理论质疑的正是这样一套基本的设想，并在批判中形成了许多不同的理论观点，打破了传统的批评观念和支持它们的意识形态。例如：女性主义把文化政治引入到文学研究，读者反应理论把研究的中心从作者和文本的关系转向文本和读者的关系，新马克思主义强调文化介入并干预社会，后结构主义颠覆传统的形而上学认识，后殖民理论反对文化霸权，后现代主义推进多样性，等等。当前流行的文化研究，更是从多方面理解文化的作用和功能：在一个由各种不同的社会群体混合的世界上，在一个由国家权力、媒体工业和跨国公司构成的世界上，文化生产如何运作？个人和群体的文化身份如何构成？人们如何受到文化力量的影响和控制？在多大程度上受文化形式的支配？在多大程度上或以什么方式可以把文化形式用于其它的目的？在多大程度上人们能够成为对自己的行为负责的主体？又在多大程度上人们的选择会受到他们无法控制的力量限制？显然，对这些问题的回答远远超出了传统批评的范围，但无疑会大大推动整个文学研究的发展。

由于当代批评理论的发展,20世纪60年代以后,西方国家越来越多的大学开设了专门的批评理论课程。随着我国的改革开放,自上个世纪80年代以来,我国也引进了许多新的西方批评理论,引起了人们浓厚的兴趣,促进了文学创作和文学研究的发展。于是各个大学人文学科院系也相继开设了批评理论课程。然而,由于在冷战时期我国长期与外界隔绝,真正系统了解西方批评理论的人仍然甚少,虽然有人也编写了供研究生使用的教材,但至今没有一个系统的统一版本,至于通俗易懂供本科生使用的教材,几乎一本没有,因此急需弥补这方面的缺憾。《文学批评方法手册》正好弥补了这一空白。

《文学批评方法手册》是一本以美国大学本科生为主体对象的教材,第一版于20世纪60年代中期出版,受到广大读者的欢迎,此后四次修订再版,并先后被翻译成西班牙文、葡萄牙文、日文、中文(台湾)和朝鲜文。此次出版的是1999年新修订的第四版。新版的《文学批评方法手册》不仅保持了原来的特点,而且增加了新的内容。也就是说,既有传统的批评方法,也有20世纪60年代以后的新的批评方法。正如编者在前言中所说:“自从第一版60年代中期出版以来,我们目睹了批评理论的迅速发展,以及文学经典的急剧扩展和修正。这些超乎寻常的发展促使我们对手册以前的每一版都做过修订。”例如新版在第三版的基础上增加了读者反应批评、文化批评、女性主义批评,并扩展了对结构主义和后结构主义的阐述。

新版的《文学批评手册》共8章。第1章讨论读者对文学作品的最初介入,强调独特的个人审美经验的重要意义,但同时指出个人感受有可能导致误解,因而还需要对作品进行分析。第2章讨论一些传统的批评方法,包括传记的、历史的、道德的、哲学的解释,并注意文本问题和解释的方式。第3章阐述形式主义的方法,特别是新批评的方法。第4章阐述精神分析的方法,以传统的弗洛伊德主义为核心,兼及拉康的理论。第5章讨论神话和原型批评,重点放在容格的理论上面。第6章阐述女性主义,包括社会学的和政治的女性主义批评及其美学意义,同时也讨论了女性主义中的新弗洛伊德主义、马克思主义和解构主义。第7章阐述当前流行的文化研究,重点讨论了美国的多元文化主义和族裔文学。第8章是对多种新理论方法的概述,虽然不够全面充分,但拓宽了读者的视野,为读者更深入的学习提供了思路。

综观该书的内容,我们发现新版《文学批评方法手册》有以下一些突出的特点。第一,它是一部通俗易懂的作品,也可以说是批评方法的普及读物,不仅有批评方法的阐述,而且有实践应用的例证:它以5部常见的文学作品为实例,每一章所阐述的方法,分别用于对这5部作品的分析。它不仅简明扼要

地介绍了一些主要的批评观点和解释方法,同时又以启发的方式打开了读者的批评视野。因此对初学文学批评的人,这是一本极好的著作。第二,它具有一定的系统性,按照批评理论的发展轨迹,既有对传统批评方法的阐述和例证分析,如历史-传记批评和道德-哲学批评,也有对60年代以后的批评理论的阐述和例证分析,如女性主义、后结构主义和文化研究等;在某种意义上,它可以说是一部文学批评的简史。第三,这部著作不仅是一个统一的整体,而且具有一定的灵活性和适应性,虽然每一章阐述一种主要的批评方法,但各个章节既呼应又独立,使读者可以综合选择,形成适合自己的分析方式。第四,该书对一些方法的长处和局限作了简要说明,有利于提高读者的认识;而每一章后面附加的参考书目,也为读者进一步阅读提供了便利。

总之,《文学批评方法手册》不仅是一部适合美国大学本科生的教材,对我国大学本科高年级的学生和硕士研究生也非常适用。即使对从事文学研究和文学批评的人来说,虽称不上全面深刻,但也具有较高的参考价值。我深信,在当前缺乏文学批评教材的情况下,这本书的出版必将有助于我国文艺学教育的发展。

王逢振

中国社会科学院外国文学研究所

文学批评方法手册

英美文学文库

导 读

General Preface

Among the most important developments in contemporary global culture is the arrival of Western literary criticism and literary theory in China. FLTRP is to be congratulated for its imagination and foresight in making these crucial texts available to teachers and students of literature throughout China. There is arguably no greater force in producing understanding between peoples than the transmission of literary traditions—the great heritage of narrative, lyric, and prose forms that give cultures their distinctive character. Literary criticism and theory stand at the crossroads of these transmissions. It is the body of writing that reflects on what a literature has meant to a culture. It investigates the moral, political, and experiential dimensions of literary traditions, linking form to content, literature to history, the sensuous love of literature to analytic understanding.

The availability of these important texts will greatly help students and teachers to become acquainted with recent criticism and major critical theories and movements. I am convinced that the series will make an important contribution to the literary education of China, increasing literacy in new fields and international understanding at the same time. It is an extraordinarily timely venture, at a time when comparative literary study in a global context has become increasingly important for professionals, and beyond that, for a general readership that seeks a deeper understanding of literature.

W. J. T. Mitchell

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出版说明

近年来,许多大专院校为英语专业的学生开设了英美文学课程,市场上也出现了各种版本的原版英美文学经典著作,它们基本上满足了高校对课堂阅读教材的需要。但是,英美文学教学中仍然严重缺少原版文学史、文学理论、文学评论和文学工具书等重要参考书,以至于许多学生写论文时收集资料成为一大难题,专业教师和研究人员的业务水平的提高因此受到限制,在知识更新及学术研究上也难以与国际接轨,北京、上海等大城市以外的地方尤为如此。

据此,外研社组织了全国17所著名高校或研究院的44名英美文学领域的专家学者,经过仔细斟酌,决定引进一批与教学需要相适应、有学术价值、在国外最常用且被国际公认为优秀的文学评论、文学理论、文学史和文学工具书。这是一套开放型的系列图书,以原版加中文序言的形式分批出版。相信这套书的出版定可缓解国内大专院校中英美文学参考书匮乏的现象;同时,通过这种途径,可以有意识地引进国际知名学者的代表作,这无疑会推动和提高我国在英美文学领域的研究水平。

钱青

北京外国语大学英语学院

Preface

This book, now in its fourth edition, has been from the first the product of our shared conviction that the richness of great literature merits correspondingly rich responses—responses that may be reasoned as well as felt. Corollary to this conviction is our belief that such responses come best when the reader appreciates a great work from as many perspectives as it legitimately opens itself to. Nothing, of course, replaces the reader's initial *felt* responses: the sound of poetry on both the outer and the inner ear; the visions of fiction in the mind's eye; the kinesthetic assault of "total theater." But human responses seldom remain dead-level: they reverberate through multiple planes of sensibility, impelled toward articulation—in short, toward criticism. To answer the inevitable classroom questions, "Why can't we simply *enjoy* this poem [story, novel, play]? Why must we spoil the fun by criticizing?" we would rejoin, "The greatest enjoyment of literary art is never simple!" Furthermore, we should recall, in T. S. Eliot's words, "that criticism is as inevitable as breathing, and that we should be none the worse for articulating what passes in our minds when we read a book and feel an emotion about it."

Eliot's reminder was instrumental in the genesis of the first edition of *A Handbook of Critical Approaches* in the early 1960s, when the four original coauthors were colleagues in the English Department at Centenary College of Louisiana. At that time we had become sensitive to the problems of teaching lit-

erary analysis to young college students in the absence of a comprehensive yet elementary guide to some of the major critical approaches to works of literature. No work of that sort existed at the time, yet students clearly could have profited from a more formalized and contemporary introduction to the serious study of literature than they generally had received in lower levels of education. We found that most lower- and many upper-division students were entering and emerging from courses in literature still unenlightened about the most rewarding critical techniques that a keen reader could apply to good imaginative writing. Even students whose exposure to literature had been extensive often possessed only a narrow and fragmented concept of such interpretive approaches. Consequently, one of our first aims—then and now—has been to help establish a healthy balance in the student's critical outlook. We—a group that now includes another collaborator—still fervently believe that any college or university student—or, for that matter, any advanced high school student—should have at hand the main lines of the most useful approaches to literary criticism.

With these assumptions in mind, we marked off our areas of concern and laid claim to fill the need we sensed. We have been gratified with the success of that claim, indicated by the acceptance of the book by our professional colleagues and by thousands of students throughout the land and abroad. (The book has now been published in Spanish, Portuguese, Japanese, Chinese, and Korean [besides an English version in Korea].) However, there has also been an acceptance we did not anticipate. Our original concern was to offer critical approaches to students in the early years of college work, but we have found that in instance after instance the book is being used at upper-division levels and in graduate classes. Even so, this extended use has not precluded the book's acceptance by numerous high school teachers as well.

We hope that in this fourth edition we have preserved that versatility, and we have worked strenuously to improve upon it. Since the publication of our first edition in the mid-1960s, we have witnessed a veritable explosion of critical theories, along with a radical expansion and revision of the literary canon. These extraordinary developments have prompted cor-

responding revisions in each succeeding edition of our handbook. For example, our prologue in the third edition has now been expanded to a full chapter which includes not only pre-critical comments on "To His Coy Mistress," *Hamlet*, "Young Goodman Brown," and *Huckleberry Finn*, but also a reader-response approach to Alice Walker's "Everyday Use: for your grandmama." This opening discussion of Walker's widely celebrated classic signals one of the most substantial additions to this fourth edition: because of its accessibility (it is eminently readable) and its richness of interpretive susceptibility, "Everyday Use" nicely complements the other four major works we have treated in detail in each of our preceding editions; and because of its succinctness, the complete story is conveniently reprinted in our Appendixes, along with "To His Coy Mistress" and "Young Goodman Brown." Moreover, Walker's story responds to our increasingly felt need to recognize the canonical significance of women writers, especially those who represent the cultural diversity of our literature. Our recognition of this diversity is further manifested by the addition of our full chapter on cultural studies, composed of sections on British cultural materialism, new historicism, and multiculturalism, and including detailed treatments of all five major works as well as specific mention of other works that represent this burgeoning literary phenomenon. This fully packed seventh chapter replaces our previous chapter on structuralism and poststructuralism, which are now discussed in our eighth chapter along with several other important approaches, coming full circle to our opening discussion of reader-response criticism. In this concluding chapter we have, as before, surveyed various additional approaches in such a way that students may find both orientation and bibliographical guides to expanding their critical horizons. These Quick Reference guides are provided handily at the end of each section in chapter 8, just as they are included at the end of each preceding chapter (rather than being relegated to the back of the book as in our previous editions).

Note also that we have often included additional helpful entries for works not discussed in the text, especially in those sections that treat more contemporary critical emphases.

Despite these changes, our aim in this new edition is still

much the same as it was in the first three editions: to provide a basic introduction to the major critical-interpretive perspectives that a reader beginning a serious study may bring to bear on literature. This book describes and demonstrates the critical tools that have come to be regarded as indispensable for the sensitive reader; these tools are what we call “approaches.” Furthermore, because this is a *handbook* of critical approaches, we have tried to make it suggestive rather than exhaustive. We make no claim to being definitive; on the contrary, the book’s value lies, in part, in opening the student’s eyes to the *possibilities* in literature and criticism. Today we read much about heuristics, the process of discovery. This sense of discovery was important in the previous editions, and it continues to be important here.

But heuristics can be guided, and for that reason we have selected seven main approaches to literary criticism, all of which we consider viable not only for the critical expert but also for the critical neophyte. These approaches constitute the first seven chapters of our handbook. Each of these chapters begins with an introduction to and definition of a particular interpretive approach, usually followed by a detailed application of that approach to the same five major works—two British and three American, one of which is African American—representing the following genres: poetry, drama, novel, and short story. Each chapter also includes comments on other literary works cited as occasional illustrations, thereby effectively extending the handbook’s application beyond the five works treated more extensively, while at the same time permitting the student to apply the various critical approaches to the works thus briefly mentioned. There is no rigid sequence from chapter to chapter, and the five major works are not all treated with the same degree of detail in each chapter, since not all works lend themselves equally well to a given approach. Consequently, one important aspect of our treatment of critical reading should be the student’s recognition of the need to select the most suitable approach for a given literary work.

Chapter 1, “Getting Started: The Precritical Response,” discusses the reader’s initial involvement with a work of literary art, emphasizing the importance of this unique personal aesthetic experience. Chapter 2 considers the cluster of perspec-

tives generally accepted as traditional—the biographical, the historical, the moralistic, and the philosophical—with some attention to textual matters and to the time-honored technique of interpretive summary. Chapter 3 deals with the formalistic approach, which has come to be especially associated with the New Criticism. Chapter 4 presents a treatment of psychology in literature, focusing on traditional Freudian concepts. Chapter 5 moves into the realm of cultural myths and archetypal patterns as they are manifested in literature, with particular attention to the archetypal theories of C. G. Jung. Chapter 6 serves as an extensive introduction to the feminist approach, with its rich sociological and political as well as aesthetic implications. The feminist approach includes such varying attitudes as those of neo-Freudians, Marxists, and deconstructionists, since these are sometimes amalgamated with the reformation of sexist attitudes in literary criticism. Chapter 7 addresses one of the liveliest and widest-ranging recent developments in the teaching of literature, cultural studies, with special attention to examples of American multiculturalism in the works of African American, Latina/o, American Indian, and Asian American writers. In chapter 8 we discuss ten additional approaches; to conserve space, we do not attempt in this succinct survey to treat the five major works chosen for detailed analyses in the seven preceding chapters.

These five works were chosen because they lend themselves exceptionally well to multiple interpretations and because they will make the beginning student aware of the joys of reading at increasingly higher levels of ability. Two of them—*Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* and *Hamlet*—are easily available in paperback, if not in the student's literature anthology. The other three—"To His Coy Mistress," "Young Goodman Brown," and "Everyday Use"—are included in this book. Regardless of the availability of these five works, we hope that this book will serve as a model or guide for the interpretation of many literary works. In short, while our handbook possesses an integrity of its own, it may be used most instructively as a complementary text in conjunction with an anthology or a set of paperbacks.

This handbook may be read from cover to cover as a continuous unit, of course, but it has been organized for both flexi-

bility and adaptability. For example, although it is primarily organized by “approaches” rather than genres, at the beginning of a course the instructor may assign the introductory section of each chapter, later assigning the section of each of the seven main chapters that deals with a certain genre. Thus, the instructor who decides to begin with the short story may assign “Young Goodman Brown” and “Everyday Use” along with the introductory sections of selected chapters and the accompanying discussions of these two stories. Another possible strategy is to have students read several literary works early in the term and discuss them in class without immediate recourse to this handbook. Then they might read this text, or pertinent sections of it, and bring their resulting new insights to bear on the literature read earlier, as well as on subsequent readings. This double exposure has the advantage of creating a sense of discovery for the perceptive reader.

For the continuing success of this handbook over the past four decades, we owe many thanks. Our debt to the canon of literary scholarship—the breadth and depth of which is reflected in the Quick Reference sections of this text—is obvious, and we acknowledge it with gratitude. Equally considerable is our debt to the many friends and colleagues whose assistance and suggestions have helped to insure this success. To these we give special thanks: Laurence Perrine, William B. Allmon, James A. Gowen, Donald F. Warders, Arthur Schwartz, Richard Coanda, James Wilcox, Kathleen Owens, Czarena Stuart, Irene Winterrowd, Yvonne B. Willingham, Mildred B. Smith, Melinda M. Carpenter, Alyce Palpant, Jeanette DeLine, Betty Labor, Ruby George, Mary McBride, Robert C. Leitz III, Stephen J. Mayer, Karl-Heinz Westarp, Donald Hannah, Ellen Brown, Bernard Duyfhuizen, Michael L. Hall, David H. Jackson, Jefferson Hendricks, Kyle Labor, Phillip Leininger, Bettye Leslie, Teresa Mangum, Barry Nass, Steven Shelburne, Frederick C. Stern, Keith G. Thomas, David Havird, John Hardt, Harry James Cook, Donald Kummings, Gayle Labor, Earl Wilcox, Kevin Harty, James Lake, Sue Brown, Helen Taylor, Sura Rath, Ed Odom, John Reesman, Garry Partridge, Debbie López, Elia DeLeon, Douglas Bruster, Gena Dagel Caponi, John Kucich, Louis Mendoza, Denise Walker, Kim Chapman, Bridget Drinka,

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