

· 大学英语学习系列教材 ·

Undergraduate English Series

□ 华中科技大学外国语学院英语系 编

赏析

英美文学佳作

Highlights of British and American Literature

华中科技大学出版社

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Highlights
Of British and American Literature
英美文学佳作赏析

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总 序

21 世纪是一个国际化的知识经济时代,社会主义市场经济的发展要求新世纪的人才除了具有扎实的专业知识、良好的创新能力、人文素养外,还必须具有优秀的外语能力。英语作为一种国际性的语言,已成为人们在国际交往中不可缺少的工具。新形势下,社会的发展对中国大学生英语能力提出了全新的要求,已从原来纯粹的语言技能的掌握,发展到语言应用能力及跨文化交际能力的提高、英语文化认知水平的扩大及人文综合素养的完善。

在这种形势下,许多高校进行了大学英语教学改革,除了进行英语听说读写的基础课程训练,还开设了一系列高级语言能力及文化、文学方面的专业课程供全校学生选修。此外,本着培养复合型人才的理念,许多高校英语专业面向非英语专业招收英语第二学位的学生,开设了一系列英语专业课程。与英语本科专业的教学相比,这一系列课程因教学对象、学生需求、教学学时等不同,其目标内涵与层次定位、教材选编、教学方法及教学要求等方面还是存在着一定的差异。为此,华中科技大学外国语学院英语系在长期开设英语公共选修课及开办英语第二学位、辅修学位的基础上,组织一批有丰富教学经验的老师,共同编写了《大学英语学习系列教材》。

本系列教材包括《高级英语阅读》、《英语写作教程》、《英汉互译——方法与实践》、《英美报刊选读》、《英美文学佳作赏析》等,具有以下特征。

1. 本系列教材的编写以国家教育部颁布的《大学英语教学大纲》和《英语专业教学大纲》为依据,充分考虑非英语专业学生的实际情况和新世纪复合型人才对外语能力的要求,既重视培养语言技能、提高语言交际能力,又注重扩大学生的知识面,提高人文素养。

2. 本系列教材的编写吸收了大学英语、专业英语、英语第二学位的教学及教材编写的丰富经验,充分采纳国内外先进的教学理论和方法,力求选材新颖实用、难度适中、具有鲜明的时代特征。

3. 本系列教材体系统一,可全套使用,也可针对学生实际需要有选择地使用。

本系列教材可供非英语专业本科生英语选修课使用,也可供选修英语第二学位或辅修英语学位的学生使用,还可供具有相当于大学英语四级水平的英语自学者使用。

本系列教材在编写的过程中得到了华中科技大学外国语学院领导的指导和各位同仁的支持,华中科技大学出版社对本系列教材的编写和出版给予了鼎力支持,在此我们全体编写人员表示衷心的感谢。由于经验不足,水平有限,错误在所难免,恳请广大师生和读者提出批评和建议,以便在今后的修订中不断得到改进和完善。

华中科技大学外国语学院英语系

2006 年 6 月

前 言

在中外交流日益频繁、全球一体化趋势不断加强的今天,学习英语、了解英美文化已成为中国大学生的共识。文学是文化的精华载体,通过赏析英美文学名篇,我们不仅能学习语言、了解文化,同时还能接受优秀英美作品精髓思想的熏陶,增强对社会生活的理解与感悟,加强自身的人文素质和修养。

华中科技大学外国语学院本着培养复合型素质人才的理念,面向本校及外校非英语专业学生开设英语第二学位,其中“英美文学佳作赏析”是一门重要的必修课。长期担任该课程教学的教师根据多年的教学实践,在自编讲义的基础上修订增补,精心编写成《英美文学佳作赏析》一书,这其中既包含有对学术同仁最新成果的借鉴,又凝结着教师自己教学实践的总结创新。考虑到非英语专业学生的知识背景和实际需求,本书编者在选材时力求做到:既适当涵盖经典、兼顾英美,又突出选文的时代性、趣味性和可读性。

本书按诗歌、小说、散文、戏剧四种体裁进行编写。每类体裁内容具体如下:首先是关于文学体裁特点、文体要素的分析及赏析要点的介绍;其次是有代表意义的作品选文,适当加以注释;再次是关于作家作品简要介绍;最后是引导学生鉴赏、思考的讨论题。全书最后附有参考文献及可供自学使用的相关文学网址。

本书部分编者曾担任华中科技大学公共人文选修课“英美文学”的教学,基于同样的非英语专业的教学对象,该书也是公共人文选修课英美文学教学成果的总结。所以,本书除了适用于英语第二学位学生的教学之外,也可作为高等学校面向全校开设英美文学公共选修课的教材,同时还可供具有一定英语水平的英美文学爱好者、自学者学习之用。

对本书的使用可视教学对象、教学学时等的差异灵活处理。同时,不同体裁的作品也可穿插讲授,无须拘泥于集中编排的目录顺序。

本书在编写的过程中得到了华中科技大学外国语学院领导的支持和鼓励,在外国语学院担任英美文学教学的美籍教师 Shirley F. Hurt 也认真审读过书稿,对该书的选材及语言提出了许多宝贵的意见,华中科技大学出版社的同志们在编辑加工、提高书稿质量方面做了许多细致的工作,在此,我们谨致衷心的感谢!

由于编者的水平所限,书中难免有考虑不周之处,恳请批评指正。

编 者

2006年6月于武汉

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Part One

Poetry



Enjoying Poetry

Poetry is really hard to define in exact words. However, it is instantly recognizable. Some of its qualities are special visual tips on the printed page: stanzas and forms, such as couplets, quatrains, sonnets, capitalized first lines and short lines. Some are special uses of language and rhythm: imagery, metaphor, symbol, repetition, onomatopoeia, rhyme, and meter. Others are compression of language, tension, tone, seriousness of ideas, or utter playfulness.

In some ways reading poetry is much like reading fiction, drama, and the essay: we observe details of action and language, make connections and inferences, and draw conclusions. We also bring to poetry the same intellectual and emotional dispositions, the same general experience with life and literature that we draw on in reading drama, fiction, and essay. Yet there is something different about reading poems. We are supposed to be more attentive to the connotations of words, more receptive to the expressive qualities of sound and rhythm in line and stanza, more discerning about details of syntax and punctuation. This increased attention to linguistic detail is necessary because of the density and compression characteristic of poetry. More than fiction, drama, and essay, poetry is an art of condensation and implication; poems concentrate meaning and distill feeling.

There are generally two kinds of poems: the narrative and the lyric. Narrative poems, which tell stories and describe actions, includes the epic, romance, and ballad. Lyric poems, combining speech and song to express feelings in varying degrees of verbal music, includes the elegy, epigraph, sonnet, sestina, villanelle, and many other ones that contain strong personal emotions.

Elements of Poetry

A good close reading of a poem will depend on observing specific elements as they serve the purpose of the poet. We can learn to interpret and appreciate poems by understanding the basic elements, since all the elements of a poem work together harmoniously to convey feeling and embody meaning.

Voice; Speaker and Tone When we read or hear a poem, we hear a speaker's voice. It is this voice that conveys the poem's tone, its implied attitude toward its subject. When we listen to a poem's language and hear the voice of its speaker, we catch its tone and feeling and ultimately its meaning.

Image An image is a verbal picture of an object, action or abstract idea or sensation (feeling). Images appeal directly to one of the senses: touch, sight, hearing, smell, or taste. Poets make effort to excite our responses through sensory experiences (what we see, hear, feel, smell, taste), rather than through abstract language, for it is through our senses that we perceive the world. Images trigger our memories, stimulate our feelings, and command our response. Imagery refers to a pattern of related details in a poem. When images cluster together to convey an idea or feeling beyond what the images literally describes, we call them metaphorical or symbolic.

Figurative Language Language can be conveniently classified as either literal or figurative. When we speak literally, we mean exactly what each word conveys; when we use figurative language we mean something other than the actual meaning of the words. Poetry achieves many of its effects through this skill of language. Simile and metaphor, the two most commonly used rhetorical devices, are both making connections between normally unrelated things, seeing one thing in terms of another. However, simile establishes the comparison explicitly with the words *like* or *as*, while metaphor employs no such explicit verbal clue, and is then more subtle and implied. Other kinds of figurative language include personification, giving inanimate objects abstract concepts with animate characteristics or qualities; metonymy, substituting an attribute of a thing for the thing itself; pun, a play on words; hyperbole, or exaggeration; paradox, to name only a few.

Symbol and Allegory A symbol is any object or action that means more than itself, any object or action that represents something beyond itself. A rose, for example, can represent beauty or love or transience. A tree may represent a family's roots and branches. A soaring bird might stand for freedom. Light might symbolize hope or knowledge or life. A symbol may be universal in its nature, as when we say that "sailing westward" usually symbolizes preparation for death. But a symbol can also be more private. Recognizing their use in poetry will help you see them in daily language, either spoken or written. Related to symbolism,

allegory is a form of narrative in which people, places, and happenings have hidden or symbolic meaning. Allegory is thus a type of symbolism, but it differs from the former in establishing a strict system of correspondences between details of action and a pattern of meaning. Allegory is especially suitable as a vehicle for teaching.

Syntax Syntax refers to the grammatical structure of words in sentences and the deployment of sentences throughout the poem. It is an important element of a poem's tone and a guide to a speaker's state of mind. Speakers who repeat themselves or who break off abruptly in the midst of a thought, for example, reveal something about how they feel. When reading poetry, pay attention to such syntactical features as sentence length, sentence type, word order, complexity, and arrangement. Special attention should go to some peculiarities like inversion, repetition, parallelism, omitting, adding, sentence fragments, rhetorical sentences (requiring no answer), exclamation sentences, coinage of new words and phrases, and even punctuation and capitalization. These are usually where special meaning lies.

Sound Effect Rhythm refers to the changing pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of a poem. It is the beat of music we feel in poetry that adds greatly to its aesthetic effect. The tempo of rhythm helps to express meaning and convey meaning. A certain combination of various syllables is called a foot or a meter. Rising meters like iambic and anapestic, and falling meters like trochaic and dactylic, are most frequently employed in English verse. Rhyme, the matching of final vowel and consonant sounds in two or more words at regular intervals, usually at the end of lines (end rhyme), and sometimes within lines (internal rhyme or middle rhyme). Two other forms of sound play prevail in poetry: alliteration or the repetition of consonant sounds, especially at the beginning of words, and assonance or the repetition of vowel sounds. These sound devices, having the music effect of onomatopoeia, make poetry pleasant and sweet to read and hear. Working together with other elements of poetry, they contribute to the meaning of the poetry.

Form When we analyze the form, or the structure of a poem, we focus on its patterns of organization. Form exists in poems on many levels from patterns of sound and image to structures of syntax and of thought; it is as much a matter of phrase and line as of stanza and whole poem. Some poems are strictly constrained

in closed or fixed form and we can recognize them by their patterns of rhyme, meter, repetition, the shapes of their stanzas and the patterns of their line lengths. Shakespearean Sonnets are the most typical poems of fixed form. But not all poems are written in fixed forms. Many poets, resisting the limitations inherent in using a consistent and specific metrical pattern or in rhyming lines in a prescribed manner, developed and discovered looser, more open and free forms. Open or free form does not imply formlessness. It suggests that poets can either create their own forms or use the traditional fixed forms in more flexible ways. Walt Whitman is regarded as a pioneer experimenting with free verses.

Theme Theme is defined as an abstraction or generation drawn from the details of a literary work. It is an idea or meaning inherent and implicit in a work. In determining a poem's theme we should be careful neither to oversimplify the poem nor to distort its meaning, and we also should recognize that sometimes poems can have multiple themes. Focusing on a poem's theme enables us to see a poem's significance—what it says, what it implies, and what it means.

Suggestions on Reading Poetry

1. Read the poem a few times slowly and deliberately. If possible read it aloud. Make sure you know the meaning of the words and the grammar so that you can follow what each sentence literally says.
2. Identify the speaker (Who is speaking?), subject (About what?), situation and the tone (How does he feel?).
3. Pay attention to special language phenomena, figure of speech, syntax features, symbols, etc.
4. Consider the poem's form and how its structure shapes its thought and its emotion.
5. Test the poem against your own experience (Do you have similar experiences and feelings?) or try to view things in the poet's feet. If you cannot understand very much, don't be too upset. Read it at some other time or with a friend and it may help.
6. Identify the social, cultural and moral values that emerge in the poem. Consider how your own values influence your interpretation and evaluation of its worth.

A Selection of Poems

*How Do I Love Thee?**Elizabeth Browning*

How do I love thee? Let me count the ways.
I love thee to the depth and breadth and height
My soul can reach, when feeling out of sight
For the ends of Being and ideal Grace.
I love thee to the level of everyday's
Most quiet need, by sun and candle-light.
I love thee freely, as men strive for Right;
I love thee purely, as they turn from Praise.
I love thee with the passion put to use
In my old griefs, and with my childhood's faith.
I love thee with a love I seemed to lose
With my lost saints—I love thee with the breath,
Smile, tears, of all my life!—and, if God choose,
I shall but love thee better after death.



(Sonnets from the Portuguese; 43)

About the Author

Elizabeth Browning (1806—1861), English poet, the wife of Robert Browning, the most respected and successful woman poet of the Victorian period. Elizabeth Browning's greatest work, *Sonnets from the Portuguese* (1850), is a sequence of love sonnets addressed to her husband.

Questions for Discussion

1. Who is the speaker addressing to? What is she talking about? Can you describe the tone of her speaking?
2. How many ways does she count in which she loves him?
3. What is the most remarkable syntactical feature of the poem? What effect does it achieve?

To My Dear and Loving Husband

Anne Bradstreet

If ever two were one, then surely we.
If ever man were loved by wife, then thee;
If ever wife was happy in a man,
Compare with me ye women if you can.
I prize thy love more than whole Mines of gold
Or all the riches that the East doth hold.
My love is such that Rivers cannot quench,
Nor ought but love from thee, give recompense.
Thy love is such I can no way repay;
The heavens reward thee manifold, I pray.
Then while we live, in love let's so persevere,
That when we live no more, we may live ever.

About the Author

Anne Bradstreet (1612—1672), although was born in England, she is considered to be one of the most well-known of early American poets at a time when little attention was given to women authors. At the age of sixteen, she married Simon Bradstreet, who played a key role in her literary career and was the focus in several of her poems.

Questions for Discussion

1. How does the speaker describe the love between she and her husband?
2. Can you describe her tone and emotion?

A Red, Red Rose

Robert Burns

O My luve's like a red, red rose
That's newly sprung in June;
O My luve's like the melodie
That's sweetly play'd in tune.

As fair art thou, my bonnie lass.
So deep in luve am I
And I will luve thee still, my dear,
till a'the seas gang dry.

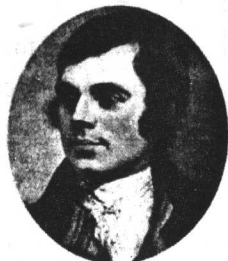
Till a'the seas gang dry, my dear,
And the rocks melt wi'the sun;
O I will luve thee still, my dear,
while the sands o'life shall run.

And fare thee weel, my only luve!
And fare thee awhile!
And I will come again, my luve,
Though it were ten thousand mile.



About the Author

Robert Burns (1759—1796), a best-loved national poet of Scotland, wrote his poems chiefly in the Scottish dialect, and became famous throughout the world. His themes vary: love and friendship; the natural beauty of Scotland; the life and labor of the common people; the patriotism and the struggle for liberty; satire on the corruption and hypocrisy of the high society. His poetry is unsurpassed for its beautiful lyricism and sincerity of emotions. He played an important role in reviving and reserving the Scottish culture and is regarded as a forerunner of Romanticism poetry.



Questions for Discussion

1. How do you like the way the speaker describes his love?
2. How does the speaker express his deep love for his girl? What rhetorical devices are used in the poem?
3. What are the most remarkable syntactical features of the poem?

My Heart's in the Highlands

Robert Burns

My heart's in the Highlands, my heart is not here;
My heart's in the Highlands a-chasing the deer;
A-chasing the wild deer, and following the roe—
My heart's in the Highlands wherever I go.

Farewell to the Highlands, farewell to the North!
The birthplace of valour, the country of worth;