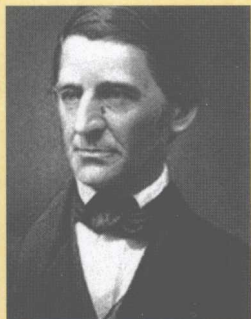


RALPH WALDO EMERSON'S ESSENTIAL TEXTS:
SPIRITUALITY AND CREATIVITY



爱默生精选文本：
精神性与创造性

隋刚 主编

SUI GANG

国际文化出版公司

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爱默生精选文本
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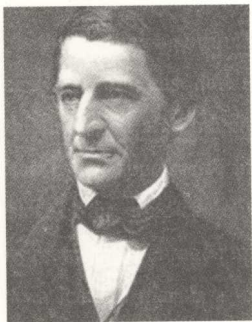
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- 北京市教育委员会“科研基地——科技创新平台——北京第二外国语学院英美社会文化研究平台建设”项目

前 言

本教材可用于英语语言文学专业硕士研究生的美国文学或美国文化课程，旨在帮助学生了解超验主义理念在美国当时的文化背景下应运而生的原因，了解爱默生作为超验主义文学家对美国文艺复兴乃至世界文化的贡献，了解人依靠直觉向大自然学习的可行性、创造性地运用传统文化的可能性以及构建民族新文化的重要性。

本教材可引导学生有针对性地深入研究爱默生作品的两个基本特性——精神性和创造性，挖掘其中具有普遍意义的文化内涵，培养学生独立思考能力、独特感悟能力和灵活创造能力。

本教材的研读方法：针对爱默生的思维特点，采用逻辑思维研究与形象思维研究相结合的方法；针对爱默生的超验主义文学作品，采用抽象理论研究与具体意象研究相结合的方法；根据爱默生的超验主义思想的启示，根据当代文学与文化理论重构的需要，采用文本历史意义研究与文本现实意义研究相结合的方法。

本教材收录了爱默生的 11 篇作品。这些作品涉及以下几个关键问题：

(1) 有关占领理论制高点的问题——重视人生的精神价值，蔑视趋炎附势、唯利是图，相信自己的感知力、想象力、表现力和创造力，自觉地纠正自己的思想偏差，执著地探索生命的真谛，真诚地追求崇高和永恒。

(2) 有关依托理论基础的问题——要关注不断变化着的自然世界的具体事物，更要关注在这些具体事物中所包含的精神实质；要熟知传统文化，更要熟知如何创造性地运用它。

(3) 有关创建新理论、新文化的问题——积极投身到现实

生活中去，探究新生事物的发展规律，摆脱呆板庸俗的教条的束缚，揭示社会现实本质，在动态中使理论得以不断发展，以从容乐观的心态和严肃认真的态度，创建无愧于己、无愧于民族、无愧于时代的新文化。

在本教材的编写过程中，隋刚负责制订教材的提纲，选定需编入教材的爱默生作品的具体篇目，撰写每个具体篇目的“主要观点”部分（Major Concepts）和“阅读思考”部分（Reading for Meaning）。李素杰、黄敏、蒋云珍、龙云、隋刚、张清泉、周玉龙、魏怡、李婉青和刘蔚然参与撰写爱默生各篇入编作品的中文“内容提要”，或参与收集相关研究资料。

编者曾受到北京市教育委员会的资助，负责完成其 2006 年人文社会科学研究计划面上项目“爱默生创新理念的现实意义”（编号：SM200610031001）。本教材就是这一项目的成果之一。本教材的正式出版受到北京市教育委员会“科研基地——科技创新平台——北京第二外国语学院英美社会文化研究平台建设”项目的资助。一并致谢。

编者

2007 年 9 月 25 日

Contents

目 录

Introduction

前言 (1)

I. Nature

自然 (1)

II. The American Scholar

美国学者 (54)

III. The Divinity School Address

在神学院的演讲 (80)

IV. Literary Ethics

文学伦理学 (105)

V. The Method of Nature

自然的法则 (129)

VI. Man the Reformer

作为改革者的人 (154)

VII. Self-Reliance

自助 (177)

VIII. The Over-Soul

超灵 (211)

IX. The Poet

诗人 (235)

Supplementary Readings

补充读物

I. Each and All

个体与整体 (265)

II. Experience

体验 (268)

Reference Books

参考书目 (294)

I. Nature

Major Concepts:

- (1) the universe composed of Nature and the Soul
- (2) Nature as the Not Me ('both nature and art, all other men and my own body'), and as the symbol of spirit
- (3) solitude needed for self-examination, self-discovery, and self-uplifting
- (4) the double consciousness needed to perceive truths – the consciousness of the factual physicality of nature, and the consciousness of its transcendental spirituality
- (5) 'a transparent eyeball' as an intuitive way of seeing, and as a creative way of knowing – the purified vision and heightened awareness of the divinely inspired individual
- (6) taste as the love of beauty, and art as the creation of beauty
- (7) language as a presentation of natural facts, and as a symbolic representation of their corresponding spiritual facts
- (8) the noblest ministry of nature as 'the apparition of God'

(9) nature as a discipline of the understanding in intellectual truths

(10) the restoration of the original and eternal beauty of nature based on the redemption of the Soul

自 然

【内容提要】

拉尔夫·华尔多·爱默生（1803—1882）是新英格兰超验主义运动的核心人物，是美国19世纪最为重要的思想家之一。他的文化影响既广泛又深远。他的著名散文作品《自然》被普遍认为是超验主义运动的宣言，是美国浪漫主义运动精神的最全面的表述。

《自然》一文发表于1836年。在此之前，爱默生因与唯一神教观念相左，放弃神职，并于1832至1833年间访问欧洲。该文显现了美国清教主义、欧洲浪漫主义和康德先验论哲学等多重影响，集中反映了爱默生关于神圣价值、宗教信仰、自然规律、文明传统、文学艺术、民主社会、个人主义等问题的深入思考。研读该文可能是理解爱默生文化思想的最佳切入点。

《自然》包括导言和八个章节：（一）自然、（二）商品、（三）美、（四）语言、（五）训诫、（六）理想主义、（七）精神、（八）远景。文中处处有真知灼见，很多话语已成为西方文明史中耳熟能详的警句或格言。

在导言中，爱默生开宗明义，指出美国人不应该继续生活在传统的阴影中，不应该“在历史的枯骨堆里胡乱摸索，”而是要像先人那样建立与上帝和自然的密切联系并与之直接交流，要面对新的世界，描绘“新的土地、新的人、新的思想”。爱默生为“自然”明确定义，即：宇宙的两个组成部分之一。他说：“就哲学观点而言，宇宙由自然和灵魂组成。”自然涵盖所有“非我”的一切，包括自然界、艺术、他人和自己的躯体。

第一章是该文的核心部分，包含了爱默生自然观的精髓。爱默生确信：自然不但具有实用价值和审美价值，而且具有精神价值；自然能够陶冶人的

情操，抚慰人的伤痛，升华人的灵魂。人应保持精神独立，不与世俗权利崇拜和金钱崇拜的狂潮同流合污，回归自然，回归童心和质朴，回归信仰和正义，回归崇高和永恒，从而与神圣价值融为一体。

在第二、三、四、五章中，爱默生深入浅出地阐述了自然的多种功能，即：商品功能、美学功能、在语言中显示出的表征功能、对人类心灵和道德的训诫功能。爱默生认为，自然不仅以物质的形式给人类提供各种生存发展的便利条件，不仅给人类带来感官上的审美愉悦，不仅为人类奠定象征性语言的表意基础，而且具有强大的精神和道德力量，对人的智力和品行进行规范和指导。自然是精神的象征，昭示着人类不断进步的起点和归宿。

在最后三章中，爱默生进一步强调自然的超验本质。他的主要观点是：精神高于物质；物质世界是表象性的，而精神或灵魂才具有终极的实质性，才是永恒不朽的。在现实社会生活中，人自身的精神因遭物化而形成的残破不全导致他所认识的世界的残破不全。只有当人满足了精神的所有需求的时候，人才能成为完整的人，才能实现人与自然的真正的和谐统一。

A subtle chain of countless rings
The next unto the farthest brings;
The eye reads omens where it goes,
And speaks all languages the rose;
And, striving to be man, the worm
Mounts through all the spires of form.

Introduction

Our age is retrospective. It builds the sepulchres of the fathers. It writes biographies, histories, and criticism. The foregoing generations beheld God and nature face to face; we, through their eyes. Why should not we also enjoy an original relation to the universe? Why should not we have a poetry and

philosophy of insight and not of tradition, and a religion by revelation to us, and not the history of theirs? Embosomed for a season in nature, whose floods of life stream around and through us, and invite us by the powers they supply, to action proportioned to nature, why should we grope among the dry bones of the past, or put the living generation into masquerade out of its faded wardrobe? The sun shines to-day also. There is more wool and flax in the fields. There are new lands, new men, new thoughts. Let us demand our own works and laws and worship.

Undoubtedly we have no questions to ask which are unanswerable. We must trust the perfection of the creation so far, as to believe that whatever curiosity the order of things has awakened in our minds, the order of things can satisfy. Every man's condition is a solution in hieroglyphic to those inquiries he would put. He acts it as life, before he apprehends it as truth. In like manner, nature is already, in its forms and tendencies, describing its own design. Let us interrogate the great apparition, that shines so peacefully around us. Let us inquire, to what end is nature?

All science has one aim, namely, to find a theory of nature. We have theories of races and of functions, but scarcely yet a remote approach to an idea of creation. We are now so far from the road to truth, that religious teachers dispute and hate each other, and speculative men are esteemed unsound and frivolous. But to a sound judgment, the most abstract truth is the most practical. Whenever a true theory appears, it will be its own evidence. Its test is, that it will explain all phenomena. Now many are thought not only unexplained but inexplicable; as language, sleep, madness, dreams, beasts, sex.

Philosophically considered, the universe is composed of Nature and the Soul. Strictly speaking, therefore, all that is separate from us, all which Philosophy

distinguishes as the NOT ME, that is, both nature and art, all other men and my own body, must be ranked under this name, NATURE. In enumerating the values of nature and casting up their sum, I shall use the word in both senses; — in its common and in its philosophical import. In inquiries so general as our present one, the inaccuracy is not material; no confusion of thought will occur. *Nature*, in the common sense, refers to essences unchanged by man; space, the air, the river, the leaf. *Art* is applied to the mixture of his will with the same things, as in a house, a canal, a statue, a picture. But his operations taken together are so insignificant, a little chipping, baking, patching, and washing, that in an impression so grand as that of the world on the human mind, they do not vary the result.

Chapter I

Nature

To go into solitude, a man needs to retire as much from his chamber as from society. I am not solitary whilst I read and write, though nobody is with me. But if a man would be alone, let him look at the stars. The rays that come from those heavenly worlds, will separate between him and what he touches. One might think the atmosphere was made transparent with this design, to give man, in the heavenly bodies, the perpetual presence of the sublime. Seen in the streets of cities, how great they are! If the stars should appear one night in a thousand years, how would men believe and adore; and preserve for many generations the remembrance of the city of God which had been shown! But every night come out these envoys of beauty, and light the universe with their admonishing smile.

The stars awaken a certain reverence, because though always present, they are inaccessible; but all natural objects make a kindred impression, when the mind is open to their influence. Nature never wears a mean appearance. Neither does the wisest man extort her secret, and lose his curiosity by finding out all her perfection. Nature never became a toy to a wise spirit. The flowers, the animals, the mountains, reflected the wisdom of his best hour, as much as they had delighted the simplicity of his childhood.

When we speak of nature in this manner, we have a distinct but most poetical sense in the mind. We mean the integrity of impression made by manifold natural objects. It is this which distinguishes the stick of timber of the wood-cutter, from

the tree of the poet. The charming landscape which I saw this morning, is indubitably made up of some twenty or thirty farms. Miller owns this field, Locke that, and Manning the woodland beyond. But none of them owns the landscape. There is a property in the horizon which no man has but he whose eye can integrate all the parts, that is, the poet. This is the best part of these men's farms, yet to this their warranty-deeds give no title.

To speak truly, few adult persons can see nature. Most persons do not see the sun. At least they have a very superficial seeing. The sun illuminates only the eye of the man, but shines into the eye and the heart of the child. The lover of nature is he whose inward and outward senses are still truly adjusted to each other; who has retained the spirit of infancy even into the era of manhood. His intercourse with heaven and earth, becomes part of his daily food. In the presence of nature, a wild delight runs through the man, in spite of real sorrows. Nature says, — he is my creature, and maugre all his impertinent griefs, he shall be glad with me. Not the sun or the summer alone, but every hour and season yields its tribute of delight; for every hour and change corresponds to and authorizes a different state of the mind, from breathless noon to grimmest midnight. Nature is a setting that fits equally well a comic or a mourning piece. In good health, the air is a cordial of incredible virtue. Crossing a bare common, in snow puddles, at twilight, under a clouded sky, without having in my thoughts any occurrence of special good fortune, I have enjoyed a perfect exhilaration. I am glad to the brink of fear. In the woods too, a man casts off his years, as the snake his slough, and at what period soever of life, is always a child. In the woods, is perpetual youth. Within these plantations of God, a decorum and sanctity reign, a perennial festival is dressed, and the guest sees not how he should tire of them in a thousand years. In the woods, we return to reason and faith. There I feel that nothing can befall me in life, — no disgrace, no calamity, (leaving me my eyes,) which nature cannot

repair. Standing on the bare ground, — my head bathed by the blithe air, and uplifted into infinite space, — all mean egotism vanishes. I become a transparent eye-ball; I am nothing; I see all; the currents of the Universal Being circulate through me; I am part or particle of God. The name of the nearest friend sounds then foreign and accidental: to be brothers, to be acquaintances, — master or servant, is then a trifle and a disturbance. I am the lover of uncontained and immortal beauty. In the wilderness, I find something more dear and connate than in streets or villages. In the tranquil landscape, and especially in the distant line of the horizon, man beholds somewhat as beautiful as his own nature.

The greatest delight which the fields and woods minister, is the suggestion of an occult relation between man and the vegetable. I am not alone and unacknowledged. They nod to me, and I to them. The waving of the boughs in the storm, is new to me and old. It takes me by surprise, and yet is not unknown. Its effect is like that of a higher thought or a better emotion coming over me, when I deemed I was thinking justly or doing right.

Yet it is certain that the power to produce this delight, does not reside in nature, but in man, or in a harmony of both. It is necessary to use these pleasures with great temperance. For, nature is not always tricked in holiday attire, but the same scene which yesterday breathed perfume and glittered as for the frolic of the nymphs, is overspread with melancholy today. Nature always wears the colors of the spirit. To a man laboring under calamity, the heat of his own fire hath sadness in it. Then, there is a kind of contempt of the landscape felt by him who has just lost by death a dear friend. The sky is less grand as it shuts down over less worth in the population.

Chapter II

Commodity

Whoever considers the final cause of the world, will discern a multitude of uses that result. They all admit of being thrown into one of the following classes; Commodity; Beauty; Language; and Discipline.

Under the general name of Commodity, I rank all those advantages which our senses owe to nature. This, of course, is a benefit which is temporary and mediate, not ultimate, like its service to the soul. Yet although low, it is perfect in its kind, and is the only use of nature which all men apprehend. The misery of man appears like childish petulance, when we explore the steady and prodigal provision that has been made for his support and delight on this green ball which floats him through the heavens. What angels invented these splendid ornaments, these rich conveniences, this ocean of air above, this ocean of water beneath, this firmament of earth between? this zodiac of lights, this tent of dropping clouds, this striped coat of climates, this fourfold year? Beasts, fire, water, stones, and corn serve him. The field is at once his floor, his work-yard, his play-ground, his garden, and his bed.

“More servants wait on man
Than he’ll take notice of.” —

Nature, in its ministry to man, is not only the material, but is also the process and the result. All the parts incessantly work into each other’s hands for the profit of