BEYOND CONCEPT

超越概念——高等院校英语专业系列教材

总主编 ◎ 何其莘 [美] 杨孝明

ENGLISH LITERATURE: A CONCISE COURSE

英国文学简明教程

主 编 ◎ 刁克利

中国人民大学出版社

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前言

一

文学学习有益且魅力无穷。文学可以让人领略极致的语言之美。因为大作家都是语言大师，大作家的作品代表了他们所处时代的语言的最高水准，也构成了一个民族的语言特色。我们在英语学习的过程中，学习到一定程度，通常会感到水平停步不前。这时，阅读英语文学名著，可以对英语产生新的认识，磨砺对语言的敏感，享受语言的乐趣。在文学作品中，能够体会到最精到的用词、最深刻的用意。

文学描写、刻画和触动的是最深刻、最微妙、最直接的人生。阅读过程中，或击节称赏，或低吟沉思，或设身处地，或推己知人，文学教我们体会生命的丰富，领悟物事的变化，探究思想之浩渺。文化天下，通过文学学习，可以了解一个国家的文化内涵、民族特性、思想根由，和人类世世代代的情感寄托与精神传承。

通过阅读、欣赏、理解和评析英语文学原著，掌握文学批评的基本知识和方法，可以促进我们语言能力和人文素养的提高，增强对英语文学及文化的理解。这是英语专业教学大纲的要求，也是本书的编写初衷。

二

文学课程习之有道。文学的发展受制于一定的社会、历史、文化等外在因素的影响，是一定社会背景的产物，同时也反映一个时代的特殊面貌。比如《贝奥武甫》与盎格鲁－撒克逊时代，《坎特伯雷故事集》和中世纪，威廉·莎士比亚戏剧与文艺复兴运动，浪漫主义诗歌与法国革命，查尔斯·狄更斯小说与维多利亚时期，T. S. 艾略特的《荒原》与现代社会，谢默斯·希尼的诗歌与爱尔兰复杂的民族情绪等等，都有密切的关联。因此，阅读文学作品的同时，了解作品产生的背景有助于加深对作品的理解，同时，文学也为我们提供了观察那些特定时代和特殊历史事件的角度和窗口。

文学的发展也自有其内在的规律。英国文学先后经历了中古英语时期、文艺复兴、新古典主义、浪漫主义、现实主义、现代主义等不同时代和文学潮流的更替，既有继承，又有革新，有促其变化沿革的外部背景，又有其更替发展的内在原由。不同的文学潮流具有不同的文学品质，有各自的代表性作家、作品和特征。

英国文学还经历了诗歌、戏剧、散文、小说等不同文学类型的演绎。不同时期各有不同的主要文学类型，比如诗歌最先登上文学的舞台，其次是戏剧、散文，而小说的兴起在时间进程上要晚得多。同时，每一种文学类型又经过了不断的丰富、创新与发展。就诗歌而言，史诗、叙事诗、抒情诗等

渐次主导。就戏剧而言，从莎士比亚的喜剧、悲剧、历史剧、传奇剧等，到乔治·萧伯纳的社会问题剧，及塞缪尔·贝克特的荒诞剧，相映生辉。就散文而言，从弗兰西斯·培根、约瑟夫·艾迪生，到查尔斯·兰姆，特色各具。至于小说，自最初的讲故事、为娱乐、重说教，直到现在，在情节安排、人物塑造、主题表达、风格、象征等方面不断发展。

三

名著名篇都经过千锤百炼。开篇的《贝奥武甫》是英国的民族史诗，刻画了史诗英雄的可贵品质。杰弗里·乔叟的《坎特伯雷故事集》惟妙惟肖地描摹了中世纪的众生相。莎士比亚的伟大戏剧不仅代表了英语的最高水准，也是人类情感与思想表达的巅峰。培根出口成诵的散文，约翰·弥尔顿失明之后写成的气势恢弘的《失乐园》，约翰·班扬所著的坎坷多难的《天路历程》等，共同展示了17世纪英国文学的不朽魅力。丹尼尔·笛福的《鲁滨逊漂流记》写出了荒岛生存的艰辛与信念，乔纳森·斯威夫特的《一个小小的建议》道出了对英国统治者的辛辣讽刺和对爱尔兰人民的深切同情，艾迪生的《伦敦的叫卖声》、塞缪尔·约翰逊博士那封著名的《致吉斯特菲尔德爵爷书》，还有兰姆的《梦幻中的孩子》，都是英国散文中难得的珍品。

威廉·布莱克、罗伯特·彭斯、威廉·华兹华斯、塞缪尔·泰勒·柯勒律治、乔治·戈登·拜伦、波西·比希·雪莱、约翰·济慈等人的浪漫主义诗篇是英国文学的一个高峰。这些诗篇或激情四溢、或想象瑰丽、或吟咏自然、或呼唤自由，曾引起了中国现代诗人们深深的共鸣，对中国现代文学起到过重要的影响。这些美妙绝伦的诗篇都有不止一个中文译本，很多中国翻译家都用笔尖触摸过诗人的心迹，表达了对英国浪漫主义诗人的喜爱和崇敬。

维多利亚时期是英国文学的又一个高峰。那是一个以小说为主导文学种类、小说家灿若星辰的时代。狄更斯的《远大前程》和《双城记》，夏洛蒂·勃朗特的《简·爱》，艾米丽·勃朗特的《呼啸山庄》，以及托马斯·哈代的《德伯家的苔丝》都是读者耳熟能详的名作，根据他们小说改编的电影至今兴盛不衰。在一个小说的时代，阿尔弗雷德·丁尼生、罗伯特·布朗宁以及伊丽莎白·芭瑞特·布朗宁的诗歌光焰照人，萧伯纳的戏剧独领风骚。

20世纪以来，由于社会的大变革，文学从内容到形式都发生了巨大变化。文学不只描写社会人生，更反映作家内心的困惑。威廉·巴特勒·叶芝的诗作细腻而深刻。T. S. 艾略特的《阿尔弗瑞德·普鲁弗洛克的情歌》写尽了现代人的忧郁和彷徨。詹姆斯·乔伊斯的《一个青年艺术家的肖像》通过内心独白的形式表现了一个艺术青年对自己人生道路的反省与抉择。戴维·赫伯特·劳伦斯的《儿子与情人》对母子关系、情人关系的描写热烈而伤感，他试图从中探寻现代人的困境与出路。贝克特的《等待戈多》虽然每次落幕时都有“戈多”的消息，但他似乎永远也不会出现。威廉·戈尔丁的《蝇王》令人痛心地描摹了少年天真的丧失和环境对人性的改变。希尼继承了英诗的优良传统，又为当代诗歌开辟了新的道路。因为主题的变化，作家们对文学技巧进行了从多方面的探索和突围，构成了新的文学传统。

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四

英国文学源远流长。由于篇幅有限，可供选择的篇目繁多，本书精选的都是英国文学中最为经典的名篇。同时，注重有现代意义的作品，希望这些作品能够引起当代读者的共鸣，增长智慧，启迪人生。

本书跨度范围自古英语时期至21世纪初。共选作家32位,作品近70（部）篇。根据学时不同，可供一到两个学期使用。虽名曰“简明”教程，实为突出重点，明分详略，使文学史和作品选读融会贯通，相辅相成。

本书主要内容为文学时期描述、作家评价与介绍、作品选读与分析、正文注释、问题思考等。全书按照英国文学史的顺序分为七个时期。每一时期都有历史文化的背景介绍，文学潮流的演变梳理，和文学特征的归纳总结。作家评价与介绍部分首先简要概括作家在文学史中的地位和重要性，然后是作家生平和创作经历。同时配有作家图片，与文字部分相映生辉，增加趣味性和生动性。作品选读部分对所选篇目有内容介绍、写作特点和主题分析，与对重点部分的详尽注释，穿插文学术语和定义解释，以及文学批评方法等。思考题是为了调动学习积极性，同时点出重点，有助于复习考试，温故知新。

教材编写经长期酝酿，反复推敲，既是编者的个人记忆，又是一代又一代学者的积累和传承，同时有赖于读者的认可和批评。文学是一个美好的事业，值得大家共同努力。

刁克利

2012年11月28日

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PART I

The Middle Ages

(to ca. 1485)

Literature, as a written record of human life and representative of high level of national language, is also a legacy of long civilization. Therefore, the knowledge of early English people and English language is beneficial to literature learning.

The important events in the early part of English history are: Roman Conquest, Anglo-Saxon Conquest and Norman Conquest, which leave influence to different extent upon the development of English as a nation and that of English as a language.

1. Roman Conquest (43—ca. 420)

The early inhabitants in the island were Britons, a tribe of Celts. From the Britons the island got its name Britain, the land of Britons. The Celts were primitive people living in tribal society, knowing how to make swords and grow crops. Their religious ceremonies were May Day and the cult of mistletoe, which have become part of the national tradition of the English people.

The Celts suffered repetitive invasions by foreign forces. In 55 BC, Julius Caesar, the Roman conqueror, led his legions to England. There were frequent conflicts between the native Celts and the Roman invaders. The Celts remained free and wild in Scotland, Wales and Ireland. The Roman occupation lasted for three and a half centuries. They built temples, roads, walls, and military camps, and they also built many walled towns and made them the sites of military settlement. This explains the reason why there are towns today in Britain ending in "-chester" or "-caster". In AD 410, the Romans withdrew their legions from the island. The Roman Conquest witnessed the foundation of London, but the Conquest left little influence on its national life, and the people continued to speak Celtic.

2. The Anglo-Saxon Period (ca. 450—1066)

About AD 450, the island of Britain was invaded by three Germanic tribes: the Angles, Saxons and Jutes. This is the beginning of the Anglo-Saxon period in British history. The Anglo-

Saxons were the ancestors of the present English people. They killed many Celts and drove the rest into Wales, Scotland and Ireland, and settled down themselves. The Jutes occupied Kent, the southeastern part of the island. The Saxons took the southern part and established small kingdoms as Wessex, Essex and Sussex. The Angles spread over the east midland and built the kingdom of the East Angles.

The Celts resisted bravely. In the struggle against the invaders, there appeared a legendary figure, the Celtic King Arthur, the founder of the kingdom of Wessex. King Arthur was a Romanized Celt, and a general and brave fighter. At Camelot in Somersetshire, the legendary capital of his kingdom, he gathered around him the bravest of his followers, who were known as the Knights of the Round Table. King Arthur and his knights fought bravely for the kingdom against the Anglo-Saxon invaders, and left rich materials for endless English romances.

The Anglo-Saxons also fought among themselves, and seven kingdoms were established at the end of the sixth century. In the process of fighting against other invaders later, these small kingdoms were combined into a united kingdom named England, that is, the land of Angles. The three tribes had mixed into a whole people called English.

Language spoken by them is now called Old English, which is the foundation of English language and literature. With the settlement of Anglo-Saxon in Britain, the history of English literature began. Among all the achievements of literary legacy, the chief survivor of Old English literature is, undoubtedly, *Beowulf*.

3. The Norman Period (1066—1350)

In 1066, the English were defeated at the Battle of Hastings, and were conquered by the Normans, led by Duke William. The Normans, whose name is actually a form of "Norsemen", were the descendants of Scandinavian adventurers. At the beginning of the tenth century they had seized a wide part of northern France, adopted the French language and set up a powerful state, Normandy. The Norman Conquest started the medieval period in England (1066—1485).

Feudal system was accordingly established. In literature, the body of customs and ideals known as chivalry were introduced. The knightly code and the romantic interest in love were reflected in the literature. The prevailing form of literature was known as "romance". The romance focuses not upon love and sentiment, but upon adventure. *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* is typical of this literary genre. The romance is derived from Celtic legend, and deals with the exploits of King Arthur and his knights of the Round Table.

With the coming of the Normans, French words began to come into the English language, and thus three languages coexisted in England at that time: Latin, the language of the Roman Catholic Church, holding the status as a language of courtly life; Anglo-Norman French, used in literature and documentation, and most books, including official documents and literary works,

were written in French or Latin; English, spoken language of the majority of the common English people.

Owing to the great influence of Norman Conquest, the 14th century witnessed thousands of words and expressions borrowed from French and Latin and Greek, many inflectional forms of the words were dropped and formal grammar simplified. The Old English underwent a remarkable change, and Middle English is proper to describe the new features of the language. The best known Middle English writer is Geoffrey Chaucer, the author of *The Canterbury Tales*.

Beowulf

Beowulf was written in Old English sometime before the 10th century AD. As the single major surviving work of Anglo-Saxon heroic poetry, the poem has become "England's national epic."

It consists of 3,182 lines, and recaptures the values, beliefs, and longings of the Anglo-Saxon people before they came to England, and presents a mixture of ideas of paganism and Christianity.

In the poem, Beowulf battles three antagonists: Grendel, a monster who has been attacking Heorot, the hall of the Danish king Hrothgar; Grendel's Mother, who wants to take the revenge the next night for the killing of her son by Beowulf; and 50 years later, a dragon. Beowulf is a perfect representative of the ancient hero: the embodiment of loyalty, duty, and courage.

Beowulf represents the highest achievement of Old English. The most distinct feature of the epic is the extensive use of alliteration, that is, certain accented words in a line begin with the same consonant sound. Besides, a figurative language called "kenning" is largely applied to add beauty to ordinary objects. A kenning is a poetic compound, made up of two or more nouns standing for another noun. For example, the "rough sea" is the "whale-road", the "smooth sea" is "swan's road," the boat is the "wave-rider," the dragon is the "shadow-walker," the ocean is "the mingling of the waves," the king is the "ring-giver," and "helmet bearer" stands for "warrior", the "world candle" for the sun. The name Beowulf itself is a kenning, "bee-wolf," that is, "bear". In the text selected below, "the jaws of the hall" refer to "the door", "the house of bone" to "the body". Understatements can also be found to give an impression of reserve and humour, such as "not troublesome" for "welcome", "need not praise" for "a right to condemn".

The two selections here are of modern translation in free form. The first one gives a narration of Beowulf's fight with Grendel. The second is a description of the burial of the legendary hero: how his people love him, mourn him and honour his death.

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