

# America: Images and Realities

アメリカ：そのイメージと実像

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**S SEIBIDO**

# はじめに

## テキストの内容

本テキストは、基礎的な文法力・読解力を身に着けた学生諸君を対象にした英文精読用のリーディング・テキストです。中級～上級レベルと言っていいでしょう。じっくりと読み込むことによって、文法的なつながりを見極め、英文の構造的把握を心掛けてください。あらかじめ予習として辞書を引ながら最初の“読み”を済ませます。その後に教室において教員による文構造の分析・解説に耳を傾ける。さらにその構造をもう一度自らで確認していきます。このように英文の精読を続けていきます。そのプロセスを経ることで、英語の syntax (統語法、構成法) が理解され、英文読解力は着実に向上していきます。

著者のティルマント氏は長年日本の大学で教鞭をとってこられました。したがって日本の学生の英語学習環境やそのレベルをよく理解しています。氏の執筆のスタンスは、常に簡明な英語を旨としており、ときには英文作家として個性を出すようなライティング・スタイルも試みています。その意味で学生諸君にとってもチャレンジングなところもあるかと思います。[ Notes ] は本文理解に必要な語句 (辞書を見てすぐ分かるような字義的なものは省きました)、英文構造・文法的なつながりの説明や背景情報としての固有名詞、史実などの解説を施しています

内容に関してですが、そのタイトル *America: Images and Realities* からもお分かりのように、アメリカに対する“イメージ”とその“現実の姿”を解き明かそうとするものです。つまりアメリカの国家としての成り立ち (植民地移民から国家形成へ、アメリカ人としての各民族の在り方、連邦政府と州政府の対立、現代の移民の問題) から始まり、多文化社会の変貌 (孤立か融合かの問題)、個人と集団の相克 (マイノリティー vs. マジョリティー) などの問題、また現代文明の先端を走っているアメリカ社会が必然的に抱えざるを得ないもろもろの問題 (教育、健康保険制度、武器保持、同性婚、高齢化社会、経済的格差、差別と表現、多数決原理など)、そしてますます多民族化し、巨大化する一国家としてのアメリカの近未来の問題などを扱っています。

## テキストの構成

〔導入的イントロダクション〕

はじめに日本語で各章のトピックの核が記述されていますので、これを読んで本文で何が書かれているか、おおよその推測を立ててから英文テキストを読み進めてください。

### 〔KEY WORDS AND PHRASES〕

本文に出てくる重要語句を扱って Exercise を作成しています。語句の意味・概念を確かめる Exercise、同意語や定義を探す Exercise、語法を問う Exercise などが用意されています。

### 〔COMPREHENSION〕

本文の内容に関する Exercise で、「英問英答」や「True or False 問題」などの Exercise が用意されています。

### 〔SAY IT AGAIN〕および〔GUIDED SUMMARY〕

本文の内容についての理解を問う Exercise です。いずれも語句の選択問題として用意されています。

なお、本テキスト出版に当たり、株式会社成美堂の菅野英一氏には企画の段階から、原稿整理・編集に至るまでいろいろとお世話になりました。適切な助言により編者として大いに助けられました。ここに記してお礼申し上げます。

編 著 者

# Introduction



Most of you already have images of what you think America is like. Some of you envision its “frontier spirit” and rugged individualism. Some see it as a great nation with wonderful people. It’s big: big cars, wide streets, big houses.

Many people see America as the land of the free, where individual social, political and economic rights are protected. Americans enjoy freedoms that people in many countries can only dream about. Protection of human rights is afforded to all, citizens and non-citizens alike.

America is rich, a world leader, the only remaining super-power. It is a land of opportunity where even the most recent immigrants can still pursue the American dream.

For others, however, the image is a bit different. They see America as a rather dangerous place, with widespread gang, drug, and crime problems. Some point out America’s history of racism, bigotry, and other social ills. America might be rich, but lots of Americans are not; millions live in poverty, thousands are homeless. Americans also struggle with social health issues such as obesity and drug abuse, especially among the young.

All of these images are partly right. But images do not always reflect reality. Nor do they paint the complete picture. Movies and TV shows often contain a dose of realism, but we cannot assume that all of society is the way it is shown in the movies and on TV, or even in the news. After all, even “reality TV” is far from real.



In an effort to better understand America and American society, this book attempts to seek the reality behind many of the images people have of America by looking at some of the major issues in American society today. To see why these issues are important to Americans, we try to understand some of their ideas about individual rights, views on the role of government, the relationship between the individual and society, and their relationships

with each other. As we talk about the issues, we see the effects these ideas have on them, and how they can put a strain on a society as large and diverse as America.

As you read about and hopefully discuss the topics, perhaps some of your own images of America will change, or at least you will be better able to compare the images with the reality.

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# CHAPTER 1

## Which America? Which Americans?

「アメリカ人」といっても実に多様で、「アメリカとは、アメリカ人とは？」という質問ひとつとっても答えるのは容易ではない。アメリカは既に早くからその国内においては国際化が進み、民族・文化の多様性は当たり前。その意味で、世界がグローバル化する中であって、もろもろの社会問題も先取りする形で生まれている。未来社会を考えるための試金石、それがアメリカだ。



### KEY WORDS AND PHRASES

*Choose the best expression (or concept) from the list below to match each sentence.*

1. America has everything from mountains to deserts, swamps and plains. ( )
2. The various groups were scattered in many different directions. ( )
3. She followed her family history to find her roots. ( )
4. Her family had always gone to the shrine on New Year's Eve. ( )
5. After long thought, she was able to get to the very heart of the problem. ( )

(a) core (b) tradition (c) dispersion (d) trace (e) ranging from




## READING

 1 - 4

In attempting to understand America and American culture, we first need to realize that America is actually a “country of countries,” a “culture of cultures.” If we talk about a Japanese-style house, or a Japanese-style room, Japanese food, or traditional Japanese music or dress, it is fairly easy to get a picture of  
5 what we are talking about.

But what is typically American? The size of Japan is about 378-thousand sq. kilometers, or a little smaller than the state of California, and although local areas do enjoy local foods, festivals and traditions, there really is not much difference in culture, customs and lifestyles nationwide. America covers  
10 an area of about 9,385,000 sq. kilometers, with geography ranging from vast deserts and plains to the towering peaks of the Rocky Mountains, from the lush green of the northwest to the swamps of Florida and Louisiana. And many of these different areas have strikingly different cultures, customs and histories. If you flew from the city of New York to the city of Albuquerque, New Mexico,  
15 you might think you landed in a different country.

While about 98 percent of the Japanese population is ethnic Japanese, less than 70 percent of Americans are white with European background. More than 13 percent are black, and another 14 percent Hispanic. Over ten million are Asian. At least 10 percent were born in foreign countries, and another six percent  
20 have at least one non-American parent. And while some of these families have been in “the States” for several hundred years, others arrived very recently, bringing with them many of their own cultural values and ideas.  1 - 5

In addition, there is not always an even dispersion of the many ethnic or cultural groups in American society. Southern California and the southwest  
25 have large Hispanic populations — in many places they are the majority group. Spanish is widely spoken, Mexican culture is a part of the overall culture, and of course Mexican cuisine is common. Many places have Spanish names. Perhaps you know some of these: San Diego, Los Angeles, San Francisco, and Las Vegas are a few. Parts of the southwest, such as Arizona and New Mexico, still have

a strong Native American cultural influence as well.

New England, on the other hand, is the birthplace of America. As such, it has a long history of European tradition. Over 85 percent of the population is white with a strong cultural influence from their European roots. European names, or English variations of them, are the rule. Many of their celebrations, such as St. Patrick's Day, can be traced back to "the old country." This same kind of difference in demographic spread can be seen in other places as well. Many southern states have populations that are over 30 percent black, with a culture defined in many ways by their own unique history, while in the northwest over 80 percent of the population is white. Over 12 percent of the people in California are Asian.

And even within these ethnic groups are various sub-groups. Most Hispanics in the southwest trace their roots to Mexico, while the majority in New York are from Puerto Rico and other Caribbean countries, and most Hispanic communities in Florida, which make up about 20 percent of the population there, are from Cuba or South America. The majority of Asians in California trace their roots back to China, while those in Hawaii tend to be Japanese.

It is true that the white European Christian tradition has had by far the greatest influence on American society and culture but, as we have seen, this has certainly not been the only influence. Millions of Spanish Americans have large "fiestas" to celebrate the national holidays of Mexico. There are colorful Chinese New Year celebrations in New York, San Francisco, and elsewhere. Most American jazz and much of the basis of rock and roll, as well as rap music, come from the Black culture.



All of this diversity helps to make America a rather unique place. Most Americans are exposed to, and influenced by, a wide variety of cultures and ethnic differences. While people in many countries, such as Japan, have to decide what "international" means, lots of places in America *are* international.

But is this cultural, racial and ethnic diversity always a good thing? The answer to that question will depend on whom you ask. One thing is sure; it certainly has a tremendous influence on American culture and society, both

locally and nationwide, and is at the core of many of the social issues and problems that this book will talk about.

We can see the difficulty in defining American culture in the same way as we might think of Japanese, Italian or French culture. But realization of the diversity in American society will help you to understand the American people and their society much better.

#### NOTES

**get a picture of** ~ 「～のイメージを掴む, ～を理解する」 cf. **get the picture** 「理解する, のみ込む, 分かる」 **local** 「地元の, その土地の」 **ethnic Japanese** 「日本民族」 cf. **ethnic minorities** 「少数民族」 **another 14% Hispanic** 前の文章の流れを受けて、当然ここの Hispanic の前には **be** 動詞 **are** が省略されている。 **their own cultural values and ideas** 「彼ら自身の(故国の)文化的価値観、考え方」 **not always** ~ 「必ずしも～とは限らない」 部分否定の用法。 **on the other hand** 「他方では(また一方では), これに反して」 通例は、on (the) one hand . . . , on the other hand . . . 「一方では…、他方では…」 の形で使われる。 **As such** 「そういうものとして, そのために」 ~ **are the rule** 「～が通例である, ～が一般的である」 **St. Patrick's Day** 「聖パトリックの日」 3月17日には、アイルランドの守護聖人である St. Patrick を祝う。 **trace their roots to** ~ 「自分たちのルーツを～まで遡る」 **make up** ~ 「～を構成する」 **by far** 「はるかに, ずっと」 すぐあとにある the greatest との関係。最上級を強める。比較級を強める副詞は far とか much などが使われる。far (much) easier 「はるかに易しい」 “fiestas” 「(スペイン・ラテンアメリカの宗教上の)休日, 祝祭」 **are exposed to** ~ 「～に晒される」 **depend on** ~ 「～次第である」

#### COMPREHENSION

*Use the information from the text to answer the following questions in English.*

1. What do we first need to realize if we want to understand America?

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2. What percentage of Americans were born in foreign countries?

---

3. Where was the “birthplace” of America?

---

4. What are the main places that Hispanic Americans come from?

---

5. Which ethnic group has had the greatest influence on American society and culture?
- 

**SAY IT AGAIN**



*Choose the best answer or response, based on the material in the textbook.*

1. The United States is about \_\_\_\_\_ bigger than Japan.
  - a. 24 times
  - b. 18 times
  
2. Different parts of America have \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. pretty much the same cultures and traditions
  - b. very different cultures and traditions
  
3. The racial and ethnic mix is \_\_\_\_\_ throughout America.
  - a. not the same
  - b. pretty much the same
  
4. Most of the Asians in California originally came from \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. Japan
  - b. China
  
5. The cultural and ethnic diversity in America \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. has always been a positive thing for American society
  - b. can sometimes cause problems or issues in American society