

**National Taiwan University**  
**Graduate Institute of Foreign Languages and Literatures**  
**2019 PhD Program Admissions Examination**  
**Subject: American Literature (40%)**

Much of American literature can be construed as a dialogue, if not a contestation, between religious assurances and secular concerns. Puritanism, Transcendentalism, Naturalism, and Modernism all prompted literary works that are characteristically informed by their distinct spiritual persuasions, or the lack of them. Compare and contrast two American authors of your choice and discuss their varied positioning in relation to “the ways of God to men.” How does that positioning inform their works? In what ways have their positioning made their works markedly American? Use at least one text by each author to illustrate your points. Note that in addition to the content of your argument, the quality of your language will also be graded.