

# HISTORY AND ANTHOLOGY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE

第一册

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## 前 言

我国高等院校英语专业在高年级课程中,开设有《英美文学史》和《英美文学作品选读》两门课程,讲授《文学史》以伴随《文学作品选读》为宜,否则容易形成脱节现象,或者形成教学中的重复,再者,文学史是根据历史的顺序以系统讲授为主,由于课时的限制,往往重头轻尾,完不成全面教学的任务,《文学作品选读》只能选一部分重要作家和重要作品进行讲授,略古详今。这样,史和选读分作两门课程讲授,往往不能相辅而行。从时间上说,也有不经济课时的情况,所以这两门课程,最好结合起来:史的部分在书中简单扼要地概述;作品选读部分,尽可能遴选文学史上的重要作家和重要作品进行讲授。教师根据班级的具体情况,可多选讲,也可少选,灵活掌握,因材施教。

本书编写的体例,除史的部分有简略扼要的叙述以外,作家作品部分有:(1)作者生平与创作介绍;(2)作品内容提要(如选文为作品节录时);(3)选文;(4)注释。在教学中每周以四学时计,共两个学期(有的院校是四个学期),课堂以讲授作品为主,史的部分由教师掌握,学生阅读参考。史、选结合,进行教学,可事半功倍,收到良好的教学效果。这是本书编写的目的。

本书编选分为两卷:第一卷是古代至 18 世纪英国文学,第二卷是 19 世纪至 20 世纪英国文学。

本书可供高校外语系英语专业英美文学史和文学作品选读课程作教学用书或参考书,也可供广大中学英语教师及具有一定程度的英语自学者和英美文学爱好者作为进修读物。

本书曾由国家教委高校外语教材编审委员会召开审稿会进行

审稿。参加审稿会的有主审人张健教授(山东大学);审稿人有孟广龄教授(北京师范大学)、常耀信教授(南开大学)和李乃坤副教授(山东大学)。会议期间,审稿人对本书提出了许多宝贵的意见,编者根据这些意见,作了必要的修改。在此,对参加审稿的同志表示衷心的感谢。

本书在编选过程中,曾参考了国内外出版的许多文学史和作品选读方面的书籍,注释部分也参照了有关各书的注释,在此不一一列举。由于编者水平有限,书中错误缺点和考虑不周之处在所难免,恳切希望读者和专家们批评指正。

编 者

## 内容简介

本书是作者根据英国文学历史的顺序结合作品选读所编写的一套适合我国高等院校英语专业使用的教材。由于课时有限,历史部分只作了简明扼要的概述,作品选读部分,尽可能遴选了文学史上的重要作家和重要作品。

这部史、选结合的教材,分为两册出版,第一册是古代至 18 世纪英国文学,第二册是 19 世纪至 20 世纪英国文学。教材内容丰富,观点正确,选文具有代表性,可作高校外文系英语专业英国文学史和文学作品选读课程的课本或参考书,也是广大中学英语教师及具有一定程度的英语自学者和英美文学爱好者进修的理想读物。

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## **PART I**

### **The Anglo-Saxon Period**

(449—1066)

After the fall of the Roman Empire (410 A. D. ) and the withdrawal of Roman troops from Albion, the aboriginal Celtic population of the larger part of the island was soon conquered and almost totally exterminated by the Teutonic tribes of Angles, Saxons and Jutes who came from the continent and settled in the island, naming its central part Anglia, or England.

For nearly four hundred years prior to the coming of the English, Britain had been a Roman province. In 410 A. D. the Romans withdrew their legions from Britain to protect Rome herself against swarms of Teutonic invaders. About 449 a band of Teutons, called Jutes, left Denmark, landed on the Isle of Thanet. Warriors from the tribes of the Angles and the Saxons soon followed, and drove westward the original inhabitants.

Before the invasion of Britain, the Teutons inhabited the central part of Europe as far south as the Rhine, a tract which in a large measure coincides with modern Germany. The Jutes, An-

gles, and Saxons were different tribes of Teutons. These ancestors of the English dwelt in Denmark and in the lands extending southward along the North Sea.

The Angles, an important Teutonic tribe, furnished the name for the new home, which was called Angle-land afterward shortened into England. The language spoken by these tribes is generally called Anglo-Saxon or Saxon.

The **Literature**. The literature of this period falls naturally into two divisions, —pagan and Christian. The former represents the poetry which the Anglo-Saxons probably brought with them in the form of oral sagas,—the crude material out of which literature was slowly developed on English soil; the latter represents the writings developed under teaching of the monks, after the old pagan religion had vanished, but while it still retained its hold on the life and language of the people. In reading the earliest poetry of England it is well to remember that all of it was copied by the monks, and seems to have been more or less altered to give it a religious coloring.

The coming of Christianity meant not simply a new life and leader for England; it meant also the wealth of a new language. The scop is now replaced by the literary monk; and that monk, though he lives among common people and speaks with the English tongue, has behind him all the culture and literary resources of the Latin language. The effect is seen instantly in English early prose and poetry.

More voluminous are the survivals of the Christian poetry preserved in the monasteries. Among the early Anglo-Saxon po-

ets we may mention Caedmon who lived in the latter half of the 7th century and who wrote a poetic *Paraphrase* of the Bible, and Cynewulf, the author of poems on religious subjects, who lived a century later.

But the names of those who preserved and put down in written form the surviving pieces of old Anglo-Saxon poetry, have sunk into oblivion. And yet these unknown scribes probably deserve to occupy a higher place in the history of English literature than the two above-mentioned ecclesiastic poets. It is these unknown scribes that passed down to later generations the great epic—*The Song of Beowulf*—and such poems as *Widsith* or *The Traveller's Song*, and the *Seafarer*.

**The Song of Beowulf.** *The Song of Beowulf* can be justly termed England's national epic and its hero Beowulf—one of the national heroes of the English people.

The only existing manuscript of *The Song of Beowulf* was written by an unknown scribe at the beginning of the 10th century and was not discovered until 1705. *The Song* was composed much earlier, and reflects events which took place on the Continent approximately at the beginning of the 6th century, when the forefathers of the Jutes lived in the southern part of the Scandinavian peninsula and maintained close relations with kindred tribes, e. g. with the Danes who lived on the other side of the straits.

The whole epic consists of 3182 lines and is to be divided into two parts with an interpolation between the two. The whole song is essentially pagan in spirit and matter, while the interpo-

lation is obviously an addition made by the Christian who copied the Song. Other elements, alien to the original text of the epic, can be easily traced in the text of the manuscript and do not thwart the style of the whole.

**The Subject Matter.** This poem of 3182 lines describes the deeds of the Teutonic hero Beowulf. Hrothgat, the King of the Danes, built a magnificent mead hall to which he gave the name of Heorot. While the Danes were eating and drinking their fill in this famous hall, Grendel, a monster half-human, came from the moor, burst in upon them, mangled thirty warriors, and then rushed off into the darkness. For twelve years this monster harried the warriors whenever they feasted in the hall, until the bravest were afraid to enter it. When Beowulf heard of this, he sailed with his warriors to Heorot, and persuaded the Danes to feast with him in the hall. After they had fallen asleep there, Grendel burst in the door, seized a warrior, and devoured him in a few mouthfuls. Then he grasped Beowulf. The hero, disdaining to use a sword against the dire monster, grappled with him, and together they wrestled up and down the hall. In their mad contest they overturned the tables and made the vast hall tremble as if it were in the throes of an earthquake.

Finally Beowulf, with a grip like that of thirty men tore away the arm and shoulder of the monster, who rushed out to the marshes to die. The next night a banquet was given in fateful Heorot in honor of the hero. After the feast, the warriors slept in the hall, but Beowulf went to the palace. He had been gone but a short time, when in rushed Grendel's mother to avenge the

death of her son. She seized a warrior, the king's dearest friend, and carried him away.

Beowulf followed the bloody trail of Grendel's mother to the terrible flood. Undaunted by the dragons and serpents that made their home within the depths, he grasped a sword and plunged beneath the waves. After sinking what seemed to him a day's space, he saw Grendel's mother, who came forward to meet him. She dragged him into her dwelling, where there was no water, and the fight began. The issue was for a time doubtful, but at last Beowulf ran her through with a gigantic sword, and she fell dead upon the floor of her dwelling. A little distance away, he saw the dead body of Grendel. The hero cut off the heads of the monster and his mother and hastened away to Hrothgar's court. After receiving much praise and many presents, Beowulf sailed homeward with his warriors, where he ruled as king for fifty years.

The closing part of the poem tells now one of Beowulf's subjects stole some of the treasure which a firedrake had for three hundred years been guarding in a cavern. The enraged monster with his fiery breath laid waste the land. Beowulf sought the dragon in his cavern and after a terrible fight slew the monster, but was himself mortally wounded, and died after seeing in the cavern the heaps of treasure which he had won for his people. The dying hero was glad to learn that by his death he has gained more wealth for his people. He instructed Wiglaf, who was to succeed him, how to bury his body and how to rule the country after his death. His last words were full of care for

the future of his land.

According to Beowulf's last will, the people of Jutland built a large bonfire on a headland which stretched far into the sea and cremated the hero's body. Then they laid all the treasures from the dragon's cave with Beowulf's ashes to show that the gold could in no way compensate their great loss, and buried them under a tremendous mound. They piled the earth and stones so high that, in accordance with Beowulf's will, the mound thereafter became a beacon for the seafarers who sailed along the coast. Thus, even after his death, Beowulf continued to serve the people.

Mourning their dead champion, the people of Jutland composed a dirge praising the great deeds of Beowulf who

of men was the mildest and most beloved,  
to his kin the kindest, keenest for praise.  
Then the Goth's people reared a mighty pile  
With shields and armour hung, as he had asked,  
And in the midst the warriors laid their lord,  
Lamenting. Then the warriors on the mount  
Kindled a mighty *bale* fire; the smoke rose  
Black from the Swedish pine, the sound of flame.  
Mingled with sound of weeping;...while smoke  
Spreads over heaven. Then upon the hill  
High, broad, and to be seen far out at sea.  
In ten days they had built and walled in it  
As the wise thought most worthy; placed in it  
Rings, jewels, other treasures from the *hoard*.

They left the riches, golden joy of earls,  
In dust, for earth to hold; where yet it lies,  
Useless as ever. Then about the mound  
The warriors rode, and raised a mournful song  
For their dead king; *exalted* his brave deeds,  
Holding it fit men honour their liege lord,  
Praise him and love him when his soul is fled.  
Thus the (Geat's) people, sharers of his hearth,  
Mourned their chief's fall, praised him of kings, of men  
The mildest and the kindest, and to all  
His people gentlest, yearning for their praise.

(Morley's version)

### **Beowulf<sup>1</sup>**

(Prologue: The Earlier History of the Danes)

Yes, we have heard of the glory of the Spear-Danes' kings  
in the old days—how the princes of that people did brave deeds.

Often Scyld Scefing<sup>2</sup> took mead-benches away from enemy  
bands, from many tribes, terrified their nobles—after the time  
that he was first found helpless.<sup>3</sup> He lived to find comfort for  
that, became great under the skies, prospered in honors until ev-  
ery one of those who lived about him, across the whale-road,  
had to obey him, pay him tribute. That was a good king.

Afterwards a son was born to him, a young boy in his  
house, whom God sent to comfort the people; He had seen the  
sore need they had suffered during the long time they lacked a

king. Therefore the Lord of Life, the Ruler of Heaven, gave him honor in the world: Beow<sup>4</sup> was famous, the glory of the son of Scyld spread widely in the Northlands. In this way a young man ought by<sup>1</sup> his good deeds, by giving splendid gifts while still in his father's house, to make sure that later in life beloved companions will stand by him, that people will serve him when war comes. Through deeds that bring praise, a man shall prosper in every country.

Then at the fated time Scyld the courageous went away into the protection of the Lord. His dear companions carried him down to the sea-currents, just as he himself had bidden them do when, as protector of the Scyldings,<sup>5</sup> he had ruled them with his words—long had the beloved prince governed the land. There in the harbor stood the ring-prowed ship, ice-covered and ready to sail, a prince's vessel. Then they laid down the ruler they had loved, the ring-giver, in the hollow of the ship, the glorious man beside the mast. There was brought great store of treasure, wealth from lands far away. I have not heard of a ship more splendidly furnished with war-weapons and battle-dress, swords and mailshirts. On his breast lay a great many treasures that should voyage with him far out into the sea's possession. They provided him with no lesser gifts, treasure of the people, than those had done who at his beginning first sent him forth on the waves, a child alone. Then also they set a golden standard high over his head, let the water take him, gave him to the sea. Sad was their spirit, mournful their mind. Men cannot truthfully say whom received that cargo, neither counsellors in the hall nor



warriors under the skies.

(1) Then in the cities was Beow of the Scyldings beloved king of the people, long famous among nations (his father had gone elsewhere, the king from his land), until later great Healfdene was born to him. As long as he lived, old and fierce in battle, he upheld the glorious Scyldings. To him all told were four children born into the world, to the leader of the armies: Heorogar and Hrothgar and the good Halga. I have heard tell that (... was On) ela's queen,<sup>6</sup> beloved bed-companion of the Battle-Scylfing.

#### (Beowulf and Grendel)

#### (The Hall Heorot is Attacked by Grendel)

Then Hrothgar was given success in warfare, glory in battle, so that his retainers gladly obeyed him and their company grew into a great band of warriors. It came to his mind that he would command men to construct a hall, a mead-building large(r) than the children of men had ever heard of, and therein he would give to young and old all that God had given him, except for common land men's bodies.<sup>7</sup> Then I have heard that the work was laid upon many naitons, wide through this middle-earth, that they should adorn the folk-hall. In time it came to pass—quickly, as men count it—that it was finished, the largest of hall-dwellings. He gave it the name of Heorot,<sup>8</sup> he who ruled wide with his words. He did not forget his promise: at the feast he gave out rings, treasure. The hall stood tall, high and wide-