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全国高等教育自学考试英语专业辅导用书(本科)

英美文学选读学习指南

*A COMPANION
TO SELECTED READINGS
IN ENGLISH AND AMERICAN LITERATURES*

主 编 井卫华 霍跃红
主 审 桑思民



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前 言

为了帮助考生顺利通过高等教育英语专业自学考试本科段课程的考查,我们根据全国高等教育自学考试委员会颁布的《高等教育英语专业自学考试计划(试行)》和相关课程的教学大纲,结合多年教学经验,编写了本科段主要(必考)课程的自学辅导丛书:《高级英语(上)学习指南》、《高级英语(下)学习指南》、《英美文学选读学习指南》和《英汉翻译教程学习指南》共4册。

《英美文学选读学习指南》分为“辅导篇”、“习题篇”和“英美文学常识附录”3部分。其中,“辅导篇”包括各章的“学习指导”(名词解释、文学术语、文学常识)、“主要作家及作品简介”及“自测题”3部分;“习题篇”参考历年考题,总结各章考点,精心编写3套模拟试题。同时,附有近年最新考试真题两套。

承担本书编写任务的都是长期在大连外国语学院英语学院从事普通教育本科及自考英语本科教学的教师,具有丰富的教学经验,所培养的自考本科生通过率高,语言技能强,部分成绩优异者甚至考上了研究生。

我们衷心地希望本书能够成为自考生的良师益友,帮助自考生顺利通过《英美文学选读》自学考试。

由于时间仓促和水平有限,书中缺点和错误在所难免,还希望同仁和同学指正。

编者

于大连外国语学院英语学院

2001年9月



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第一部分 辅导篇

上篇 英国文学

上古及中世纪英国文学简介

An Introduction to Old and Medieval English Literature

I. 学习指导

1. 名词解释

- 1) Celts 凯尔特人 A prehistoric people whose numerous tribes occupied much of Europe between 2000 and 100BC, the peak of their power being around 500 – 100 BC. No European Celtic literature survives, but the later Irish and Welsh sources tell much about Celtic society and way of life.
- 2) Anglo – Saxons 盎格鲁-撒克逊人 Collective name for the Germanic peoples who dominated England from the 5th to the 11th centuries. They originated as tribes of Angles, Saxons and Jutes who invaded England after Roman rule collapsed, creating kingdoms that eventually united to form the English nation. In modern usage, Anglo-Saxons are the English or their emigrant descendants in other parts of the world.
- 3) Normans 诺曼人 Inhabitants of Normandy, the former province of NW



France. In 911 Rollo, leader of the Viking raider-settlers, was recognized as duke of the area. Strong, warlike and excellent administrators, the Normans ("Northmen") became Christians in the 10th century and completed the Norman Conquest of England in the 11th century. They were active in the Crusades, in the reconquest of Spain, Italy and Sicily.

- 4) the Norman Conquest of England 诺曼征服英格兰 Conquest of England by William, Duke of Normandy, following the Battle of Hastings (October 14, 1066) when William defeated and killed England's Saxon king, Harold. Although illegitimate, William claimed the English throne as Edward the Confessor's cousin and named successor. Crowned in London, he quickly crushed revolts, building castles as he advanced. The land of the English nobles was distributed to Normans in return for their agreement to supply the king with mounted soldiers. The great *Doomsday Book* (1086) listed landholdings. The conquerors also brought to England the influence of their French language and methods of warfare.
- 5) *Genesis A* 《创世纪》: 圣经中《旧约全书》的第一卷 The first book of *the Old Testament*. It tells of the Creation, the Fall, the Flood, the origins of the Hebrews, and the early Patriarchs with whom God made his Covenant. The book accounts for the Israelites' presence in Egypt, and so leads into Exodus.
- 6) *Exodus* 《出埃及记》: 基督教《旧约全书》中的第二卷 The second book of *the Old Testament*, and of the Torah. The book describes the escape of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, the covenant made at Mt Sinai between Moses and Yahweh and includes the Ten Commandments.
- 7) *Old Testament* 《旧约全书》 The first part of the Christian *Bible*, de-



scribing God's covenant with Israel. It is traditionally divided into three parts: the Law, the Prophets and the Writings. The Christianity regards *the Old Testament* as an inspired record of God's dealings with His people in preparation for the coming of Christ, containing in embryo much *New Testament* teachings.

- 8) *New Testament* 《新约全书》 The part of the *Bible* which is distinctively Christian. In it are recorded the life and teachings of Jesus Christ and the beginnings of Christianity. It comprises *the Four Gospels*, *the Acts of the Apostles*, *the Epistles* and *the Book of Revelation*, numbering 27 books in all. The *New Testament* is written in everyday 1st-century Greek. The earliest copy fragments date from the early 2nd century.

2. 文学术语

1) elegy 挽歌格律诗

In Classical literature an elegy was any poem composed of elegiac distichs (自成一段的两行诗), also known as elegiacs, and the subjects were various: death, war, love and similar themes. The elegy was also used for epitaphs (墓志铭) and commemorative verses, and very often there was a mourning strain in them. However, it is only since the 16th century that an elegy has come to mean a poem of mourning for an individual or a lament for some tragic event. English literature is especially rich in this kind of poetry.

2) epic 叙事诗

An epic is a long narrative poem about the deeds of warriors and heroes.

3) lyric 抒情诗

The Greeks defined a lyric as a song to be sung to the accompaniment of a lyre. A song is still called a lyric, but we also use the term loosely to describe a particular kind of poem in order to distinguish it from



narrative or dramatic verse of any kind. A lyric is usually fairly short, not often longer than fifty or sixty lines, and often only between a dozen and thirty lines; and it usually expresses the feelings and thoughts of a single speaker (not necessarily the poet himself) in a personal and subjective fashion. The range and variety of lyric verse is immense, and lyric poetry, which is to be found in most literatures, comprises the bulk of all poetry.

4) motif 中心思想; 主题

It is one of the dominant ideas in a work of literature; a part of the main theme. It may consist of a character, a recurrent image or a verbal pattern.

5) couplet 对句 (指两行尾韵相谐的诗句)

A couplet is two successive rhyming lines. The couplet composed of two iambic pentameter (抑扬格的五音步诗行) lines—more commonly known as the heroic couplet (英雄偶句诗)—is the most favored form. The couplet is one of the main verse units in Western literature and is a form of great antiquity. Chaucer was one of the first Englishmen to use it in *The Legend of Good Women* (《好女人的故事》1372–1386) and for most of *The Canterbury Tales* (《坎特伯雷集》1386–1480).

6) romance (中世纪) 骑士故事; 传奇文学

It is a popular literary form in the medieval period. It uses narrative verse or prose to sing knightly adventures or other heroic deeds. The hero is usually the knight, who sets out on a journey to accomplish some missions. There is often a liberal use of the improbable, sometimes even supernatural, things in romance. Romantic love is an important part of the plot in romance. Characterization is standardized. The structure is loose and episodic. The language is simple and straightforward. The importance of romance itself can be seen as a means of showing medieval



aristocratic men and women in relation to their idealized view of the world. It reflects a chivalric age.

7) verse 韵文

It is a term used for lines composed in a measured rhythmical pattern, which are often, but not necessarily, rhymed. It has three different meanings: (a) a line of metrical (韵律的) writing (诗行); (b) a stanza (诗节); (c) poetry in general (诗歌).

3. 文学常识

1) The Old English literature 上古英国文学 It extends from about 450 to 1066 in which the Germanic tribes invaded England and brought with them not only the Anglo-Saxon language but also a specific poetic tradition, which is both bold and strong, mournful and elegiac in spirit. The Old English poetry can be divided into two groups, namely, the religious group and the secular group. The poetry of the religious group is mainly on biblical themes. The poetry in the secular group is usually epic.

2) The Medieval English literature 中世纪英国文学 It starts in 1066 and ends at the end of the 14th century. The early part of this period was almost a barren period in literary creation. But in the second half of the 14th century, the English literature started to flourish with the appearance of such writers as Geoffrey Chaucer (乔叟 1343 ~ 1400), William Langland (郎格兰 1330 ~ 1386), John Gower (高尔 1330 ~ 1408) and others. Compared with the Old English literature, the Medieval English literature deals with a wider range of subjects, and it is uttered by more voices and in a greater diversity of styles, tones and genres. Popular folk literature also occupies an important place in this period. Its presentation of life is accurate, lively and colorful. Yet the originality of thought is often absent in the literary works. The Medieval Eng-



lish literature strongly reflects the principles of the medieval Christian doctrine, which were primarily concerned with the issue of personal salvation.

3) John Dryden 约翰·德莱顿 (1631 ~ 1700) English poet and dramatist, also considered the father of English literary criticism. Dryden's career began around the time of the Restoration (1660, 王政复辟). He became the Poet Laureate (桂冠诗人) in 1668. Later in his life, he worked largely on translations, notably of Virgil (维吉尔, 古罗马诗人, 其诗作对欧洲文艺复兴和古典主义文学产生巨大影响).

4) Homer 荷马 Greek epic poet, probably of the 8th century BC, to whom are ascribed the *Iliad* (《伊利亚特》) and *Odyssey* (《奥德赛》). Nothing is known of his life, nor even of the genesis of the poems. Since they were probably composed orally and based on traditional tales of real events in Bronze Age Greece, it is hard to say whether Homer actually was the author; most scholars now hold, though, that one man gave a final shape to each poem, and that it was the same man in both cases. Homer has come to represent, for many different ages and tastes, the epitome of poetry; this is still true in the 20th century.

II . 主要作家及作品简介

1) Beowulf 贝尔沃夫 It is a typical example of Old English poetry. It is regarded today as the national epic of the Anglo-Saxons. The story took place in Scandinavia (斯堪的纳维亚). The poem was originally in an oral form. It describes the exploits (英雄事迹) of a Scandinavian hero, Beowulf, in fighting against the monster Grendel, his revengeful mother, and a fire-breathing dragon. Beowulf is shown not only as a glorious hero but also as a protector of the people. Thematically the poem presents a vivid picture of how the primitive people wage heroic struggles



against the hostile forces of the natural world under a wise and mighty leader. The poem is an example of the mingling of nature myths and heroic legends (传说).

2) Geoffrey Chaucer 乔叟 (1343 ~ 1400) He is the greatest writer of the medieval period. He affirmed man's right to pursue earthly happiness and opposed asceticism (禁欲主义); he praised man's energy, intellect, quick wit and love of life; he exposed and satirized the social vices, including religious abuses. In his works, Chaucer explores the theme of the individual's relation to the society in which he lives; he portrays clashes of characters' temperaments and their conflicts over material interests; he shows the comic and ironic effects obtainable from the class distinctions felt by the newly emerged bourgeoisie as in the case of *the Wife of Bath* who is depicted as the new bourgeois wife asserting her independence. In short, Chaucer develops his characterization to a higher artistic level by presenting characters with both typical qualities and individual dispositions.

His literary works include:

The Romaunt of the Rose 《玫瑰传奇》(1372)

The Legend of Good Women 《好女人的故事》(1386)

The Canterbury Tales 《坎特伯雷故事集》(1386 ~ 1400)

Troilus and Criseyde 《特洛伊勒斯与克利西达》(1385)

He made a great contribution to English prosody (韵律学, 诗体学) by introducing from France the rhymed stanzas of various types to English poetry to replace the Old English alliterative verse (押头韵的诗). It was he who used for the first time in English the rhymed couplet of iambic pentameter. He gave the world what is virtually the first modern novel *Troilus and Criseyde*. He developed his art of poetry still further towards drama and the art of the novel. John Dryden (约翰·德莱顿 1631 ~



1700) called Chaucer the father of English poetry.

III. 自测题

A. Fill in the blanks with names or phrases that would best suit the sentence.

1. The father of the English poetry is _____.
2. Generally speaking, the Old English poetry that has survived can be divided into two groups: the _____ group and the secular one.
3. *Beowulf*, a typical example of Old English poetry is regarded today as the national _____ of the Anglo-Saxons.
4. With the Norman Conquest starts the _____ period in English literature, which covers about four centuries.
5. The period of Old English literature extends from about 450 to _____, the year of the Norman Conquest of England.
6. *The Canterbury Tales* is Chaucer's greatest work and written for the greater part in _____ couplets.
7. The Middle English literature strongly reflects the principles of the _____ Christian doctrine, which were primarily concerned with the issue of personal salvation.
8. In the 14th century, the two most important writers are _____ and Langland.
9. The 15th century has been traditionally described as the barren age in English literature. But it is the spring tide of English _____.
10. In *Troilus and Criseyde*, Chaucer gave the world what is virtually the first modern _____.

B. Short Essay Questions

1. What is romance? And why is it important in the medieval period?
2. What is Geoffrey Chaucer's contribution to English language?



3. What is the social significance of *The Canterbury Tales*?
4. What are the main incidents of the poem of Beowulf?

参考答案

A.

1. Chaucer 2. the religious 3. epic 4. medieval 5. 1066
6. heroic 7. medieval 8. Chaucer 9. ballads 10. novel

B.

1. Romance which uses narrative verse or prose to sing knightly adventures or other heroic deeds is a popular literary form in the medieval period. It has developed the characteristic medieval motifs of the quest, the test, the meeting with the evil giant and the encounter with the beautiful beloved. Romantic love is an important part of the plot in romance. Characterization is standardized. The structure is loose and episodic. The language is simple and straightforward. The importance of the romance itself can be seen as a means of showing medieval aristocratic men and women in relation to their idealized view of the world. The romance reflects a chivalric age.
2. Chaucer's language is vivid and exact. His verse is smooth. His words are easy to understand. He introduced from France the rhymed stanzas of various types, especially the rhymed couplet of iambic pentameter which was later called the heroic couplet. He is the first important poet to write in the current English language. Chaucer did much in making the dialect of London the foundation for modern English language.
3. In his masterpiece *The Canterbury Tales*, Chaucer gives us a true-to-life picture of the society of his time. Taking the stand of the rising bourgeoisie, he affirms men 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 his time. They attack the degeneration of the noble, the heartlessness of the judge, the corruption of the Church, etc.

4. The main incidents of the poem of Beowulf are

- 1) Beowulf's fight with the monster Grendel in Hrothgar's hall.
- 2) Beowulf's slaying of Grendel's mother in her lair.
- 3) Beowulf's return in glory to his uncle, and his succession to the throne.
- 4) Beowulf's victory in death over the fire dragon fifty years later.