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丛书主编 / 刘岩

中国大学生必读书

新视角英语文学与文化系列教材



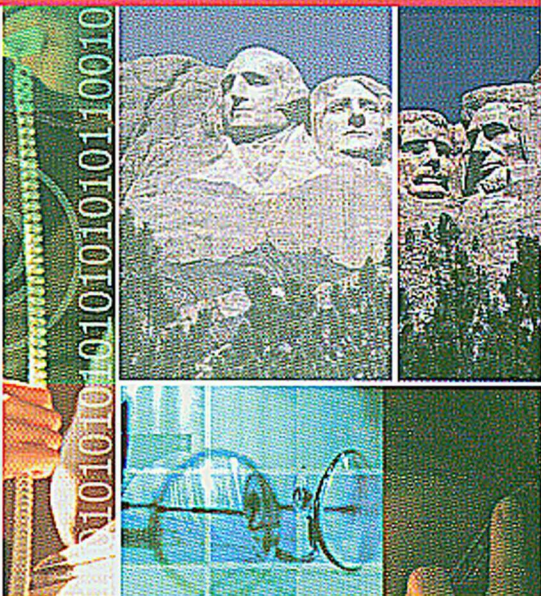
# 美国文学阅读与欣赏

## AMERICAN LITERATURE: UNDERSTANDING AND APPRECIATION

主 编 / 黄家修



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# 美国文学阅读与欣赏

## **American Literature: Understanding and Appreciation**

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## 作者简介



**黄家修** 1969年毕业于广州外国语学院英语系，1973年赴英国，在埃克塞特大学和考文垂教育学院攻读英语语言文学，1981年在北京大学研修美国文学，1991年在加拿大麦吉尔大学研修加拿大文学并进行学术交流。曾任广州外国语学院英语系副主任、涉外秘书系主任、广东外语外贸大学国际文化交流学院院长、广州翻译协会副理事长等。现为广东外语外贸大学英语语言文化学院教授、硕士生导师。长期从事英语语言文学专业的教学与研究，目前主要担任美国文学、英语诗歌、当代西方文学批评等本科生课程和英国诗歌、美国诗歌等硕士生课程。主要研究方向是英美诗歌、美国小说和文学翻译等。





## 编者的话

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美国从其诞生至今仅有两百多年的历史，但它的文学从殖民时期开始，经过了浪漫主义、超验主义、现实主义、自然主义和现代主义的发展，一直到第一次世界大战以后，异军突起，欣欣向荣。美国文学在其短暂的历史进程中迅速冲出了欧洲文学的樊篱而成长，涌现出了一大批诸如惠特曼、马克·吐温、海明威、福克纳、尤金·奥尼尔等享誉世界的伟大作家，也产生了许许多多题材广泛、风格迥异的文学精品，为世界文学的繁荣与发展起到了十分重要的作用。

美国文学是英语专业本科生的重要课程之一。2000年全国英语专业本科教学大纲中明确规定：“文学课的目的在于培养学生阅读、欣赏、理解英语文学原著的能力，掌握文学批评的基本知识和方法。通过阅读和分析英美文学作品，促进学生语言基本功和人文素质的提高，增强学生对西方文学及文化的了解。”《美国文学阅读与欣赏》是根据英语本科教学大纲的要求，结合当代的文学理论进行编写的本科生教材。这一教材已经在几年的课堂教学中试用。在具体试用中，我们运用了新的教学方法（如交际教学法），在美国文学课堂中进行实践，并取得了一定的成果。有些成果已经在有关学术刊物上发表。

《美国文学阅读与欣赏》这一教材在相关章节中对美国文学发展的各个历史时期的时代背景、哲学和文艺思潮、文学运动和主要作家做了较为详尽的介绍。对所选作家及其作品也做了具体的介绍。结合我们在美国文学课堂教学实践中得到的经验，我们对练习



项目做了精心的设计，包括检查学生对文本阅读理解程度的题目，培养学生对文本进行鉴赏的适合课堂上进行小组讨论的题目，以及锻炼学生用书面表达对文学作品的意见的写作练习。

本书由黄家修策划和设计，并担任主审。正式参加编写的人员有黄家修、刘岩、周静琼、杜寅寅、张欣和焦敏。其中第一章、第二章的时代背景部分和第一章中 Edwards 及其作品的介绍和练习题由黄家修编写，这两章的其他作家和所选作品的介绍及练习题由杜寅寅编写；第三章、第四章的时代背景部分由刘岩编家，这两章的其他作家和所选作品的介绍及练习题由焦敏编写；第五章的时代背景及其中四位作家（Carver, Jen, O'Connor, Walker）的介绍由周静琼编写，这一章的其余四位作家、全章作品的介绍以及练习题由张欣编写。黄家修审阅了第一、二章，刘岩审阅了第三、四章，周静琼审阅了第五章，黄家修对全书终审定稿。

本书已列入普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材。在编写过程中，编者参阅了有关的资料，在此向相关的书著作者及出版社表示感谢。在本书的编写过程中，广东外语外贸大学英语语言文化学院一直给予大力的支持，在此我们表示衷心的感谢。本书难免还有许多有待改进之处，敬请使用本书的各界人士不吝赐教，提出宝贵意见，以利今后修改。

编者

2007年3月2日



## 总 序

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我们所处的时代是一个多元共生的时代。国际政治的多极化走向、经济的全球化趋势、社会的信息化局面以及文化的多元化态势正快速改变着我们的生活。科学技术的高速发展以及新兴学科的不断涌现加剧了世界各国文化的交流、碰撞和合作。如何培养适应新时代发展和需要的人才，这是我们这一代教育工作者面临的新的课题和挑战。

高等学校外语专业教学指导委员会英语组于2000年3月修订的《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》明确规定了高等学校英语专业的培养目标：“高等学校英语专业培养具有扎实的英语语言基础和广博的文化知识并能熟练地运用英语在外事、教育、经贸、文化、科技、军事等部门从事翻译、教学、管理、研究等工作的复合型英语人才。”这样的描述为我们编写英语专业教材和组织英语专业教学提供了重要依据。我校在长期的外语教学和研究实践中践行“明德尚行，学贯中西”的校训，着力推进外语与专业的融合，致力于培养一专多能、“双高”（思想素质高、专业水平高）、“两强”（外语实践能力强、信息技术运用能力强）、具有国际视野和创新意识的国际通用型人才。这要求全面提高学生的综合素质，包括拓宽人文学科知识，加强人文素质，培养创新精神，提高独立分析问题和解决问题的能力。

正是在这样的环境和背景下，我院精心策划并组织骨干教师编写了这套《新视角英语文学与文化系列教材》。这套教材可以用于英语专业高年级文学、文化、翻译等专业课和选修课的教学，也可





以为其他专业的学生提供必要的相关专业知识。我们期待这套教材能够以培养学生人文素质为根本原则，以加强学生人文修养、增强学生创新能力为目标，帮助学生批判地吸收世界文化精髓并弘扬中国优秀文化传统。

这套教材的策划和出版得到武汉大学出版社的积极推动和热情支持，没有他们的努力就不会有这套教材的问世。我院教师把多年教学经验积淀成书，每一本教材都凝结着他们的智慧和心血。还有我院一批渴求知识的学生，是他们的勤学好问让我们看到了工作的价值，也正是在教学相长的过程中我们的教材得到了不断的完善。在这套教材即将面世之际，让我们对所有参与教材编写和出版的人士表示衷心的感谢和敬意！也请同行专家对教材的缺憾不吝赐教。

广东外语外贸大学英语语言文化学院 刘岩博士

2006年4月于白云山校区



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# *Chapter One*    **Early American Literature**

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(1620–1820)

## Early Colonial American Literature

Christopher Columbus discovered the American Continent in 1492, but the United States became an independent country in 1776, nearly three centuries later.

The development of colonial America into the United States was recorded by explorers and colonizers from Europe in a literature that began as accounts of exploration and colonization. They wrote of what they saw and what they felt in the New World, and thereby they created a literature that was amazingly rich.

However, the early settlers thought of themselves as Europeans instead of Americans. They observed European customs and habits, and remained European in their ways of thinking and writing. So much of their literature is not uniquely American. It is not really literature either because much of it told people how to do things and was written in the forms of letter, diary and report. Among the early colonial American writers, there were some descriptive writers who contributed significantly to the development of the nation's literature, including **Captain John Smith** (1580–1631) and

**William Bradford** (1500-1657).

Captain John Smith was among the members of a small band of settlers who founded the first permanent English settlement in North America—Jamestown, Virginia in 1607. He was born in England of poor farmers, and ran away as a youth to become a merchant soldier. When the Jamestown settlers faced immense difficulties, Smith became their leader, and saved their colony from ruin. He forced the settlers to build defense, plant crops, and trade with the Indians. He started Jamestown on its way to survival. In 1609, he returned to England, and five years later, he was sent back to America by merchant investors to search for gold, collect furs and kill whales for oil. After the voyage, he returned to the Old World, where he spent most of his remaining years writing and rewriting his histories and reports.

His first published work was a letter he had sent from Virginia to a friend in England, where it was printed in 1608 as *A True Relation of Occurrences and Accidents in Virginia*. This account of exploration has been described as the first distinctive American literature to be written in English. In 1616 he published *A Description of New England*. In 1624 he published his most important work *The General History of Virginia*.

“Strongly shaped by a New World consciousness, Smith’s descriptions of America were filled with themes, myths, images, scenes, characters, and events that were a foundation for the nation’s literature. He portrayed English North America as a land of endless bounty, a land of nourishment and redemption.”<sup>①</sup> This

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① George McMichael, et. , ed. *Anthology of American Literature*. New York: McMillan Publishing Co. , Inc. , and London: Collier Macmillan Publishers. 1980, p. 2.





confirmed the European dream of America as an earthly paradise. “His delectable vision helped lure many English settlers to America, among them the Pilgrims and Puritans who saw themselves as new saints with a spiritual mission to flee the Old World and create a New Israel, a New Promised Land, in the America that John Smith had described.”<sup>①</sup>

William Bradford was one of the Pilgrims on the ship “Mayflower”, which sailed to America in 1620. They landed at Cape Cod and founded the Plymouth Colony. Bradford was chosen as the governor many times, serving almost continuously from 1621 to 1656. But all through his life, he remained a humble man who sought neither personal glory nor riches. Instead, he held fast to his faith in the divine mission of the Pilgrims. His life is an epitome of determination and self-sacrifice that are characteristic of his people.

He began writing his history of the Pilgrims in 1630, which was published posthumously as *Of Plymouth Plantation*, a book that has been regarded as one of the great works of colonial America.

## Literature of Puritan New England

The Plymouth Colony was the oldest, but remained one of the poorest of the New England colonies. In 1691 it was absorbed by the large and prosperous Massachusetts Bay Colony centered at Boston.

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<sup>①</sup> George McMichael, et. , ed. *Anthology of American Literature*. New York: McMillan Publishing Co. , Inc. , and London: Collier Macmillan Publishers. 1980, p. 2.



The Massachusetts Bay Puritans were a group of serious religious people who advocated strict religious and moral principles. They believed that the priests and bishops of the Church of England had too much power and too little respect for the teachings of *the Bible* which, they regarded as the revealed word of God. They believed that people should take *the Bible* as their guide to all aspects of life, the Church of England should be purified of its errors, and church worship should be restored to the pure and unspotted condition of its earlier days. “For their ceaseless efforts to ‘purify’ the English Church, to purge it of corruption, they earned the name ‘Puritans’.”<sup>①</sup>

The Puritans adhered to their basic religious beliefs, which had been strongly shaped by the teachings of **Martin Luther** (1483-1546) and **John Calvin** (1509-1564). They agreed with Martin Luther who asserted that priests and bishops should not be regarded as a privileged class that had the right to impose their law upon the Christians, and all true believers were equally divine. “From Calvin’s great work, *The Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536-1559), the New England colonists derived their basic theological doctrines: of total depravity, that because of the original sin of Adam and Eve, all mankind was born ‘corrupt and prone to evil’; of limited atonement, that Jesus’ sacrifice had earned God’s forgiveness, or grace, only for the elect, a limited few; of irresistible grace, that salvation was ordained by God, and one could neither win nor lose salvation by his own acts; of predestination, that God had predestined all events and selected all those who would be

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<sup>①</sup> George McMichael, et. , ed. *Anthology of American Literature*. New York: McMillan Publishing Co. , Inc. , and London: Collier Macmillan Publishers. 1980, p. 5.



saved in heaven, and all those who would be lost in hell.”<sup>①</sup> These doctrines, which may appear harsh, were received with joy and comfort by the Puritans.

The Puritans set an example to the Christian world with their absolute dedication to religious principles. They developed a tradition of preaching and sermon. Sermons were by far the most popular literature of the time and the dominant literary form for the major writers of New England although sermons were more like lengthy exercises in logic than works of literary arts.

The Massachusetts Bay colonists were devoted to sermons and Bible study, and therefore they placed great emphasis on education. As a result, their colony soon became the educational and cultural center of the English colonies in North America. They founded the first American college, Harvard, at Cambridge in 1636, established the first colonial press also at Cambridge in 1638, and published the first colonial newspaper in Boston in 1690.

In the Puritan period, many of the people who were writing were politically and religiously powerful. This group that ruled was called theocracy. Among them was a minister, **John Cotton** (1584-1652), who joined the Massachusetts Bay Colony and became a religious leader. He wrote many works on the church, and some of them were very influential. *The Keyes of the Kingdom of Heaven* (1644) became the standard congregational guide in New England. Cotton and his group preached for the Puritan church authority.

Toward the middle of the 17th century, there emerged another group of writers who were more sectarian and pragmatic. Then came the Puritan controversy between the two writers, John Cotton and **Roger Williams** (1603-1683). Cotton's autocratic views on

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<sup>①</sup> Ibid., p. 5.