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剑桥美国小说新论·21
(英文影印版)

New Essays on

*Hemingway's
Short Fiction*

《海明威短篇小说》新论

Paul Smith 编



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导 读

北京大学英语系教授 陶洁

近年来,美国文学在我国很受欢迎。大专院校英语系纷纷开设美国文学选读和专题课,学生从中学到的大部分内容是美国小说。不仅如此,在本科毕业论文、硕士论文或博士论文方面,学生所选题材也大多为关于某部美国小说或某个美国小说家。然而,我们的学生往往热衷理论而对作品或作家缺乏深入细致的了解和分析。他们往往先大谈理论规则,然后罗列一些例证,不能很好地把理论和文本融会贯通,恰如其分地结合在一起。在这种情况下,我们需要一些好的参考资料来帮助学生更好地认识和理解他们在阅读或研究的作品和作家。《剑桥美国小说新论》正是这样一套优秀的参考书。

这套丛书的负责人是曾经主编过《哥伦比亚美国文学史》的艾默里·埃利奥特教授,并且由英国剑桥大学出版社在上世纪80年代中期开始陆续出书,至今仍在发行并出版新书,目前已有五十多种,不仅出平装本还有精装本。一套书发行二十多年还有生命力,估计还会继续发行,主要因为它确实从学生的需要出发,深受他们和教师的喜爱。

《剑桥美国小说新论》的编排方式比较统一。根据主编制定的原则,每本书针对一部美国文学历史上有名望的大作家的一本经典小说,论述者都是研究这位作家的知名学者。开篇是一位权威专家的论述,主要论及作品的创作过程、出版历史、当年的评价以及小说发表以来不同时期的主要评论和阅读倾向。随后是四到五篇论述,从不同角度用不同的批评方法对作品进行分析和阐

释。这些文章并非信手拈来,而是专门为这套丛书撰写的,运用的理论都比较新,其中不乏颇有新意的真知灼见。书的最后是为学生进一步学习和研究而提供的参考书目。由此可见,编书的学者们为了帮助学生确实煞费苦心,努力做到尽善尽美。

这五十多种书有早期美国文学家库珀的《最后的莫希干人》,也有当代试验小说大师品钦的《拍卖第49号》和厄普代克那曾被《时代》杂志评为1923年以来100部最佳小说之一的《兔子,跑吧!》;有我们比较熟悉的麦尔维尔的《白鲸》,也有我们还不太了解的他的《漂亮水手》;有中国学生很喜欢的海明威的长篇小说《永别了,武器》,令人想不到的是还有一本论述他所有的短篇小说的集子。有些大作家如亨利·詹姆斯、威廉·福克纳等都有两三本作品入选,但它们都分别有专门的集子。丛书当然涉及已有定论的大作家,包括黑人和白人作家(可惜还没有华裔作家的作品),但也包括20世纪70年代妇女运动中发掘出来的如凯特·肖邦的《觉醒》和佐拉·尼尔·赫斯顿的《他们眼望上苍》,甚至还有我国读者很熟悉的斯托夫人的《汤姆叔叔的小屋》。当年这部小说曾经风靡美国,在全世界都有一定的影响,后来被贬为“政治宣传”作品,从此在美国文学史上销声匿迹。70年代后随着要求扩大文学经典中女性和少数族裔作家的呼声日益高涨,人们才开始重新评价这部作品,分析它对日后妇女作家的影响、对黑人形象的塑造,甚至它在美国文学的哥特式传统中的地位等等。

这样的例子还有很多,例如威廉·迪恩·豪威尔斯和他的《赛拉斯·拉帕姆的发迹》。以前人们只肯定他在发展现实主义文学和理论方面的贡献,对他的作品除了《赛拉斯·拉帕姆的发迹》评价都不太高。但在这本新论文集子里编者对已有定论进行挑战,强调豪威尔斯的小说、他的现实主义跟当时的社会经济文化现状有很大的关系。他的小说既有其文学形式,又是一种社会力量。另外一位19世纪新英格兰作家萨拉·奥尼·裘威特过去一向被看成是乡土作家,现在学者们用女性主义观点强调她的《尖枫树之乡》对美国文学的贡献,分析当年的种族、民族主义和文学市场

对她写作的影响。用封底宣传语言来说,这本集子对美国文学研究、女性主义批评理论和美国研究等方面都会引起很大的兴趣。

还有一本书似乎在我们国家很少有人提起过——亨利·罗思的《就说是睡着了》。此书在20世纪30年代曾经风靡一时,此后长期销声匿迹,60年代又再度受到推崇。现在这部小说则是上面提到的《时代》杂志100部优秀小说中的一部,被认为是上个世纪头50年里最为出色的美国犹太小说、最优秀的现代主义小说之一。评论家认为集子里的文章采用心理分析、社会历史主义等批评方法探讨了有关移民、族裔和文化归属等多方面的问题。

这套集子里还出现了令人信服的新论点。很长时间内海明威一直被认为是讨厌女人的大男子主义者。但在关于他的短篇小说的论述里,作者通过分析《在密执安北部》,令人信服地证明海明威其实对妇女充满同情。不仅如此,这一论断还瓦解了海明威在《太阳照样升起》中充分暴露他的厌女症的定论。

然而,作者们并不侈谈理论或玩弄理论名词,所有的论断都是既以一定的理论为基础,又对文本进行深入的分析;既把理论阐述得深入浅出,又把作品分析得丝丝入扣,让人不由得不信服。他们能够做到这一点完全是因为他们了解学生的水平和需要。

我认为《剑桥美国小说新论》是一套很好的参考书。北京大学出版社购买版权,出版这套书是个有益于外国文学研究教学的决定。

The great thing is to last and get your work done and see and hear and learn and understand; and write when there is something that you know; and not before; and not too damned much after. Let those who want to save the world if you can get to see it clear and as a whole. Then any part you make will represent the whole if it's made truly. The thing to do is work and learn to make it.

– Ernest Hemingway

Series Editor's Preface

In literary criticism the last twenty-five years have been particularly fruitful. Since the rise of the New Criticism in the 1950s, which focused attention of critics and readers upon the text itself – apart from history, biography, and society – there has emerged a wide variety of critical methods which have brought to literary works a rich diversity of perspectives: social, historical, political, psychological, economic, ideological, and philosophical. While attention to the text itself, as taught by the New Critics, remains at the core of contemporary interpretation, the widely shared assumption that works of art generate many different kinds of interpretations has opened up possibilities for new readings and new meanings.

Before this critical revolution, many works of American literature had come to be taken for granted by earlier generations of readers as having an established set of recognized interpretations. There was a sense among many students that the canon was established and that the larger thematic and interpretative issues had been decided. The task of the new reader was to examine the ways in which elements such as structure, style, and imagery contributed to each novel's acknowledged purpose. But recent criticism has brought these old assumptions into question and has thereby generated a wide variety of original, and often quite surprising, interpretations of the classics, as well as of rediscovered works such as Kate Chopin's *The Awakening*, which has only recently entered the canon of works that scholars and critics study and that teachers assign their students.

The aim of The American Novel Series is to provide students of American literature and culture with introductory critical

guides to American novels and other important texts now widely read and studied. Usually devoted to a single work, each volume begins with an introduction by the volume editor, a distinguished authority on the text. The introduction presents details of the work's composition, publication history, and contemporary reception, as well as a survey of the major critical trends and readings from first publication to the present. This overview is followed by four or five original essays, specifically commissioned from senior scholars of established reputation and from outstanding younger critics. Each essay presents a distinct point of view, and together they constitute a forum of interpretative methods and of the best contemporary ideas on each text.

It is our hope that these volumes will convey the vitality of current critical work in American literature, generate new insights and excitement for students of American literature, and inspire new respect for and new perspectives upon these major literary texts.

Emory Elliott

University of California, Riverside

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剑桥
美国
小说
新论

Introduction: Hemingway and the Practical Reader

PAUL SMITH

TWENTY years ago common knowledge told us that there was nothing more to be said about Hemingway's fiction: The patterns were clear; motifs, categorized. We had an authorized biography and what seemed to be stable texts. Then, just as our beliefs were beginning to harden into dogma, Hemingway's manuscripts and unpublished letters were opened to scholars and revisionist work opened the fiction to new readings. A cottage industry was born. Those academics, myself included, who moved into that virtual village found overwhelming evidence that every Hemingway text was flawed in its publishing, that the author was more literate and complex than we suspected, and that there was much in his fiction we had ignored. My contribution to this endeavor has focused almost entirely on reading Hemingway's rather amazing short fiction, which I have argued was his real genius, transforming as it did the way American writers tell stories. In the opening lines of *The Making of Americans*, Gertrude Stein writes of an angry son dragging his father through his own orchard. "'Stop!' cried the groaning old man at last, 'Stop! I did not drag my father beyond this tree.'" This parable might well be the epigraph for this book. When asked to edit a collection of new essays on Hemingway's short fiction, I solicited submissions from five diverse, rigorous, and talented scholars, challenging them and myself to take you, my practical reader, beyond your previous limits.

Let me explain myself. The *Hemingway* of my title refers to both the writer and his fiction. I make this point because I want to consider at times what he wrote in letters, articles, and memoirs about his fiction, and at others, the fiction itself. For

“the reader” I have you in mind (like Whitman, I feel your eyes upon my page), a “practical” reader who will agree that reading fiction once took, and with any luck still takes, practice. Not, however, so practical as to oppose all speculation or theory, for reading itself is speculative, and it’s been said that there is nothing so practical as a good theory.

In raising some questions about reading Hemingway, I take as my text a passage from *Studies in Classic American Literature* where D. H. Lawrence warns a practical reader of his generation:

An artist is usually a damned liar, but his art, if it be art, will tell you the truth of his day. . . . Never trust the artist. Trust the tale. The proper function of a critic is to save the tale from the artist who created it. (12, 13)

Lawrence’s striking prose seems at first to dare us to step outside and settle the matter, and this reader is practical enough to agree; after all, Lawrence is an artist himself, and if it takes one to know one, then, yes, they are liars and not to be trusted. We can all cite an occasion when a writer assured an audience that some profound work is really very simple: Robert Frost often claimed that “Stopping by Woods” was just a poem about a fellow who wanted to get the hell home. Then, again, if all artists are liars, and Lawrence is an artist, is his remark that artists are liars itself a lie? No, for it’s as if Lawrence acquitted himself as one of those artists who are only “usually” liars – you know, only now and then.

By now, any practical reader has become a bit skittish. There is a way out of this quandary, as is often so when we’re faced with only two options. Why not use the tale to discover whether to trust the artist? If the art will tell us the truth of the artist’s “day” – whatever that may be – it should tell us if the artist is to be trusted. Begin with the fiction, the story, and if what it tells us is confirmed by anything the writer might have said of it, so much the better; if not, then take Lawrence at his word. A sensible attitude, I think, and not out of order in reading Hemingway.

The Theory of Omission and "Out of Season"

Working on the memoir *A Moveable Feast* in the summer of 1957, Hemingway discusses a moment in 1924 when he remembered writing a story in the late spring of 1923:

It was a very simple story called "Out of Season" and I had omitted the real end of it which was that the old man hanged himself. This was omitted on my new theory that you could omit anything if you knew that you omitted and the omitted part would strengthen the story and make people feel something more than they understood. (75)

A "simple" story, yes, of course, but how that word "theory" seems to leap at us out of what is some rather lame prose. If what we are being told is that an implication we discover as readers is often more persuasive than a writer's statement, it might have been new to Hemingway but to few others and it would hardly count as a theory.

Consider the story. "Out of Season" is one of the three in Hemingway's *Three Stories and Ten Poems* (published in 1923), and like the other two it stakes out scenes he would explore in later stories: in "Up in Michigan," the small villages and surrounding woods in northern Michigan where he spent his boyhood summers; in "My Old Man," the realm of sport and gambling – here, horse racing; and in "Out of Season," the stations, hotels, and favored haunts of the American tourist in Europe. "Out of Season" opens on a cold and overcast spring day in Cortina d'Ampezzo in the Italian Dolomites. Peduzzi, a local character, has spent the morning spading a hotel garden for four lire, getting drunk on his pay, and arranging to guide a young gentleman and his wife to a trout stream after lunch. He has three more grappas, and they join him to walk through the town to the Hotel Concordia. As they enter the hotel bar to buy some marsala wine, there is tension between the couple. The husband is barely apologetic; the wife's still embittered over something he said at lunch. They walk with Peduzzi to the stream. The couple argue over fishing with a drunk for a guide before the season legally opens, and the wife leaves. The young man prepares to fish but neither he nor his guide has remembered to bring the lead

sinkers, so he and Peduzzi finish the marsala. Peduzzi plans the fishing for the next day; the young man gives him four lire, and the story ends as Peduzzi promises that

"I will have minnows, Signor. Salami, everything. You and I and the Signora. The three of us."

"I may not be going," said the young gentleman, "very probably not. I will leave word with the padrone at the hotel office." (*Complete Stories* 139)

I cite the story's conclusion because it is from there that the narrative directs us to imagine what might happen in the silent future, speculation crucial for the concept underlying the theory of omission.

Nearly a decade after writing that story in the late spring of 1923, Hemingway first mentioned the theory in *Death in the Afternoon* (1932), and then only in passing and with no mention of "Out of Season." In 1958, three years before his death, he referred to the theory as it applied to *The Old Man and the Sea* (*Paris Review* 125). Then, in the posthumous *A Moveable Feast* (1964), the theory was associated with this story to become in time something of an axiom in Hemingway criticism. And there's fair warning, for what yesterday's criticism takes as self-evident is often what tomorrow's will challenge. The counter-evidence came to light later in Hemingway's own letters and manuscripts. In a letter to F. Scott Fitzgerald (ca. 24 December 1925) Hemingway described the occasion that inspired "Out of Season." The story was, he said, an almost literal transcription of what happened.

Your ear is always more acute when you are upset by a row of any sort, . . . and when I came in from the unproductive fishing trip I wrote that story right off on the typewriter without punctuation. . . . I [had] reported [the guide] to the hotel owner . . . and he fired him and as . . . he was quite drunk and very desperate, [he] hanged himself in a stable. . . . I wanted to write a tragic story without violence. So I didn't put in the hanging. Maybe that sounds silly. I didn't think the story needed it. (*Selected Letters*, 180-1)

On the face of it, this letter seems to confirm Hemingway's later memory. Hemingway did have a good ear for dialogue whatever

his mood; the story's only manuscript shows that it was written rapidly without punctuation and immediately revised on the typewriter; and that he was angry after that row, for he struck the typewriter keys so hard that some of the letters punched holes in the paper (Kennedy Library/EH 644).

But imagine what had to have happened if Hemingway did angrily type the story right after the day's fishing and then deliberately omitted the hanging, for whatever effect. After reporting the "real" Peduzzi's behavior to the padrone, he began typing furiously, and then: The padrone sought out the guide and fired him on the spot; the guide became terribly depressed, raced to the stable and hanged himself. He was found almost immediately by someone who reported the news to the padrone; the padrone then, quite naturally, informed the guest who had made the original complaint; and, after all this, Hemingway turned back to his story, thought about the hanging in the light of his new theory and decided to omit it. Maybe this scenario sounds silly. If so, we should recall that Hemingway was in his early twenties when he wrote the letter, and that Fitzgerald, however much a friend, was also a writer, a competitor only three years older who had published two volumes of stories and three novels, the latest *The Great Gatsby* (1925). The letter was written in response to Fitzgerald's rating of the *In Our Time* stories just recently published. Maybe Hemingway was trying to impress Fitzgerald; maybe he was merely joking, making fun of slick magazine fiction. Maybe he was thinking more about "Big Two-Hearted River," which he himself rated as the best in the collection.

Whatever Hemingway's motive, the practical reader is fairly driven to agree with Lawrence and to trust the tale, for *if something has been left out that implies more than we know, some vestige of it, some trace, must have been left behind in the story to initiate the implication.* Few readers can find anything in "Out of Season" to imply that Peduzzi would be fired, or that he might hang himself, certainly not on that day, for he has earned as much for simply walking to the river as he did in a morning spading the garden. What, then, does the story imply? However much Peduzzi's vinous garrulity intrudes on the scene, the story is not about him

but about the benighted couple. Nearly everything in the setting and the action of the story, from its title to its final lines, points to the hopelessness of their marriage. They have come to the perfect place to foreshadow their separation, for here three dialects merge but none of the three characters either listens to or understands what the others say. They arrive at the perfect time of year for such miscommunication, for like the fishing, they, too, are “out of season.” Perhaps the story’s final irony is that only Peduzzi, deep in his cups, has any hope for the morrow: “The three of us,” he exclaims. But with the singular pronoun, “I may not be going,” the young gentleman belies that hope and directs our attention toward his own lonely prospect.

Dimensions in the Stories and “The Killers”

There is a second passage in *A Moveable Feast* that, like the remark on the theory of omission, has started a good many critical hares. Hemingway is describing how in his early days he sometimes had difficulty beginning his stories if he wrote “elaborately, or like someone introducing or presenting something,” but usually could overcome the difficulty if he discarded those elaborations to “start with the first true simple declarative sentence” he had written and go on from there. That led him to recall that when he finished writing a story he put it out of his mind and walked through the streets of Paris, often to the Musée du Luxembourg to see the Impressionist paintings. He was especially drawn to the Cézannes, because, as he remembered it,

I was learning something from the painting of Cézanne that made writing simple true sentences far from enough to make the stories have the *dimensions* that I was trying to put in them. . . . I was not articulate enough to explain it to anyone. Besides it was a secret. (my italics, 12, 13)

What was he learning from Cézanne and why was it a secret? The original 1924 ending of “Big Two-Hearted River,” which was replaced before the story was published, tells us more. In that discarded fragment which appeared posthumously, Nick says,