

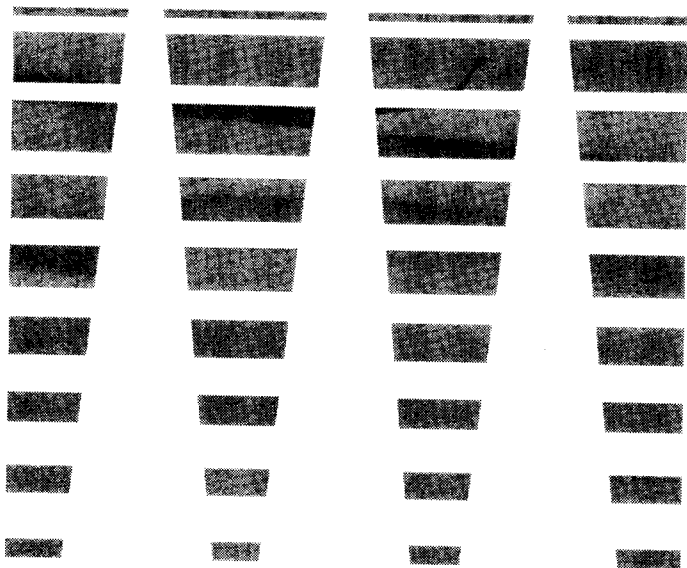
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A CRITICAL APPRECIATION OF
AMERICAN SHORT STORIES

美国 短篇小说赏析

主编 范革新

新 华 出 版 社



美国短篇小说赏析

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前 言

《美国短篇小说赏析》是一部可读性很强的书，覆盖了美国短篇小说发展的每个主要阶段，凸显了每位文学巨匠的代表作品，融学术性、知识性和趣味性为一体。它不仅仅是一部供英语专业本科高年级学生阅读的好教材，而且还是一面具有历史元素的镜子。

《美国短篇小说赏析》的篇幅有限，但选材颇有代表性，从浪漫主义的欧文到有浓重清教色彩的霍桑，从美国西部的马克·吐温到西班牙内战时期的海明威，从自然主义的杰克·伦敦到魔幻现实主义的辛格，从美国南部的福克纳又到美国南部的韦尔蒂。此外，这些文学作品上触摸到了上帝，下又碰见魔鬼，在中间不断地与人类的良心较量，同时又让我们了解我们自己和生活的真谛。

《美国短篇小说赏析》共选收 15 篇短篇小说，其编写体例如下：

1. 每篇小说前均有英文的作者简介，以帮助读者了解作家及其所生活的时代。
2. 在小说部分，每页的右边都有中文的生词解释，以帮助读者更好地阅读与欣赏。
3. 每篇小说后面都有中文的评析，以增加读者理解的深度与广度。



《美国短篇小说赏析》经过我们 5 位同仁近一年多的努力，即将付梓。在此，我们对北京师范大学刘象愚教授与周流溪教授的学术信任表示衷心的感谢。

编 者

2006 年 1 月于沈阳师范大学



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Rip Van Winkle

By Washington Irving

作者简介

Washington Irving (1783—1859) was born in the right time in history and the right place in the world. The year of his birth was the year when England officially recognized the new nation, and the victory of the War of American Independence brought American people a new freedom. And yet, this hard-won freedom became a new anxiety gradually, for it was very hard for the first generation of Americans to find their own identity as Americans immediately after the war. They were lost, uncertain of what to do with the freedom.

So was Washington Irving. The absence of the cultural and literary identity and tradition was felt in the new country, creating a vacuum that Irving and his generation had to fill. But how in the country where few people could read and write and more people fought for land and political rights? And Washington Irving himself was not prepared or ready, as a historical mission, to find the national literary identity, even though he felt the tension between the New World and the Old World. Rather, he drifted into the national glory and the literary fatherhood by luck and chance and fate.

Irving was born in a wealthy family in 1783, the youngest of eight children. His father, William Irving, was a successful importer in New York City, whose money and love allowed Irving to live happily through life until he was 32 years old in 1815, when the first phase in his research for identity ended. During



those happy years, Irving attended Columbia College, as his two brothers William and Peter did, and was eventually groomed as a lawyer.

In 1807, Washington Irving joined a literary club known as the “lads of Killken-y”, and wrote, with two club members, *Salmagundi* 《杂拌》, a collection of satirical essays on the social changes in New York. While torn between being a lawyer and becoming a writer, Irving fell madly in love with Matilda Hoffman, the daughter of his employer, Judge Josiah Hoffman. But before he was able to finish *History of New York* 《纽约外史》, a most successful book ever written by Irving, Matilda died of tuberculosis. The birth of a great book and the death of his fiancée completely changed Irving’s life, ushering him into the second phase of his life and search for identity.

In May of 1815, Washington Irving set sail for Europe, and lived there for almost 17 years. One of the reasons for Irving to go to the Old World was that the War of 1812 lowered the US demand for goods from England, and caused the family import business in England to fail. The year 1818 witnessed the bankruptcy of the family business, which devastated Irving. For the first time in his life, Irving began to write in earnest to make a living. *The Sketch Book of Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.* 《见闻札记》(1819-1820) was a huge commercial and literary success, though only 4 of the 34 sketches in the book are about America. And two of them are considered as American classics, which have been translated into every known language and read world wide today. They are *Rip Van Winkle* 《瑞普·凡·温克尔》 and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* 《睡谷的传说》.

The success of *The Sketch Book* brought Irving, the first professional writer in America, an international reputation, though his following two books “by Geoffrey Crayon, Gent.” *Bracebridge Hall* 《布雷斯布里奇庄园》(1822) and *Tales of a Traveller* 《游子述异》(1824) were poorly received. The commercial and literary ups and downs cooled Irving’s zest for fiction and essays and he



began to write history and biography, which proved to be a right turn in his literary career. *The Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus* 《哥伦布传》 and *Life of George Washington* 《华盛顿传》 show us another talent of his.

The year 1832 brought him a new identity as a diplomat, for in September he was appointed as secretary at the American legation in London, where his friends there helped him a lot in negotiating trade and business agreements with England.

Irving was a good learner, a party-goer and a successful diplomat in the Old World, but he did not forget his native land. In 1835, he bought a house, which he called "Sunnyside" on the Hudson River north of New York City, where many and many years ago, good-natured Rip Van Winkle might have been spotted drinking with his Dutch friends.

Washington Irving, the first American man of letters, who pioneered the short story as genre and folklore as a source of literary creation, died of a heart attack after a long period of illness at Sunnyside, surrounded by his family: his brother Ebenezer and Ebenezer's five daughters on November 28, 1859, and was buried in the Sleepy Hollow Cemetery at the Old Dutch Church in Sleepy Hollow, New York on the eve of the American Civil War. His lifespan linked the two great wars that gave birth to the new nation, and his books bridged the two sides of the Atlantic Ocean. And for nearly one and half centuries, any one who knows English, reads him.



故事：瑞普·凡·温克尔

Rip Van Winkle

注释：

WHOEVER has made a voyage up the Hudson must remember the Kaatskill mountains. They are a dismembered branch of the great Appalachian family, and are seen away to the west of the river, swelling up to a noble height, and lording it over the surrounding country. Every change of season, every change of weather, indeed, every hour of the day, produces some change in the magical hues and shapes of these mountains, and they are regarded by all the good wives, far and near, as perfect barometers. When the weather is fair and settled, they are clothed in blue and purple, and print their bold outlines on the clear evening sky; but, sometimes, when the rest of the landscape is cloudless, they will gather a hood of gray vapors about their summits, which, in the last rays of the setting sun, will glow and light up like a crown of glory.

At the foot of these fair mountains, the voyager may have descried the light smoke curling up from a village, whose shingle-roofs gleam among the trees, just where the blue tints of the upland melt away into the fresh green of the nearer landscape. It is a little village, of great antiquity, having been founded by some of the Dutch colonists, in the early times of the province, just about the beginning of the government of the good Peter Stuyvesant, (may he rest in peace!) and there were some of the houses of the original

voyage 航行

dismembered

支解的；分割的

lord it over 高于

... 之上

magical 神秘的

barometer 晴雨表

settled 不变的

bold 粗的

vapor 水蒸气

crown 王冠

descried 看见

shingle-roof 木

瓦屋顶

antiquity 古老

Peter Stuyvesant

荷兰人，曾任曼



settlers standing within a few years, built of small yellow bricks brought from Holland, having latticed windows and gable fronts, surmounted with weather-cocks.

哈顿岛的总督
latticed 有格子的
weather-cock 风标

In that same village, and in one of these very houses (which, to tell the precise truth, was sadly time-worn and weather-beaten), there lived many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He was a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and accompanied him to the siege of Fort Christina. He inherited, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple good-natured man; he was, moreover, a kind neighbor, and an obedient hen-pecked husband. Indeed, to the latter circumstance might be owing that meekness of spirit which gained him such universal popularity; for those men are most apt to be obsequious and conciliating abroad, who are under the discipline of shrews at home. Their tempers, doubtless, are rendered pliant and malleable in the fiery furnace of domestic tribulation; and a certain lecture is worth all the sermons in the world for teaching the virtues of patience and long-suffering. A termagant wife may, therefore, in some respects, be considered a tolerable blessing; and if so, Rip Van Winkle was thrice blessed.

time-worn 被岁月所侵蚀的

descendant 后裔

chivalrous 有骑士品质的

martial 尚武的

hen-pecked 受妻子气的

obsequious 顺从的
conciliate 取悦
pliant 顺从的
tribulation 苦难
curtain lecture
枕边说教
termagant 泼妇的

Certain it is, that he was a great favorite among all the good wives of the village, who, as usual, with the amiable sex, took his part in all family squabbles; and never failed, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The

amiable sex 女性
squabble 争吵



children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he approached. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, taught them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, clambering on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him with impunity; and not a dog would bark at him throughout the neighborhood.

witch 女巫
dodge 躲藏
clamber 爬
with impunity
不受惩罚地

The great error in Rip's composition was an insuperable aversion to all kinds of profitable labor. It could not be from the want of assiduity or perseverance; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a Tartar's lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling-piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He would never refuse to assist a neighbor even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone-fences; the women of the village, too, used to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he found it impossible.

composition 脾性
aversion 厌烦
assiduity 勤奋;
刻苦
fowling-piece 鸟枪
dale 谷;沟
toil 辛苦
frolic 欢乐;嬉闹
errands 差事

In fact, he declared it was of no use to work on his farm; it was the most pestilent little piece of ground in the whole country; every thing about it went wrong, and would

pestilent 有害的;
致命的



go wrong, in spite of him. His fences were continually falling to pieces; his cow would either go astray, or get among the cabbages; weeds were sure to grow quicker in his fields than anywhere else; the rain always made a point of setting in just as he had some out-door work to do; so that though his patrimonial estate had dwindled away under his management, acre by acre, until there was little more left than a mere patch of Indian corn and potatoes, yet it was the worst conditioned farm in the neighborhood.

astray (牲畜) 走失; (人) 迷路

patrimonial 祖传的

dwindle 减少

His children, too, were as ragged and wild as if they belonged to nobody. His son Rip, an urchin begotten in his own likeness, promised to inherit the habits, with the old clothes of his father. He was generally seen trooping like a colt at his mother's heels, equipped in a pair of his father's cast-off galligaskins, which he had much ado to hold up with one hand, as a fine lady does her train in bad weather.

urchin 顽童

inherit 继承

colt 马驹

cast-off 扔掉的

train 裙裾

mortal 凡人

disposition 性格

Rip Van Winkle, however, was one of those happy mortals, of foolish, well-oiled dispositions, who take the world easy, eat white bread or brown, whichever can be got with least thought or trouble, and would rather starve on a penny than work for a pound. If left to himself, he would have whistled life away in perfect contentment; but his wife kept continually dinning in his ears about his idleness, his carelessness, and the ruin he was bringing on his family. Morning, noon, and night, her tongue was incessantly going, and every thing he said or did was sure to produce a torrent of household eloquence. Rip had but one way of replying to all lectures of the kind, and that, by frequent use, had grown into a habit. He shrugged his shoulders, shook his

contentment 满足

din 反复告诉

ruin 毁灭

torrent 急流

eloquence 雄辩



head, cast up his eyes, but said nothing. This, however, always provoked a fresh volley from his wife so that he was fain to draw off his forces, and take to the outside of the house, the only side which, in truth, belongs to a hen-pecked husband.

Rip's sole domestic adherent was his dog Wolf, who was as much hen-pecked as his master; for Dame Van Winkle regarded them as companions in idleness, and even looked upon Wolf with an evil eye, as the cause of his master's going so often astray. True it is, in all points of spirit befitting an honorable dog, he was as courageous an animal as ever scoured the woods—but what courage can withstand the ever-during and all-besetting terrors of a woman's tongue? The moment Wolf entered the house his crest fell, his tail drooped to the ground, or curled between his legs, he sneaked about with a gallows air, casting many a sidelong glance at Dame Van Winkle, and at the least flourish of a broomstick or ladle, he would fly to the door with yelping precipitation.

Times grew worse and worse with Rip Van Winkle as years of matrimony rolled on; a tart temper never mellows with age, and a sharp tongue is the only edged tool that grows keener with constant use. For a long while he used to console himself, when driven from home, by frequenting a kind of perpetual club of the sages, philosophers, and other idle personages of the village; which held its sessions on a bench before a small inn, designated by a rubicund portrait of His Majesty George the Third. Here they used to sit in the shade through a long lazy summer's day, talking

provoke 激起

fain 想望;渴望

domestic 家庭的

adherent 追随者

scour 搜索

crest 颈脊

curl 卷曲

gallows 绞刑架

flourish 挥舞

precipitation 猛冲

matrimony 婚姻

mellow 变得柔和

console 安慰

frequent 光顾

sage 哲人;长者

rubicund (脸色)

红润的