

新世纪高等院校英语专业本科生系列教材(修订版) 总主编 戴炜栋

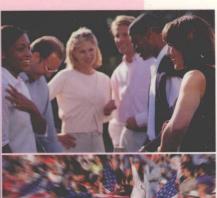
美国文化与社会

American Culture and Society

(第二版)

王恩铭 编







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总 序

我国英语专业本科教学与学科建设,伴随着我国改革开放的步伐,得到了长足的发展和提升。回顾这 30 多年英语专业教学改革和发展的历程,无论是英语专业教学大纲的制订、颁布、实施和修订,还是四、八级考试的开发与推行,以及多项英语教学改革项目的开拓,无不是围绕英语专业的学科建设和人才培养而进行的,正如《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》提出的英语专业的培养目标,即培养"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。"为促进英语专业本科建设的发展和教学质量的提高,外语专业教学指导委员会还实施了"新世纪教育质量改革工程",包括推行"十五"、"十一五"国家级教材规划和外语专业国家精品课程评审,从各个教学环节加强对外语教学质量的宏观监控,从而确保为我国的经济建设输送大量的优秀人才。

跨入新世纪,英语专业的建设面临新的形势和任务:经济全球化、科技一体化、文化多元化、信息网络化的发展趋势加快,世界各国之间的竞争日趋激烈,这对我国英语专业本科教学理念和培养目标提出了新的挑战;大学英语教学改革如火如荼;数字化、网络化等多媒体教学辅助手段在外语教学中广泛应用和不断发展;英语专业本科教育的改革和学科建设也呈现出多样化的趋势,翻译专业、商务英语专业相继诞生——这些变化和发展无疑对英语专业的学科定位、人才培养以及教材建设提出了新的、更高的要求。

上海外语教育出版社(简称外教社)在新世纪之初约请了全国 30 余所著名高校百余位英语教育专家,对面向新世纪的英语专业本科生教材建设进行了深入、全面、广泛和具有前瞻性的研讨,成功地推出了理念新颖、特色明显、体系完备的"新世纪高等院校英语专业本科生系列教材",并被列入"十五"国家级规划教材,以其前瞻性、先进性和创新性等特点受到全国众多使用院校的广泛好评。

面对快速发展的英语专业本科教育,如何保证专业的教学质量,培养具有国际视野和创新能力的英语专业人才,是国家、社会、高校教师共同关注的问题,也是教材编撰者和教材出版者关心和重视的问题。

作为教学改革的一个重要组成部分,优质教材的编写和出版对学科建设的推动和人才培养的作用是有目共睹的。外教社为满足教学和学科发展的需要,与教材编写者们一起,力图全方位、大幅度修订并扩充原有的"新世纪高等院校英语专业本科生系列教材",以打造英语专业教材建设完整的学科体系。为此,外教社邀请了全国几十所知名高校40余位著名英语教育专家,根据英语专业学科发展的新趋势,围绕梳理现有课程、优化教材品种和结构、改进教学方法和手段、强化学生自主学习能力的培养、有效提高教学质量等问题开展了专题研究,并在教材编写与出版中予以体现。

修订后的教材仍保持原有的专业技能、专业知识、文化知识和相关专业知识四大板块,品种包括基础技能、语言学、文学、文化、人文科学、测试、教学法等,总数逾200种,几乎涵盖了当前我国高校英语专业所开设的全部课程,并充分考虑到我国英语教育的地区差异和不同院校英语专业的特点,提供更多的选择。教材编写深入浅出,内容反映了各个学科领域的最新研究成果;在编写宗旨上,除了帮助学生打下扎实的语言基本功外,着力培养学生分析问题、解决问题的能力,提高学生的思辨能力和人文、科学素养,培养健康向上的人生观,使学生真正成为我国新时代所需要的英语专门人才。

系列教材修订版编写委员会仍由我国英语界的知名专家学者组成,其中多数是在各个领域颇有建树的专家,不少是高等学校外语专业教学指导委员会的委员,总体上代表了中国英语教育的发展方向和水平。

系列教材完整的学科体系、先进的编写理念、权威的编者队伍,再次得到教育部的认可,荣列"普通高等教育'十一五'国家级规划教材"。我深信,这套教材一定会促进学生语言技能、专业知识、学科素养和创新能力的培养,填补现行教材某些空白,为培养高素质的英语专业人才奠定坚实的基础。

戴烯栋

教育部高校外语专业教学指导委员会主任委员 国务院学位委员会外语学科评议组组长





American Culture and Society, a textbook intended for juniors or seniors majoring in English in four-year colleges or universities in China, aims at expanding the vision of Chinese students in their acquisition of English language skills at college. Specifically speaking, it takes it as its goal to provide students with a broad picture of the cultural and social life in the United States.

Unlike many other survey textbooks on the United States published in China, American Culture and Society does not merely touch upon the most important aspects of the culture and society of the United States, it also offers a considerable amount of discussion about, and analysis of, the questions raised in each chapter. To this end, the textbook furnishes each topic with a historical dimension to help students achieve a balanced perspective on the social and cultural issues in the United States.

Thematic in format, American Culture and Society is composed of sixteen chapters altogether, covering a wide range of subjects from immigration to cultural values, from marriage and family to political institutions, and from religion to women and minority people. By piecing together virtually all the important parts of American life and culture in it, the textbook attempts to present to the readers a multi-dimentional image of the U. S. However, extensive as these topics are, each chapter is an entity in and of itself.

To facilitate the use of the textbook, it has provided new words and expressions as well as cultural notes for each chapter. Additionally, to assist students in their understanding of the complexity and diversity of American

culture and society, it has given essay questions for the subjects discussed in each chapter. While not all-embracing in coverage, these questions are designed, in part, to help students consolidate their understanding and, in part, to stimulate them to further explore the significance of the United States as a civilization.

In the process of preparing this textbook, I have accumulated enormous intellectual debts to numerous scholars in the field of American Studies. To list all of them here is impossible, but my gratitude certainly goes to all of them. The list of authors, together with their books, at the back of the textbook, serves as my acknowledgements of the sources from which the present textbook has partially derived. Needless to say, the responsibility for any mistake in the textbook, either in the form of quotations and paraphrases, or in the form of interpretations and analysis, rests squarely with me. With all this in mind, I sincerely invite all users of this textbook to offer me their suggestions, criticisms and comments on it, for future revision or otherwise.

Wang Enming
American Studies Center
Shanghai International Studies University



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Chapter 1

Learning Objectives

- Know the unique features of American geography
- Understand the relationships between geography and economic development
- Be aware of the four definable topographical regions of the country
- Have a basic idea of the face of the land
- Understand the way(s) geography has helped shape the growth of regional cultures in the U.S.

The love of place was the earliest pulling force that brought immigrants to the American shores. The settlers came from countries of their own where they had loved the familiar land, skies, rivers and hills. The American landscape in their eyes was strange, untidy and mysterious. The continent was wild, vast and grand with a luxuriance of plant and animal life that struck all the early explorers who brought with them "the eye of discovery." They liked the place and decided to stay and live there. Out of their extraordinary experiences with the new environment, they created a nation called the United States of America.

It has been said that America is a nation with an abundance of geography but a shortage of history. There is some truth in this statement. After all, it took less than 400 years for the national territory to expand from 865,000 square miles of the original 13 states, with a population of 3.9 million, to 3,549,000 square miles, with about 303.8 million people living in today's 50-state U. S. A. In fact, Americans took over the **bulk of** their **national domain** within the last century and a half. Even today, much of the United States remains only thinly populated and hardly tamed by civilization.

Every nation is, in part, a country and, in part, a people. The country of the United States is one of great opportunity and one of considerable challenge as well. Opportunity consists of the favorable position of America, its **spaciousness**, and the wealth of natural resources. Challenge lies in overcoming the physical barriers of **relief** and distance, and the **hazards** of flood, drought and frost. In the process of conquering the continent, Americans have reshaped the face of their land, leaving behind them a record of glorious achievements as well as dismal failures. Reversely, in their constant intimate encounters with that massive land, Americans themselves have been shaped and reshaped by the entirely new environment, molding and forging their national character in a unique fashion.

General Geographic Characteristics

The United States is situated in North America between Canada and Mexico, bordering both the North Atlantic Ocean and the North Pacific Ocean. The position of America has always been one of its chief

bulk of 大部分 national domain 国 家领土

spaciousness 宽广 relief 地形的高低 起伏 hazard 危险

1 15

asset 财富

the Appalachians 阿巴拉契亚 山脉

a retreat 与世隔离 之地 cross-roads 汇集地

latitude 纬度 warm-temperate 温热带的

chronic drought 长期性干旱 cool-temperate 寒温带

theocracy 神权 统治

tidewater 沿海低地,海滨地区

assets. Over 2,000 miles from Europe (or 3,000 miles from Britain) and 7,000 miles from Asia, it was long isolated from the conflicts of these troubled continents. It thus offered itself a haven for those who wished to seek a new life free of restrictions. Not surprisingly, many of the first settlers were Separatists, anxious to separate themselves from the established churches of Western Europe. However, as the settlers moved further away, striking inland across the Appalachians, they isolated themselves even more, enjoying a still greater chance to create a different life. In this sense, isolation helped America to work out a character of its own.

Yet, as the world grew less land-based and more ocean-centered, the position of America received fresh value. With improvements in transportation and communication, America ceased to be a retreat and instead became a cross-roads: a cross-roads between East and West, facing the two most densely-populated regions of the world in Western Europe and Eastern Asia. This shift has given the United States vast scope, for instead of being gulfs of separation, the Atlantic and the Pacific have become the lifelines of a new world in which Americans have made their country the focus of the world connections.

Additionally, the geographical position has favored Americans in placing their country in the middle of latitudes, for it is a warm-temperate land and only in northern Alaska is it under the permanent threat of frost. Moreover, as it faces two oceans, it is swept by humid and maritime airs and only in the extreme southwest does it experience chronic drought. No other country has such a favorable climatic disposition — comfortable, stimulating and productive. Take Russia and China for example. Two-thirds of Russia are in the cool-temperate and arctic zones, frustrated by frost, and a large part of China is so continental as to be away from rain-bearing winds, debarred by droughts.

Another advantage of the United States is the sheer size of the country, which is over 4,000 miles broad and less than 2,000 miles deep. From the very beginning, Americans were impressed by the spaciousness of their environment. This was seen by the way in which they often resolved their difficulties by founding new settlements and creating new territories and states. When the Massachusetts **theocracy** became unbearable, for example, people went out to establish their new sects in new colonies such as Rhode Island, New Hampshire, and Connecticut. Similarly, as the **tidewater** gentlemen of Virginia and the

Carolinas grew too oppressive, people did not hesitate to march to the mountains to set up more independent settlements of their own. This tradition of packing up and moving to the west continued all the way to 1890, when the Census Bureau of the United States declared that the whole continent had been settled.

What struck the early American colonists more than the size of their new environment was its richness, for so much of it could be used. The New England seas were thick with fish and a wealth of forest was found along the Atlantic coast and on the Appalachians. Even greater wealth lay in the Appalachian coal fields. The trans-Appalachians had a super-abundance of coal and oil, together with iron, copper, lead and zinc, and above all, of fertile productive soils. The Far West abounded with precious metals and with forested ranges going down to its irrigable basins. Indeed, so great was America's wealth that it was thought to be boundless and, consequently, it generated wasteful methods of production that were sadly to deplete the non-renewable resources of the land by the midtwentieth century. To combat waste, extensive conservation projects have been undertaken, and America is now one of the most conservation-minded nations in the world.

America's resources, though plentiful, have never been easy to develop. Barriers of distance and relief and certain difficulties in the climate have all had to be overcome before the rich rewards could be won. So, there has been a strong element of challenge in each part of America, evident from the beginning to the present day. New England fisheries are set in a storm-swept sea where storm-tracks from the interior are carried well out over the ocean. Besides, New England soils are singularly stony, made up, as they were, from heavily glaciated land. Virginia and the Carolinas have their "dismal swamps" to put up with: poor drainage and an all but tropical summer often meant fever of one kind or another in the past. And once the interior is reached, new hazards are there to be dealt with. A truly continental climate with strong heating in summer and intense chilling in winter brings July thunderstorms and blizzards. Before the advent of science and technology, the killing of crops by severe winter frosts was quite common, and when spring came and snow melted, dangerous floods often rolled down the rivers and brought widespread ruin. Further west, in the Great Plains and the Pacific basins, rainfall is often unreliable and drought frequently hits the area.

abound with 充满

deplete 耗尽…资源

storm-track 风暴 路径

glaciated land 冰 川地

continental climate 大陆性气候 blizzard 暴风雪 In brief, then, the United States is a land rich in opportunities and full of challenges. While the abundant opportunities it provides have drawn an endless flow of immigrants from around the world, the challenges it poses have eventually transformed the nation from a small and relatively young nation into a big and relatively mature superpower.

The Face of the Land

topographic 地形的 jagged 凹凸不平的

geologic 地质的

tributary 支流

the Canadian Shield 加拿大地盾 the Gulf of Mexico 墨西哥湾 mountain ranges 山脉

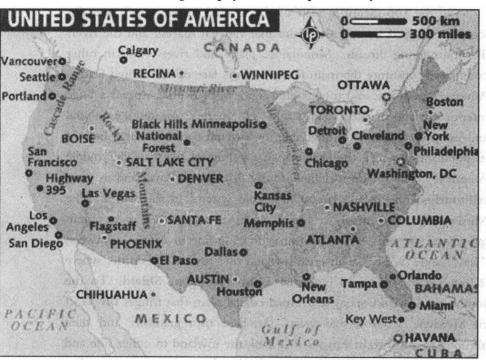
On the topographic map of the United States, the mountains look like jagged masses, the plains like vast flat spaces, and the rivers like meandering threads. Mountains, plains and rivers, like in other countries, constitute the main features of the face of the United States. America's geologic and topographic framework is built around a huge interior lowland that has vielded some of America's greatest agricultural and mineral wealth. This huge interior lowland contains a large bulk of its population, and is the heart of what politicians like to call "middle America." The region is drained by the Mississippi River and its great tributaries, one of the largest navigable systems in the world. The Mississippi is not merely a useful river; it also serves as a potent geographic symbol — the traditional dividing line in America between "East" and "West." This great lowland rises toward the north, where it butts against the wild bulwark of the Canadian Shield. To the south, the lowland opens to a broad coastal plain that fringes the Gulf of Mexico. To east and west, the land rises gradually and then abruptly to mountain ranges that flank the lowland to either side and separate it from the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans.

The mountain ranges differ substantially from each other. The Appalachians on the east stretch almost unbroken from Alabama to the Canadian border and beyond, running parallel to the east coast. They are old mountains (the highest elevation is less than 7,000 feet) with many coal-rich valleys between them, and are set back from the Atlantic by a broad belt of coastal lowland. While this coastal region contains no very remarkable scenery, not much in the way of mineral wealth, it was here that the American nation was planted and took root in the 17th century. The original 13 colonies were all located in this narrow belt, and almost half of America's history has been played out here. It was not until the American Revolution that significant numbers of American settlers began to move westward across the

Appalachians into the interior lowlands.

To the west of the interior basin lies the mighty system of mountains, the Rocky Mountains. The Rockies are often said to be "the backbone of the continent," and are considered young mountains: of the same age as the Alps in Europe, Himalayas in Asia, and the Andes in South America. Like these ranges, the Rockies are high, rough, and irregular. The western United States around the Rockies, unlike the east, has no coastal plain, and the mountains along the Pacific coast drop abruptly and often spectacularly into the sea. This

the Rocky Mountains 落基山脉 the Alps 阿尔卑斯山 the Andes 安第斯 山脉



● 美国地形图

western country is both complicated and varied, containing not only some of the highest mountains in North America, but also a vast expanse of intermountain basins, plateaus, and isolated ranges. It is a peculiar and wonderful place — a land of impressive scenery, considerable environmental variety, and great mineral wealth. Much of this western country was settled by adventurous folks in search of quick riches, when the "gold rush" swept across the United States from east to west in the mid-19th century. It was also settled by people who sought freedom from the conventions and traditions of the crowded, long-settled east, when industrialization both opened up new opportunities in the West and made means of transport available for

picturesque scenery 美丽如画的景色 people to migrate there. Its **picturesque scenery** and thrilling history have captured the imagination of American artists for a long time, who, for whatever reasons, have painted the American West in bright, uncomplicated colors.

In sum, as far as geography is concerned, there are four definable topographic regions in the United States. Viewed from east to west in the order that European settlers found and took over them, they are (1) the Atlantic and Gulf Coastal Plain; (2) the Appalachians and their foothills; (3) the Interior Lowlands; and (4) the Cordillera, a Spanish word referring to all the high rough country of the western third of the United States, which includes both the main mountains and a variety of intermountain valleys, basins, and plateaus.

The Regional Geography of the United States

A country as diverse and as large as the United States was almost bound to evolve different conditions of life, or traditions of living, in different areas. The contrast between New England and Virginia early became apparent. The former, due to its shorter growing season, was less dependent on agriculture and more reliant on trade and industry, owing to its easier access to, and greater use of, water power. Additionally, as the area was largely settled by Puritans and Separatists, the middle-class democracy assumed dominant position early on. The latter, in contrast, has a much warmer and more productive climate and soil, and therefore from its inception, it placed great emphasis on agriculture, particularly on commercial and industrial crops. Because of the enormous importance people attached to the land, landed gentry class there enjoyed prestigious position and, for a long time, Virginia practiced the rule of squirearchy. It is quite obvious, then, that factors of the natural environment, combined with different economic interests and social backgrounds, can produce a very different geography. It is in this sense that special conditions in other areas also influenced the development of their own regions, and distinct regions, as time went by, eventually emerged within the United States.

squirearchy 乡绅 阶层

Of course, regions do not remain static; they change with time and technological progress. With the onrush of industrial revolution, regions in the United States have witnessed great changes over the past two centuries. They are less and less the direct result of nature and more and more the work of man. Consequently, the regional