

# AMERICAN LITERATURE

## 精编美国文学教程

◎ 陈 许 陈庆生 主编



ZHEJIANG UNIVERSITY PRESS  
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# 序

今年夏初，杭州电子科技大学英美文学研究所所长陈许教授、外国语学院副院长高丙梁教授和英美文学教研室陈庆生副教授一行三人来河南高校学习考察，顺访我院，送来他们刚刚编写完成的《精编英国文学教程》和《精编美国文学教程》两书的书稿，恳请我在付梓之前协助审读。我早先知道该院开设的《英美文学导论》是一门广受同行赞誉、深受学生欢迎的课程，2007年被浙江省教育厅评为浙江省普通高校精品课程。因此，我想这是他们给我的一个学习的好机会，让我享受“先睹为快”的幸事，欣然同意。

于是，我利用暑假较仔细地翻阅了这套教材。这次阅读不仅使我重温了英美文学，同时也勾起了我对英美文学教学的种种回忆与遐想。

英美文学教学，特别是英国文学教学在我国有着悠久的历史。根据史料记载，鸦片战争之后，“洋务运动”的兴起和清廷外交事务的加重，迫切需要培养外语人才，从而大大推动了我国外语教育事业的发展。外语开始作为一门独立的学科列入各级学校的教学计划。专门培训外语人才的学校相继成立。1862年创立的京师同文馆首先设立英文馆，尔后又开设法文馆、俄文馆、日文馆等。上海、广州也分别于1883年和1884年成立了类似的外语学校。1898年我国第一所国立的综合性大学——京师大学堂成立，也就是北京大学的前身。1901年同文馆并入该校，改名为京师大学堂译学馆，相当于今日综合性大学中的外语院系，揭开了我国高校外语教育新的一页。英语是该馆的主要语种。

1911年孙中山先生领导的辛亥革命推翻了封建帝制，宣告了中华民国的诞生，至1949年国民党政府退出中国大陆，民国时期也就此结束。在这个时期我国高等教育和外语教学都有一定的发展，据不完全统计，新中国成立前夕，我国共有205所高等学校，其中41所设有英语系或英语专业，专业教学都偏重文学，开设的课程多为英美小说、诗歌、散文、戏剧等，没有开设听、说、读、写、译等训练语言技能的课程，主要通过大量阅读文学作品和写作来提高外语水平和文化修养，深受当时英美高等学校英语系教学思想和方法的影响。

中华人民共和国成立初期,由于受当时国内外形势与国家政策的影响,俄语教学大发展,而英语和其他语种的教学任务大为压缩,教学力量严重削弱。1953年经过院系调整,我国高校只剩下9个英语教学点,学生人数锐减,大批英语教师改行教授俄文或其他专业,甚至转业做其他工作。就以我当时就读的北京大学西语系为例,英语专业本科四个年级学生人数仅一百多人,而师资力量十分雄厚,可谓群英荟萃,拥有像李赋宁、俞大綱、杨周翰、赵萝蕤、吴兴华、朱光潜等等一大批高水平的知名教授和学者,却苦于没有多少学生可教,没有多少课可开设,造成宝贵的人才资源的极大浪费。

1956年开始中央发觉了这种情况,出台了一系列政策纠正原先政策上的偏颇,英语及其他一些语种得到了较大的发展。到1957年年底全国高校设有英语专业的学校增至23所,招生数量也倍增,教学也逐步走入正规。可惜好景不长。全国范围内开展的“反右运动”、“大跃进运动”、“反右倾运动”、“四清运动”等连绵不绝的政治运动,“左”倾思潮泛滥,严重地阻碍了教学工作的健康发展。所谓批判资产阶级教育路线,批判“西方资本主义腐朽文化”,批判“文学路线”等使英语教学,特别是英美文学教学再次受到严重打击。1966年开始的“文化大革命”,极“左”路线发展到了登峰造极的地步,教育战线和其他战线一样,受到重创。外语教育首当其冲,灾难深重,教学工作基本处于瘫痪状态。这种状况持续了整整十年之久,直至“四人帮”被打倒,“文化大革命”宣告结束,外语教育重获新生。

党的十一届三中全会给高校外语教育带来了复苏的春风。1978年教育部根据当年邓小平同志主持召开的全国科学大会和全国教育工作会议的精神,举行了全国外语教育座谈会。会议对如何恢复和发展外语教育提出了明确的方针和具体的措施。从此开创了我国外语教育的新局面,正如原国务院副总理李岚清在为上海外语教育出版社2008年出版的《改革开放30年中国外语教育发展丛书》写的“序”中说的那样,“……可以说,改革开放30年,是中国外语教育事业大发展的30年。”外语教育的面貌同全国其他战线一样“发生了历史性的变化”。高校英语专业发展的势头更是迅猛。据不完全统计,目前我国英语教学点已经超过1000个,与1953年时硕果仅剩的9个相比,增长了百倍以上,其发展速度真可谓“史无前例”,“世界第一”。英语专业在校学生近60万。2004年英语专业招收新生102388人,排在所有专业的第一位。

在这里我想特别要提出的是,在各类高校英语专业的发展中,理工科院校的英语专业是发展最为迅速的。据我了解在目前1000多个英语专业本科教学点中,有三分之一设在理工类院校。他们利用本校学科的优势,在

教学改革和提高教学质量方面都创造了许多佳绩。杭州电子科技大学的外国语学院就是这样的一个范例。他们的办学历史和教学经验虽然不如一些“老牌”的学校悠久和丰富，但是通过他们的辛勤工作，创造出了令人钦佩的业绩。摆在我面前的这套英美文学教材就是一个明证。

由陈许和陈庆生两位教授主持编写的《精编英国文学教程》和《精编美国文学教程》是该院精品课程的有机组成部分，也是颇有特色的大学本科英语专业的文学教材。诚如他们在书的“前言”中总结归纳的那样，这套教材具有内容全面，脉络清晰；结构合理，重点突出；浅显易懂，易于自学；图文并茂，增添兴趣等鲜明特点。

这里我想强调指出的是，众所周知，英国文学具有较悠久的历史，产生了很多著名的作家，他们的作品浩如烟海，要从中选出最重要的、最具有代表性的作家和作品，又要适合我国高校，特别是理工类院校英语专业学生的实际水平和需要实是一件很不容易做好的工作。但是，这本教材的编写者们做了大量的准备工作，精心设计，精挑细拣，选择了 50 多位作家，90 多篇作品，个个有特色，篇篇是珠玑。他们为这些作家和作品写的介绍、评析和注释也是精心安排，精益求精，正如本书的书名《精编美国文学教程》表明的那样，“精”字当头，名副其实。

我相信这套教材的出版和使用，不仅会给浙江省高校的英美文学的教学有很大的帮助，而且对其他地区的各类院校的英美文学教学也会有所裨益。在此我也向广大爱好英美文学的读者推荐本书。

我在上面用了较多篇幅简要地回忆我国外语教育发展的历史，为的是要告诉人们我们当前外语教学的大好形势来之不易，应十分珍惜。杭州电子科技大学外国语学院同仁们做的工作正是为保持和发展这种局面作出的很好努力，也是对建国 60 周年的最好献礼，可喜可贺！可敬可佩！

是为序。

解放军外国语学院英语教授、博导 姚乃强

2009 年 8 月于洛阳

# 前 言

21 世纪的特点是政治多极化、经济全球化、文化多元化和信息社会化。在这个瞬息万变、飞速发展的新世纪里，我国的高等教育事业在前十年里加速腾飞，由此带来了英语专业的迅猛发展，使得英语语言文学专业的本科生和硕士生人数每年递增。作为英语专业教学的重要组成部分，英美文学教学所受到的关注程度还不尽如人意。我们编写这本《精编美国文学教程》，希望能够在提高学生的美国文学学习兴趣 and 鉴赏能力方面尽绵薄之力，给予一定的帮助。

美国文学是世界文学不可忽视的组成部分。美国文学的特点在于它的“新”。从 17 世纪初叶北美拓殖开始至今也不过约四个世纪的时间。美国人一向自诩为新世界的新人。他们不愿受传统的羁束，决意走出一条新路。这种求“新”的心理状态和精神境界明显地体现在美国文学机体的质地中。各个时期的美国作家都不满足于先辈留给自己的遗产，而是努力以其独特的方式在文学园地内作出探索与尝试，竭尽全力以新成就和新发现丰富和改进它。于是，殖民时代作家，民族主义和浪漫主义作家，现实主义和自然主义作家，现代主义和后现代主义作家在不到三百年的时间里，使文学创作代代除旧布新，涌现出许多内容丰富、风格多样、具有旺盛生命力的作品。这些作品不仅为美国人民提供着精神力量，而且被世界人民传诵和喜爱。

《精编美国文学教程》是杭州电子科技大学“英美文学导论”校级与省级精品课程建设的重要组成部分。在多年的课程建设中，课程组所有成员认真备课，精心制作出内容丰富、生动形象的教学课件，搜集了大量的教学资料，如美国文学经典影片、文化背景等视频图像，并不断总结、积累和交流教学经验，这些都为本教材的编写打下了良好的基础。它的编写原则充分体现了本学科先进的教学思想，编写过程中紧紧围绕英语人才培养的目标和思路，力求层次分明、条理清晰、章节安排合理，既突出重点、难点，又强调对本课程基础知识的全面理解和掌握。与当前市场上已有的各种版本的教材相比，本教材具有以下主要特色：

1. 内容全面，脉络清晰。全书按照美国文学发展的五个阶段分为五个部分，即：殖民时期与早期美国文学、民族主义与浪漫主义年代、现实主义与自然主义年代、现代主义的诞生、现代主义与后现代主义年代。本书涉及了 31 位作家及其代表作品 37 篇。其中关注当代少数族裔作家及其作品。学生通过课堂学习和课外自

学可以对美国文学有一个比较清晰的认识和理解。

2. 结构合理, 重点突出。本书每章由三个部分组成: 第一部分内容介绍不同时期的历史、重大事件等相关背景知识; 第二部分内容包括文学综述、文学史实、文学流派、重要作家简介等知识; 第三部分内容为主要作家(附照片)的生平和主要作品介绍、作品简介和赏析、作品选读、作品注释和思考题。各部分侧重点不同, 但相互关联、相互补充, 从不同角度帮助学生, 使他们对美国文学有一个全面而深刻地了解和把握。

3. 浅显易懂, 易于自学。我们针对中国学生英语水平的状况, 以及他们的需求和学习特点, 在编写本书时力求文字简洁易懂、语言浅显流畅、论述深入浅出。并在每篇作品后附有较为详细的注释, 以便降低学生的学习难度, 提高他们的阅读速度和学习效率。

4. 图文并茂, 增添兴趣。我国以前出版的美国文学教材, 大多数没有提供图片资料, 实为美中不足。针对青年学生的兴趣特点, 我们为每一位作家配备了相关的图片, 并附以文字说明, 使得教材生动鲜活, 有吸引力, 也有助于学生更好地了解作家, 理解作品的内涵。

5. 资料详实, 观点新颖。本书在编写过程中力求观点客观全面, 同时注意吸收多年来国内外有关美国文学的研究成果, 努力做到资料详实、评价客观、分析深刻、观点新颖, 使之更好地服务于我国高等院校英语专业的教师和学生, 以及勤奋好学的英语爱好者。

参加本教材编写工作的有陈许、陈庆生、王祖友、陈怡、许焕荣、敬南菲、周小嫻、钟京霞、陈圣、张婷婷和田智文等, 他们在选材、录入、注释、校对、搜集图片等方面做了大量的工作。全书的构思设计和选材安排都由主编负责。

在这本《精编美国文学教程》即将付梓之际, 我们要衷心感谢解放军外国语学院资深望重的姚乃强教授, 他对我们编辑本教材给予了充分的肯定, 并在百忙之中为本教材作序; 我们还要衷心感谢浙江省教育厅、杭州电子科技大学及其教务处和外国语学院领导对本教材编写的大力支持和资助; 我们也要衷心感谢浙江大学出版社的编辑, 他们为本教材的出版做了大量辛勤的工作。

最后, 由于水平所限和成书仓促, 疏漏和谬误之处在所难免, 敬请专家、学者和读者匡正, 以便今后改进。

陈庆生 陈 许

2009年8月于杭州电子科技大学



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# **Part One Colonial Period and Early American Literature (1582—1789)**

## **Introduction**

### **I. Historical Background**

America has always been a land of beginnings. After Europeans “discovered” America in the fifteenth century, the mysterious New World became for many people a genuine hope of a new life, an escape from poverty and persecution, and a chance to start again. We can say that, as a nation, America begins with that hope. When, however, does American literature begin?

American literature begins with American experience. The first literature inspired by the newfound land was strictly utilitarian: what did the country look like, who lived there, what treasures were there, and what were the prospects for trade and settlement? Published in Europe, these travel chronicles in the form of letters, journals, and narratives served as guides for the colonists who followed. In the fifty years after Columbus’ initial voyage in 1492, the Spanish had ringed the Gulf of Mexico, pushed into the Southwest, and advanced to the Pacific Coast. The French established a sphere of influence in the north and along the inland waterways to the west. In the early seventeenth century, the English began colonizing along the eastern coastal plain bordered to the west by the Alleghenies.

The first permanent colony at Jamestown in Virginia in 1607 was founded for profit. Raw materials and crops, particularly tobacco, were exchanged for manufactured goods

in England. This mercantile policy fostered the growth in the southern colonies of a plantation system under which a small number of privileged landowners depended upon slave labor. Anglican, agrarian, and royalist, the southern colonists differed markedly from those who settled in New England. The Pilgrims who established their colony at Plymouth in 1620 were a nonconformist, separatist Protestant sect fleeing religious persecution in England and determined to create a better society in America. Theirs would be the first American settlement based on a social contract, outlined in the Mayflower Compact, establishing a community of believers committed to their mutual welfare. The Puritans, who wanted to reform rather than separate from the Church of England, followed in 1630, absorbing the initial Plymouth settlement into the Massachusetts Bay Company, centered in Boston, the city they founded.

As the word itself hints, Puritans wanted to make pure their religious beliefs and practices. The Puritan was a “would-be purifier”. The word was coined by the opponents of the group and was applied to them in scorn; it was intended to ridicule them as persons who thought themselves holier or better than others.

The Puritans wished to restore simplicity to church services and the authority of the Bible to theology. They felt that the Church of England was too close to the Church of Rome in doctrine, form of worship, and organization of authority. Another point of controversy was that the Church of England was the established church, that is, the official church of the state. The most extreme Puritans, among them the Plymouth Plantation group, felt the influences of politics and the court had led to corruption within the church. These Puritans were “Separatists”—that is, they wished to break free from the Church of England. The Massachusetts Bay group, on the other hand, wished to reform the church but remain a part of it. Yet once they were settled in this land, they too moved gradually toward complete separation.

The Puritan definition of good writing was that which brought home a full awareness of the importance of worshipping God and of the spiritual dangers that the soul faced on Earth. Puritan style varied enormously—from complex metaphysical poetry to homely journals and crushingly pedantic religious history. Whatever the style or genre, certain themes remained constant. Life was seen as a test; failure led to eternal damnation and hellfire, and success to heavenly bliss. This world was an arena of constant battle between the forces of God and the forces of Satan, a formidable enemy with many disguises. Many Puritans excitedly awaited the millennium, when Jesus would return to earth, end human misery, and inaugurate 1,000 years of peace and prosperity.

Scholars have long pointed out the link between Puritanism and capitalism: both rest

on ambition, hard work, and an intense striving for success. Although individual Puritans could not know, in strict theological terms, whether they were “saved” and among the elect who would go to heaven, Puritans tended to feel that earthly success was a sign of election. Wealth and status were sought not only for themselves, but also as welcome reassurances of spiritual health and promises of eternal life.

Moreover, the concept of stewardship encouraged success. The Puritans interpreted all things and events as symbols with deep spiritual meaning, and felt that in advancing their own profit and their community’s well being, they were also furthering God’s plans. They did not draw lines of distinction between the secular and religious spheres: All of life was an expression of the divine will—a belief that later resurfaces in Transcendentalism.

## II. Literary Review

Given the practical difficulties of surviving in a wilderness, the early American colonists had little time to produce works of literature or to encourage their creation. What was written and published in the seventeenth century was almost exclusively religious or utilitarian in nature, with little distinction between the two. Poetry in America began with Anne Bradstreet’s domestic and devotional verses collected without her approval by her brother-in-law and published in London as *The Tenth Muse Lately Sprung Up in America* (1650). This was one of the first books of poetry ever published by a woman in English. The greatest seventeenth-century poet, however, was the Westfield, Massachusetts, clergyman Edward Taylor, whose intense and metaphysical verse written as part of his private devotions remained in manuscript until they were discovered in the Yale Library and published in 1939. Today Taylor is generally regarded as the greatest American poet before the nineteenth century.

By 1700 there were half a million European Americans in all the colonies. Boston was the largest city, with a population of seven thousand. The first half of the century would begin to show the loosening of the religious grip by the Puritans on New England and the emergence of Yankee secular society. Although Puritan control and influence were clearly waning, the period still produced some of Puritanism’s greatest literary achievements, most notably Cotton Mather’s epic ecclesiastical history of New England, *Magnalia Christi Americana* (1702), and the works of the last great Puritan theologian, Jonathan Edwards. His “Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God” (1741) is arguably the most famous sermon ever written by an American, and his theological work *A Careful and Strict Enquiry into the Prevailing Notions of Freedom of Will* (1754) is one of the

foundational documents of American philosophy, anticipating some of the main tenets of Transcendentalism. Yet the Puritans' spiritual interpretation of the world was challenged, as the century progressed, by a rational, scientific worldview advanced by Enlightenment thinkers such as John Locke, Jean Jacques Rousseau, and Voltaire. This conflict between idealism and pragmatism is a dominant theme in American thought. The exemplar of the evolving American character was unquestionably Benjamin Franklin. As the printer, Franklin played a key role in creating and producing the literature that captured the spirit of the times and moved the country toward independence. He produced the most popular almanac in America, *Poor Richard's Almanack* (1733—1758), and the first successful American magazine (the *General Magazine* in 1741). Self-educated, a scientist and inventor, Franklin perhaps more than anyone else during the period typified many of the adages he coined for his almanac: that with persistence and application virtually anything could be accomplished. Increasingly, he was asked to apply his many talents to nation building.

Beginning in the 1750s momentum began to bind the loose assembly of colonies into a confederation. Resentment over British trade and taxation policies gradually drove the colonists toward union and independence. The Stamp Act of 1764, the Boston Massacre of 1770, the Boston Tea Party of 1773, and the first shots fired at Lexington and Concord were the milestones leading to revolution. Letters, essays, pamphlets, and editorials framed the question whether Britain had the right to tax colonists without their consent. Independence, which for many was once inconceivable, began to sound inevitable, particularly as urged by Tom Paine in *Common Sense* (1776), Thomas Jefferson soon distilled this best-selling statement of the case for separation into one of the greatest political documents ever created, the Declaration of Independence.

Even before the Revolution, writers and particularly poets began to express what made American culture distinct. The first secular verses began to appear, celebrating American scenes, such as Richard Lewis' "A Journey from Petapsco to Annapolis, April 4, 1730," and American themes, such as Ebenezer Cook's satirical *The Sot Weed Factor* (1708). During the Revolution, poets contributed to the war effort in works such as Francis Hopkinson's "The Battle of the Keg" (1778) and John Trumbull's mock-epic attack on American Loyalists, *M'Fingal* (1775—1776 and 1782). Other poets commemorated American achievements and destiny in works such as Timothy Dwight's *Conquest of Canaan* (1785) and Joel Barlow's *The Vision of Columbus* (1787), his first version of an attempted American epic that would be expanded into *The Columbiad* in 1807. Philip Freneau was unquestionably the most accomplished poet of the Revolutionary period.

The author of the visionary *The Rising Glory of America* (1772), the bitingly satirical *General Gage's Confession* (1775), and the powerful *The British Prison Ship* (1781), based on his incarceration by the British, Freneau was an important transitional figure between the neoclassical style of most eighteenth-century verse written in America and what would follow: a uniquely American version of Romanticism.

As George Washington took the oath of office as the first president of the United States in 1789, Americans had won their independence, but the greater challenges of governing lay ahead. Similarly, American literature in its first two centuries had produced its initial, distinctive responses to phenomenon of America, but it had yet to achieve greatness.

## John Smith (1580—1631)

### Life and Major Works

Captain John Smith entered the arena of North American exploration at a time when the romantic age of buccaneers and sea dogs was giving way to the new, financially cautious policies of seventeenth-century colonization. Born into a moderately prosperous Lincolnshire family, Smith received a solid English grammar school education and, after a brief apprenticeship to a prominent merchant, enlisted at the age of fifteen to fight in the Netherlands. For ten years Smith pursued an adventurous military career that took him to Hungary, France, Germany, Spain, Austria, Rumania, Transylvania, Turkey, and North Africa. Toward the end of his life he wrote about these experiences in a brief autobiography, *The True Travels, Adventures, and Observations of Captain John Smith* (1630).



John Smith

Upon his return to England, Smith—always eager for new adventures—joined the expedition that founded the Jamestown colony in 1607. An iron-willed disciplinarian, he tried almost single-handedly to keep a quarrelsome, inept, and frequently dissatisfied party intact. In his reports to his superiors Smith deplored the lack of skilled labor, complaining that too many of the colonists were “gentlemen” who found “not English cities, nor such fair houses, nor at their own wishes any of their accustomed dainties, with feather beds and down pillows, taverns and alehouses in every breathing place... For the country was to them a misery, a ruin, a death, a hell.”



While at Jamestown, Smith conducted several short exploratory trips into the interior. During one of these journeys he was captured by Chesapeake Indians, who brought him to their king, Powhatan. As Smith many years later recounted the incident, he was condemned to death and then saved at the last minute by the timely intercession of Powhatan's favorite daughter, Pocahontas. Smith's failure to mention this dramatic episode in his first account of the Virginia expedition led a number of historians (beginning with Henry Adams) to consider the Pocahontas incident as mere fabricated afterthought. Yet, given Smith's promotional purposes at the time, it is quite possible that he wanted to omit any material that might scare off potential colonists. Whether true report or tall tale, Captain Smith's brief captivity and his hairbreadth escape has become one of the best-known passages in the literature of North American exploration.

Smith stayed on at Jamestown until the fall of 1609, when it was becoming clear that his efforts to bring effective management to the colony were futile. In 1614 he made another trip to North America, this time mapping out the coast of New England, a region he not only named but also fell so in love with that he ardently promoted its colonization in two important books, *A Description of New England* (1614) and *Advertisements for the Unexperienced Planters of New England, or Anywhere* (1631). The *Advertisements*, a list of "experienced memorandums" offering practical advice and theoretical suggestions on colonization, was addressed to the Puritan leaders who founded the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630. It was Smith's last work, and given the way he had been neglected during his final years, he would not have been surprised to find that most of his admonitions went unheeded.

## **Brief Introduction and Appreciation**

Filled with themes, myths, images, scenes, characters, and events, Smith's *Description of New England* describes the fishing, soils, inhabitants, fauna, flora, and climate of the coastal region from Cape Cod to Penobscot. This work is the first to apply the term "New England" to that portion of the North America from Long Island Sound to Newfoundland. At that time it held a few trading and fishing stations, and French traders from the north and Dutch from the south carried on commerce in furs with the natives. There was a prosperous fishery to the north, where cod were taken by ships from Portugal, Holland, and Spain. To Smith, these were evidence of the richness of commodities to be had, and signs of the strategic importance to England of securing permanent settlements in the region. Smith had departed Virginia in 1609 under a cloud of accusations and had quarreled with the leaders of the privately-held Virginia