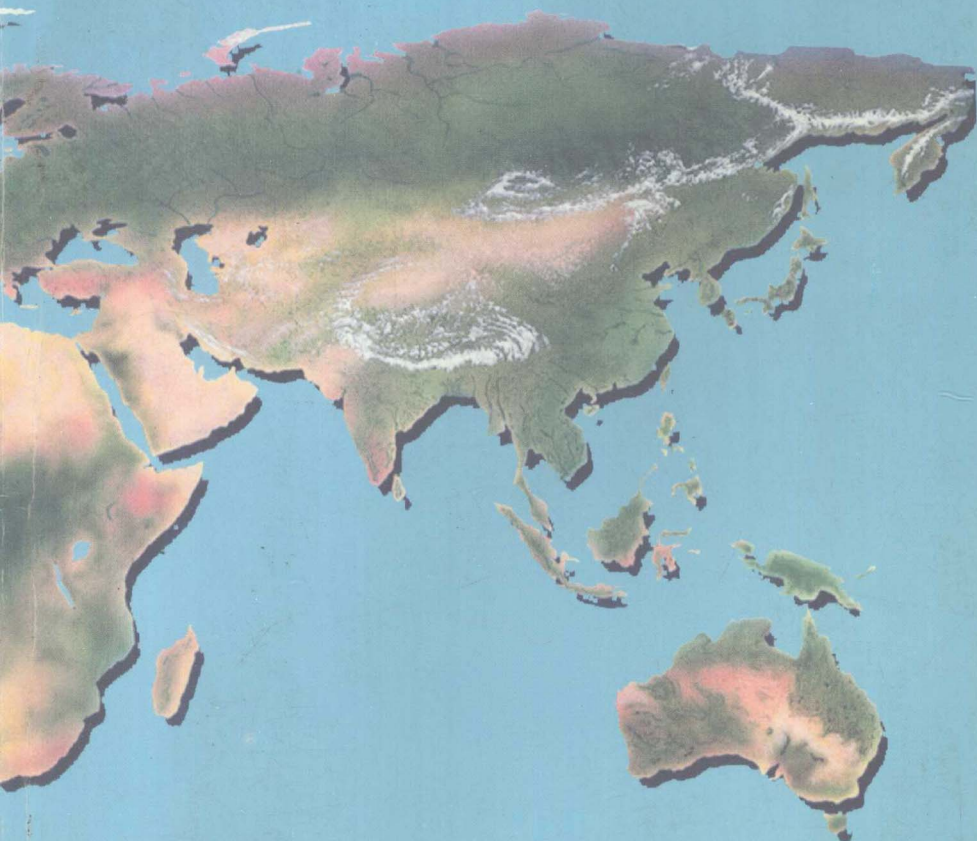


高等学校面向21世纪课程统编改革教材

新编英美概况

田金佩 张绍根 高传香 主编
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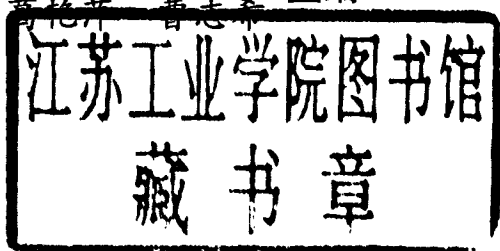


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前 言

近年来,我国高等学校教学改革的思想十分活跃,1998年3月教育部在武汉召开了全国高等学校第一次教学工作会议后,教育部明确要求我国高等学校全面实施《高等教育面向21世纪教学内容和课程体系改革计划》,改革重点是基础课程、主干课程的教学内容和体系的改革,要按照新的专业目录制定出主要专业的人才培养方案,实现课程结构和教学内容的整合优化,编写出版一批高水平、高质量的“面向21世纪课程教材”。“英美概况”是高等学校英语专业的必修课程之一,也可作为大学英语的阅读教材。20世纪90年代以来,随着世界政治经济格局发生巨大的变化,英国和美国这两个最有代表性的英语国家,其国内的政治、经济、外交等政策也随之进行了较大的调整和改革。我国高等学校学生学习英语的目的是为了更多的利用英语这一工具,全面准确地了解英美这两个国家的历史和现状,扩大对外交流,为中国的改革开放和经济建设服务。因此,编写一本紧跟时代变化的英美概况教材,这对于我国高校大学生具备更多的英语背景知识,学好英语语言就显得尤为重要。本书正是根据教育部的有关文件精神 and 我国高校开设英美概况课程急需教学内容调整 and 改革的要求,由汕头大学出版社教材编辑室直接组织全国有代表性的高等学校从事英美概况研究和教学的专家和专业教师,联合编写而成的结构完整、体系新颖、内容广泛的高等学校面向21世纪课程建设统编改革教材。

《新编英美概况》一书共有18章,分为英国部分和美国部分,本书在全面介绍英美概况的基本框架基础上,重点对英美国家近现代部分的历史、地理概况、政治、经济、教育、文化、宗教、外交等内容进行介绍和评析,旨在帮助青年大学生在学习现代英语时,能完整地理解学习内容,为学好英语提供正确的英、美国家的背景材

料。该书在编写中特别突出了四个特点:一是信息量大;二是综合性强;三是时代感强;四是适当突出美国部分。本书内容较新,例如宗教和外交在同类教材中多无叙述,布什、克林顿和梅杰、布莱尔当政时的英美各自的内政外交政策在同类教材中更是很少涉及,这些内容正是我们学习英美概况需要掌握的知识,因而在本书中作了较全面的介绍。

本书由汕头大学出版社直接组织全国有代表性的哈尔滨工业大学、天津理工学院、忻州师范学院、邯郸师范高等专科学校、扬州大学、西南财经大学、江西财经大学、中国煤炭经济学院、湖北民族学院、牡丹江师范学院、焦作工学院、南京化工大学、华北电力大学、焦作教育学院、河南农业大学、洛阳农业高等专科学校、南宁师范高等专科学校、益阳师范高等专科学校、河北工程技术高等专科学校、北京化工学院等 20 所高校联合编写和修改而成。参加编写的专家和专业教师有(按编写章节先后为序):田金佩、张绍根、高传香、郭为民、冯艳玲、葛艳萍、侯瑞君、黄宁、刘军、王艳文、王晓霞、邓大飞、王胜利、曹久平、封丽丽、卢凌、刘川、夏政、梁婷、曹志希、胡美珠、秦志强、倪钧为、张才凤。

本书初稿由副主编分别审改后交主编对全书进行系统的修改,最后由夏政教授定稿。本书在编写过程中,参考了国内外有关文献、著作、教材,引用了其中的相关材料,在此注明并表示感谢。由于编者的水平有限,编写时间比较仓促,资料的来源渠道不一,加上是多人合著,尽管本书主编和出版社责任编辑作了较大的努力和认真的修改,但错误之处在所难免,恳请读者批评指正,便于今后再版时统一修改和完善。

《新编英美概况》编委会
2000 年 12 月于广州

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PART ONE BRITAIN

Chapter I British Geography

Situated in Western Europe, lying off the north – west coast of Europe, Britain is made up of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Its full and official name is the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Britain is a rather small country, having a total area of about 242,000 square kilometers, with a population of 58.4 million, but it has played a major role in shaping the modern world.

Britain is divided into the lowland area and the highland area. It has large mountain ranges: the Pennines, the Cumbrian Mountain Range, the Grampian Mountains, the Cambrian Mountain Range and such important rivers as the Thames, the Severn, The Mersey, the Humber, the Clyde and the Forth.

The climate in Britain is generally mild and temperate. In general, there are few extremes of temperature; it rarely rises above 32°C or falls below – 10°C. Within its small area, Britain is rich in coal, petroleum, natural gas, iron, tin, and copper. Coal and petroleum are the most important.

Section One Geographic Position and Boundary

Lying off the north – west coast of Europe, there are two large islands

and several much smaller ones. Collectively, they are known as The British Isles. The largest is called Great Britain. The other large one is called Ireland.

In the British Isles there are two states. One of these states governs most of the island of Ireland. This state is called The Republic of Ireland. The other state has authority over the rest of the British Isles (the whole of Great Britain, the northeastern area of Ireland and most of the smaller islands). The full and official name of this country is The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, usually shortened or abbreviated to the United Kingdom or U.K. , Great Britain, Britain, or sometimes informally England.

Britain is situated in western Europe and is separated from the European continent by the North Sea, the Strait of Dover and the English Channel. It lies between 50°and 60°north latitude, and roughly between 2°east and 8°west longitude. The Prime meridian of 0°just passes through the old observatory at Greenwich. The neighbouring countries of Britain include France, Holland, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Belgium, the Irish Republic and Iceland.

Britain is surrounded by the sea. It has a great length of coastline (about 11,450 kilometres)with many harbours.

Section Two Territory and Administrative Areas

Britain comprises Great Britain (England, Wales and Scotland) and Northern Ireland, and it constitutes the greater part of the British Isles. The largest of the islands is Great Britain. The next largest comprises Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. Western Scotland is fringed by the large island chain known as the Hebrides, and to the northeast of the Scottish mainland are the Orkney and Shetland Islands. All these, along

with the Isle of Wight, Anglesey and the Isles of Scilly, have administrative ties with the mainland, but the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea and the Channel Islands between Great Britain and France are largely self-governed, and are not part of the United Kingdom.

Britain, consisting of England, Scotland, and Wales; numerous smaller coastal islands; and Northern Ireland, is divided into many administrative areas called counties or shires. It is a rather small country, with a total area of 242,000 square kilometers (93,000 square miles), accounting for less than 2% of the land area of the world and ranking about the 75th in size among countries in the world. It's just under 1,000 km. (about 600 miles) from the south coast to the extreme north of Scotland and just under 500 km (around 300 miles) across at the widest point.

England occupies the southern portion of Great Britain. It is the most important part of the Kingdom in wealth, size, and population. Scotland occupies the northern portion of Great Britain. It retained its own parliament until 1707 when, by the Act of Union, Scotland and the Kingdom of England and Wales were constitutionally joined as the Kingdom of Great Britain. Wales, on the western prominence between the Bristol channel and the Dee estuary, was effectively united with England in the 14th century. Northern Ireland is composed of the six Irish counties that elected to remain in the union with Great Britain when the remaining 26 counties of Ireland obtained autonomy in 1921.

Section Three Nationalities, Population and Languages

The main nations in Britain are the English, Scottish, Welsh and Irish. The modern Scottish and Irish are the descendants of the Gaels of the Celtic tribes, while the Welsh are the descendants of the Britons of the

Celtic tribes. The three great Germanic tribes: the Angles, the Saxons and the Jutes which invaded Britain form the basis of modern English people.

According to mid – 1994 estimates, Britain's population is 58.4 million, the 17th largest in the world. The population is predominantly urban and suburban, and seven great conurbations are Greater London, W. Midlands, S. Yorkshire, W. Yorkshire, Greater Manchester, Merseyside, and Tyne & Wear. The population has been growing slowly since the early 1980s, thanks to increased longevity. On mid – 1994 – based projections, the population in Britain is forecast to rise to 59.4 million in 2001 and 60.5 million in 2011. However, the population is likely to start falling again from about 2025, owing to low birth rates and the post – war “baby boom” generation dying out.

The major languages spoken in Britain are English, Gaelic and Welsh. English is the official language of the country and is spoken by most of the population. About one fourth of the people in Wales still speak the ancient Welsh language. Gaelic, as well as English, is now spoken by some Scots and by a few people in Northern Ireland.

Modern English derives primarily from one of the dialects of Anglo – Saxon. However, it has been greatly influenced by other languages, particularly, following the Norman conquest, by French. French was the language of the nobility and the courts of law for many years after 1066. The re – emergence of English as the universal language of England was signified by such events as the statute of Pleadings in 1362, which laid down that English was to be used in court. The 14th century also saw the first major English literature since Anglo – Saxon days, with the writing of such works as “Piers Plowman” by William Langland and “The Canterbury Tales” by Geoffrey Chaucer. However, there remained great regional variations in the language, and spellings were not always standardised.

Following the introduction of the printing press to England by William Caxton in the late 15th century, there was a considerable flowering of En-

English literature in the 16th and early 17th centuries. Writers such as William Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser and Christopher Marlowe produced work that is still famous today. Cranmer's prayerbook and the Authorised ('King James') Version of the Bible, which have had a profound effect on literature down to modern times, also date from this period. Also about this time, translations of Latin, Italian and other European works into English vastly expanded the English language. The work of early lexicographers, of whom the most famous was Samuel Johnson (1709 - 1784), led to greater standardisation in matters such as spelling.

Today, English is the main language spoken in Britain and is also one of the most widely used in the world. Recent estimates suggest that 310 million people speak it as their first language, with a similar number speaking it as a second language. It is an official language in a large number of overseas countries, and is widely used internationally as the main language for purposes such as air traffic control and academic gatherings.

Section Four London and Other Major Cities

London, the capital of England and of the United Kingdom, is the largest city in Europe, with a population of about 7 million. It's home for the headquarters of all government departments, parliament, the major legal institutions and the monarch. It's the country's business and banking centre and the centre of its transport network. It contains the headquarters of the national television networks and of all the national newspapers. It is about seven times larger than any other city in the country. About a fifth of the total population of the UK lives in the Greater London area.

Situated on the northern bank of the Thames, London administratively consists of: ① the city of London, the original nucleus, retaining a medi-