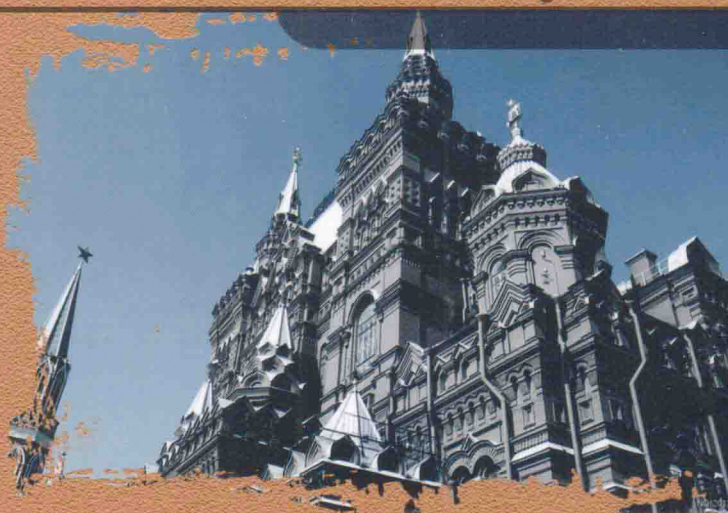


英美文学史及选读

A Brief History of British and American Literature and Selected Readings

主 编 蒙雪梅 张 扬
副主编 王 洋 王艳薇
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内 容 简 介

本套教材是在原教改拓展课程教材《英美文学史及选读》基础上编写的一套适合我国高等院校大学非英语专业学生使用的拓展课程英语教材。

这部“史”、“选”结合的教材,包括“英国文学”和“美国文学”两部分;每个部分按照文学史的先后顺序分成不同的时期,简明介绍了英美文学从古代到20世纪的历史文化、文学史特点,代表作家和经典作品。每章包括作家生平简介、作品介绍、原著选读、注释、名词解释、思考题等。本套教材线索清晰,希望为学生搭建英美文学框架,引导学生阅读原著,感受英美文学的人文精神和丰富的思想内涵,帮助学生开拓视野,丰富现象,体悟人性,品味人生。

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前 言

根据教育部颁布的《大学英语课程教学要求》(2007)指出:大学英语课程不仅是一门语言基础知识课程,也是拓宽知识、了解世界文化的素质教育课程。因此,设计大学英语课程时也应当充分考虑对学生文化素质的培养和国际文化知识的传授,以适应我国社会发展和国际交流的需要。

近年来,我国对英美文学的介绍和研究日益重视,根据 21 世纪大学英语发展要求,适应不同层次学生的自身需求,我校开设了大学英语教改拓展课程《英美文学史及选读》并自编了教材。目前我国很多优秀的英美文学类教材的使用对象是英语专业学生,不适合大学英语教改拓展课程使用。本教材就是在我校原教改拓展课程教材《英美文学史及选读》基础上编写的一本适合我国高等院校大学非英语专业学生使用的拓展课程教材。

《英美文学史及选读》包括“英国文学”和“美国文学”两部分:第一部分英国文学包括 7 个单元,第二部分美国文学包括 4 个单元。每个部分按照文学史的先后顺序分成不同的时期,简明地介绍各时期历史和文学史特点,精选了每个时期主要作家及代表作品,并加入注释、思考题、术语等,力求线索清晰,深入浅出,通俗易懂。

本书是一本集历史、文本于一体的文学选读教材,是对大学英语日常教学有益的、必要的补充。我们希望在培养学生欣赏英美文学的同时,让他们领略英美文学的魅力,把握文化的精髓和人文精神的脉动,提高学生的英语认知水平和人文素养。

本书在编写过程中,得到哈尔滨工业大学外国语学院史冰岩老师和许多老师的支持,在此一并表示感谢。

本书适合大学英语教改拓展课程使用。本书在编写过程中难免存在不足,恳请读者批评与指正,以便进一步修订与完善。

编 者
2013 年 12 月
于哈工大

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PART ONE BRITISH LITERATURE

Chapter 1 Early and Medieval English Literature

I. Historical Background

1. The Making of England

More than 7,000 years ago, when the Ice Age ended, melting ice flooded low-lying lands in continental Europe, creating the English Channel and the North Sea and turning Britain into an island. Around 3,000 BC, the first known settlers of Britain were the Iberians. More dramatic monuments were the henges, the most important of which was Stonehenge in Wiltshire.

1.1 The Native Celts

The Celts may originally have come from eastern and central Europe; they came to Britain in three main waves: Gaels, Britons and the Belgae. Celts, also called the Britons, are regarded as the natives of Great Britain. Celts began to move into Great Britain in about 700 BC, and they are believed to be ancestors of the Highland Scots, the Irish and the Welsh people. They came from eastern and central Europe, (now called France, Belgium and southern Germany). Some of the Celtic words or sounds were later assimilated into the English language. Their languages, the Celtic languages, are the basis of Gaelic, Irish and Welsh.

1.2 Roman Britain(55 BC— 410 AD)

In 55 BC, Julius Caesar sailed across the English Channel after he had conquered Gaul. In 43AD, the Romans occupied England by driving the native Celts into mountainous Scotland and Wales, and completely conquered the southern part of the island of Great Britain, including England and Wales. But they were never able to completely defeat or control what is now Scotland. For nearly 400 years, Britain was under Roman occupation. The Roman built many towns, roads, baths, temples and buildings. They

made good use of Britain's natural resources. They also brought the new religion, Christianity, to Britain.

2. The Anglo-Saxons Period

In the mid-5th century, Jutes, Saxons, and Angles came to Britain. A Jutish chief became the King of Kent in 449. Then the Saxons established their kingdom in Essex, Sussex and Wessex from the end of the 5th century to the beginning of the 6th century. In the second half of the 6th century, the Angles, who also came from northern Germany and were to give their name to the English people, settled in East Anglia, Mercia and Northumbria. These seven principal kingdoms of Kent, Essex, Sussex, Wessex, East Anglia, Mercia and Northumbria have been given the name of Heptarchy. The early Anglo-Saxons converted to Christianity. They made the contributions to the English state and laid the foundations of the English state.

The Norwegians and the Danes, the invaders, attacked various parts of England from the end of the 8th century. They even managed to capture York, an important center of Christianity in 867. By the middle of 9th century, the Viking and the Danes were posing a threat to the Saxon kingdom of Wessex.

Alfred(849—899), a king of Wessex, defeated the Danes and reached a friendly agreement with them in 879. He founded a strong fleet and is known as "the father of the British navy". All this earns him the title "Alfred the Great."

3. The Anglo-Norman Period

3.1 The Norman Conquest

It was said that King Edward had promised the English throne to William, but the Witan chose Harold. In 1066, William defeated Harold and killed him during the important battle of Hastings. William was crowned king of England, thus beginning the Norman Conquest of England. The Norman Conquest is perhaps the best-known event in English history. The feudal system was completely established in England. Norman-French culture, language, manners and architecture were introduced. The Church was brought into closer connection with Rome. The English is a mixture of nationalities of different origins. The ancestors of many English people were the ancient Angles and Saxons. Some English people are of the Norman-French origin.

3.2 The Hundred Years' War

The Hundred Years' War was a series of conflicts from 1337 to 1453 between the Kingdom of England and the Kingdom of France.

It was due to a dynastic disagreement to William the Conqueror, while remaining

Duke of Normandy. As dukes of Normandy and other lands on the continent, the English kings owed homage to the King of France. The question of legal succession to the French crown was central to the war. Although primarily a dynastic conflict, the war gave impetus to ideas of French and English nationalism.

During the Hundred Years' War, Joan believed she could rescue the French people. She rallied the demoralized French troops, leading them in battle. Ultimately captured and imprisoned by the English, Joan of Arc was condemned as a heretic and a witch and stood trial before the Inquisition in 1431. She eventually became a martyr and was then burnt at the stake and became a national hero.

3.3 The War of the Roses

The War of the Roses in the 15th century were fought by the noble families of York and Lancaster between 1455 and 1485. They are called the Wars of the Roses because each family used a rose for its symbol—a red rose for York and a white rose for Lancaster. These wars were very bloody, full of battles, betrayals and murders. Finally the last Yorkist king, Richard III, was beaten by a Welsh noble, Henry Tudor in English who became King Henry VII, the first Tudor monarch. He made a Tudor rose—a red rose with a white rose in the middle. This came to symbolize the peace that had come after all the fighting. The House of Tudor subsequently ruled England and Wales for 117 years.

II. Literature

1. Anglo-Saxon Literature

Anglo-Saxon literature, that is, the Old English literature is almost exclusively a verse literature in oral form to generation, which creators for the most part are unknown. It was only given a written form long after its composition.

Beowulf

Brief Introduction

Beowulf is the oldest poem in the English language, commonly cited as one of the most important works of Anglo-Saxon literature; and also the surviving *heroic epic poem consisting of 3182 alliterative long lines*.

In the poem, Beowulf, king of the Geats who live in Juteland, Denmark, comes to the help of Hrothgar, the king of the Danes, whose mead hall (Heorot) has been under

attack by a monster known as Grendel. After Beowulf slays him, Grendel's mother attacks the hall and is also defeated. Beowulf goes home to Geatland in Sweden and later becomes king of the Geats. After a period of fifty years has passed, Beowulf defeats a fire-spewing dragon, but Beowulf is severely wounded during the fight. He dies a heroic death. The poem ends with the funeral of the hero.

A lot of metaphors and understatements are used in the poem. For example, the sea is called "the whale-road" or "the swan road"; the soldiers are called "shield-men"; human-body is referred to as "the bone-house"; God is called "wonder-wielder"; monster is referred to as "soul-destroyer".

2. Medieval English Literature

Medieval literature covers about four century, which encompasses essentially all written works available in Europe and beyond during the Middle Ages. In the early part of the period(1066 up to the mid-14th century), there is not much about literature in English, which were composed of religious writings. In the second half(the 14th century), English literature starts to flourish with the appearance of writers like G. Chaucer, W. Langland, J. Gower and etc. Middle English literature deals with wider subjects and various styles, tones and genres.

2.1 The Romance

The most prevailing kind of literature in feudal England was the romance, which was a long composition, sometimes in verse, sometimes in prose, describing the life and adventures of a noble hero. The knight was the central character of romances.

The romance of King Arthur is comparatively the most important for the history of English literature. King Arthur is a legendary British leader of the late 5th and early 6th centuries, who led the defense of Britain against Saxon invaders in the early 6th century. Some Welsh and Breton tales and poems relating the story of Arthur date from earlier than this work. In these works, Arthur appears either as a great warrior defending Britain from human and supernatural enemies or as a magical figure of folklore, sometimes associated with the Welsh Otherworld, Annwn.

Romance is a medieval narrative, originally one in verse and in some Romance dialect, treating of heroic, fantastic, or supernatural events, often in the form of allegory.

2.2 The English Ballads

The most important department of English folk literature is the ballad. A ballad is a story told in song, usually in 4-line stanzas, with the second and fourth lines rhymed.

Popular folk literature occupies an important place in this period. Its presentation

of life is not only accurate but also in a lively and colorful way, though the originality of thought is often absent in the literary works of this period. Besides, the Middle English literature strongly reflects the principles of the medieval Christian doctrine, which are primarily concerned with the issue of personal salvation. An emphasis has also been placed on the humanity of Christ and the imagery of human passion. Love has largely superseded fear; and explorations into undiscovered regions of the heart offer fresh possibilities for introspection.

The most famous cycle of English ballads centers on the stories about a legendary outlaw called Robin Hood. The ballads tell us that he lived during the reign of Richard I. The dominant key in his character is his hatred for the cruel oppressors and his love for the poor and downtrodden. He was the leader of a band of outlaws, and they lived in the deep forest. They often attacked the rich, waged war against the bishops and archbishops, and helped the poor people. Therefore, Robin Hood and his followers were constantly hunted by the sheriffs. In English history, Robin Hood is partly a real and partly a legendary figure.

Geoffrey Chaucer (1340? — 1400)

Geoffrey Chaucer is widely considered the greatest English poet of the medieval Ages. Chaucer rose in royal employment and became a knight of the shire for Kent. As a member of the king's household, Chaucer was sent on diplomatic errands throughout Europe. From all these activities, he gained the knowledge of society that made it possible to write *The Canterbury Tales*.

Although he wrote many works, which include *The Book of the Duchess*, *the House of Fame*, *the Legend of Good Women* and *Troilus and Criseyde*, he was best remembered for his immortal *Canterbury Tales*. Chaucer died in October 1400 and he was the first poet to have been buried in Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey.

Chaucer is the first to use the rhymed couplet of iambic pentameter, which is to be called the heroic couplet. Thus, he lays the foundation of the English tonic-syllabic verse. He is the first great poet who wrote in the English language. His production of so much excellent poetry was an important factor in establishing English as the literary language of the country. The spoken English of the time consisted of several dialects, and Chaucer did much in making the dialect of London the standard for the modern English speech. Chaucer is considered the source of the English vernacular tradition and the

“father” of modern English literature.

Selected Reading

Brief Introduction

The Canterbury Tales is a collection of stories written in Middle English by Geoffrey Chaucer between 1387 and 1400. It is humorous, bawdy, and poignant stories told by a group of fictional pilgrims, who travel together on a journey from Southwark to the shrine of Saint Thomas Becket at Canterbury Cathedral. They come from all layers of society, and tell stories to each other to kill time. Many of the stories seem to fit their individual characters, social standing and real-life identities. Incomplete as they are, these tales cover practically all the major types of medieval literature: courtly romance, folk tale, beast fable, story of travel and adventure, saint's life, allegorical tale, and others. From the view of the rising bourgeoisie, Chaucer affirms men and women's right to pursue their happiness on earth and opposes the dogma of asceticism preached by the church. As a forerunner of humanism, he praises man's energy, intellect, quick wit and love of life. His tales expose and satirize the evils of the time. Chaucer uses rhymed couplets in iambic pentameter and to compose successfully in the vernacular. *The Canterbury Tales* is considered to be among the masterpieces of literature.

The Prologue provides a framework for the tales. It contains a group of vivid sketches of typical medieval figures. It supplies a miniature of the English society of Chaucer's time. Looking at his word-pictures, we know at once how people lived in that era. That is why Chaucer has been called “the founder of English realism”.

The Canterbury Tales The Prologue

When in April the sweet showers fall
And pierce the drought of March to the root, and all
The veins are bathed in liquor of such power
As brings about the engendering of the flower,
When also Zephyrus with his sweet breath
Exhales an air in every grove and heath
Upon the tender shoots, and the young sun

His half-course in the sign of the Ram has run,
And the small fowl are making melody
That sleep away the night with open eye
(So nature pricks them and their heart engages)
Then people long to go on pilgrimages
And palmers long to seek the stranger strands
Of far-off saints, hallowed in sundry lands,
And specially, from every shire's end
Of England, down to Canterbury they wend
To seek the holy blissful martyr, quick
To give his help to them when they were sick,
It happened in that season that one day
In Southwark, at The Tabard, as I lay
Ready to go on pilgrimages and start
For Canterbury, most devout at heart,
At night there came into that hostelry
Some nine and twenty in a company
Of sundry folk happening then to fall
In fellowship, and they were pilgrims all
That towards Canterbury meant to ride,
The rooms and stables of the inn were wide;
They made us easy; all was of the best,
And, briefly, when the sun had gone to rest,
I'd spoken to them all upon the trip
And was soon one with them in fellowship,
Pledged to rise early and to take the way
To Canterbury, as you heard me say.
But none the less, while I have time and space,
Before my story takes a further pace,
It seems a reasonable thing to say
What their condition was, the full array
Of each of them, as it appeared to me,
According to profession and degree,
And what apparel they were riding in;

And at a Knight I therefore will begin.

Notes

1. prologue: 序言。
2. pierce... to the root: The gentle spring rain penetrates the very roots of the plants.
3. bathed in liquor of such power: liquor, 甘霖。The water of the spring rain moistening every rib of the leaves and endowing the plants with its power.
4. As brings about the engendering of the flower: engendering, 生长; 发芽。With the power of the water, flowers begin to blossom.
5. Zephyrus: the west wind 西风。在英国, 春天的西风从大西洋上吹来, 温暖和煦。
6. exhale: 呼出; 吐出。
7. grove and heath: 树林和荒地。
8. shoots: 新芽。
9. the young sun/His half-course in the sign of Ram has run: Ram, 白羊宫, 古代用于解释天体运行的黄道带十二宫中的一个。太阳经过白羊宫时正是春天, 所以称太阳为 the young sun。
10. fowl: [复数] 鸟。
11. So nature... engages: So nature stimulates them and attracts their hearts.
12. palmers: 朝圣者; 香客。
13. the strange strands: 异乡的海岸。
14. hallowed: 被奉为神圣的。
15. sundry: 各种各样的。
16. from every shire's end: from the farthest limit of every county.
17. Canterbury: 坎特伯雷。a town southeast of London, in the county of Kent.
18. wend: 行; 走。
19. the holy blissful martyr: martyr, 殉道者。指坎特伯雷大主教 St. Thomas Becket, 他死后被葬于坎特伯雷。
20. Southwark: 当时伦敦的一个郊区。
21. hostelry: inn, 旅店; 客栈。这里指 Tabard。
22. pledged: 发誓。
23. degree: 社会地位。
24. apparel: 服饰。

Questions for Discussion

1. What are the main incidents in the song of Beowulf?
2. Please describe Beowulf's character.
3. What are qualities that make a hero? Cite the qualities in Beowulf's personality that you think are truly heroic.
4. What is the importance of "The General Prologue" in *The Canterbury Tales*?
5. Give a brief analysis of the quotation.

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The veins are bathed in liquor of such power
As brings about the engendering of the flower,
When also Zephyrus with his sweet breath
Exhales an air in every grove and heath
Upon the tender shoots, and the young sun
His half-course in the sign of the Ram has run,
And the small fowl are making melody
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Then people long to go on pilgrimages
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Of far-off saints, hallowed in sundry lands,
And specially, from every shire's end
Of England, down to Canterbury they wend
To seek the holy blissful martyr, quick
To give his help to them when they were sick,

Terms

1. Epic
2. Iambic Pentameter
3. Alliteration
4. English Ballads
5. Middle Ages
6. Romance