A decorative border of stylized leaves and vines in a brownish-gold color frames the central text area.


# 新编 英国文学教程

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A NEW COURSE BOOK  
*of*  
BRITISH LITERATURE

申富英 公丽艳 主编

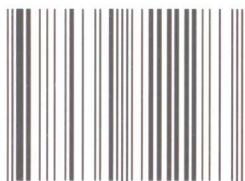
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# 新编英国文学教程

*A New Course Book of British Literature*

申富英 公丽艳 主编

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# 前言

本书是专为英语专业本科生高年级学生学习英国文学方面的知识而编写的一本专业教材,其目的是要培养他们对英国文学的兴趣和英语语感,提高他们的文学鉴赏能力和把握文学发展动向的能力。

在本书编写过程中,我们特别注意了以下几个方面:

一、英诗自身的语言特点决定了其阅读的高难度,尤其是对于把英语作为外语来学习的学生来说,初读英诗更是倍感艰涩,因此,我们在编写本书时,不仅对英诗的思想内容和艺术特点详加分析,而且在作注释时,力求详细深入。

二、传统小说自身的特点决定了其主题、人物的分析均要基于其人物的所做、所为、所思以及身处的时代背景,所以我们在编写本书时,对小说故事梗概的交代力求详细,对主题的分析力求条理、简练、全面,对人物的分析力求重点突出,并力求使作品最大限度地说明小说的主题、人物个性和艺术特色。

三、只有深刻理解某位作家所属流派及其时代特点,才能更好地理解这个作家及其作品。因此,我们对每个时代的典型文学流派都进行了深入、条理的分析,这种分析一般包括时代特征、文学流派的实质与特点、典型的文学体裁、代表作家等等,从而有利于学生从整体上和实质上理解英国文学作品。

四、鉴于目前文学界对英国文学的研究现状和读者的实

际需要,我们对乔叟以前的文学的论述较为简略;对乔叟之后,尤其是17世纪、18世纪、浪漫主义时期、维多利亚时期文学的论述则较为详细深入,对目前尚无定论的20世纪文学则是以说明和详细的注释为主。

五、在对作家和作品的取舍上,我们本着突出重点、兼顾整体的原则去选择,重点的著名的经典作家和目前是当代文学界研究热点的作家与作品,我们则重点论述,对代表某个时代某种体裁或流派的发展状况的作家,我们也进行了介绍和概括,而对于那些与著名作家同属一个流派而又不太著名的作家,鉴于本书篇幅有限,则在每个时代的总序中进行了概括性的说明。

六、对选读作品,我们主要依据其典型性、知名度、可读性进行取舍。我们所选的作品均既能有助于读者理解作家的思想风格、作品主题、人物和艺术特点,又能使读者感受到文学的魅力。

七、所有选读作品均出自英文原版图书。需要指出的是,我们对其中一些现代英语视为不规范的语法和拼写予以了保留,以忠实于原著,保持原著的风格特色。

本书作者均是在全日制高等学校英语专业从教多年的资深骨干教师,本书既是作者多年教学经验和研究成果的总结,也是这些教学经验和研究成果的升华。本书编写的具体分工如下:

第四章和第五章主要由申富英撰写。

第一章和第三章主要由公丽艳撰写。

第六章主要由周洁撰写初稿,孙笑峰进行了删改和个别作家的部分撰写工作。

第二章主要由张敏撰写初稿,孙笑峰和公丽艳进行了删改和部分作家的撰写工作。

第七章现代主义部分主要由张君丽撰写初稿,其余部分由张敏、王鹏撰写初稿,申富英对本章进行了删改和定稿。

全书由申富英策划、统筹、主编、补充和定稿。公丽艳参与了大部分稿件的编辑和校订工作。

在本书的编写过程中,山东大学外语学院李乃坤教授给予了资料方面的支持和建构方面的建议。在此向他表示诚挚的谢意。

由于时间十分仓促,资料有限,书中难免有疏误之处,敬请读者予以谅解。

**申富英**

2001年6月18日

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# Old And Medieval English Literature

## Section I The Anglo-Saxon Period

(5th century ~ 1066)

English literature began with the Anglo-Saxon settlement in England. Upon their arrival in England, the Anglo-Saxons were heathens. Coming from Northern Europe, they believed in the old mythology of Northern Europe. In 597 A.D., St. Augustine was sent to England to convert the Anglo-Saxons, and in the 7th century, all England was Christianized. The heathen mythology was gradually replaced by the Christian religion, but the heathen concepts of nature and universe survived a fairly long period of time and left their marks on British literature, which could be easily seen in *Beowulf*, the national epic of the Anglo-Saxons.

The coming of Christianity brought about great change in both the Anglo-Saxon literature and the language. The scop, the earliest group of poets who narrated or sang the poetry, were then replaced by the literary monks, who spoke the English language but had behind them all the culture and literary resources of the Latin tongue. Thus Latin had left its firm mark on the early English prose and poetry. Caedmon was generally considered as the first Anglo-Saxon poet, who lived in the 7th century. Though not a monk himself, he was a cowherd of a monastery. It was said that it was under the call of God in a dream that Caedmon could suddenly sing and write and then he turned the stories in the *Bible* into verse form. The title of his work is *Paraphrase*. Cynewulf, who lived a century later than Caedmon, was another representative figure in Anglo-Saxon literature. Nothing of his literary works was known except that he wrote poems on religious subjects. The most prominent of the early prose writers in Anglo-Saxon period was the Venerable Bede, a monk who wrote in Latin and who lived in the last part of the 7th century and the early part of the 8th century. Among his numerous books on various kinds of subjects, the most famous one is *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, because of which he earned his place as the "Father of English History."

King Alfred the Great (849~901), who succeeded in driving the Danes off England with force, was another literary figure worth mentioning. Besides being a brave king, Alfred also set himself to the task of encouraging education and literature. His contribution to English literature mainly lies in three aspects. Firstly, he translated some works from Latin, among which the most outstanding one was Bede's *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People*. Secondly, he encouraged and supervised the launching of *The Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*. And thirdly, in his translation he created the more natural English prose style.

## Beowulf

The earliest form of literature in the history of English literature was poetry, or poems and songs. These earliest poems or songs were the collective efforts of the people. The stories were based on the history or legend of the old time or contemporaneous events, and the most interesting ones were narrated orally, often in song form by a special group of people called minstrels, or scop or gleemen. These stories would pass from mouth to mouth for several generations before they were finally written down. Of the old English poetry, the most monumental one is *Beowulf*, the first long poem in English, which is considered the national epic of the English people.

The song of *Beowulf* is of some 3,000 lines. The story, partly historical and partly legendary, was brought to England by the Angles in the 6th century from their original homes and was not written down until the 7th or 8th century. Though it is a national epic of the English people, the hero and the setting have nothing to do with England; it is a story of the Scandinavians, the primitive Northern tribes on the European continent.

The hero of the story is Beowulf, one of the national heroes of the English people. Beowulf is a kinsman of Hrothgar, King of the Danes. News reaches Beowulf one day that Hrothgar has been recently disturbed by a half-human monster, Grendel. In order to entertain his warriors after wars, Hrothgar has built a great hall named Heorot. But the merry songs and shouting have disturbed the restful sleep of Grendel. So for revenge, Grendel comes to the hall at night and devours at one time as many as thirty warriors sleeping there. For 12 years whenever warriors

feast there, Grendel attacks them. Therefore, the splendid hall is deserted. Then Beowulf, the young warrior, comes with a group of 14 comrades to the rescue. After a feast of welcome, Beowulf and his companions lie in the hall for the night. When they are in sleep, Grendel bursts in, seizes one warrior and devours him. He next attacks Beowulf, who grapples with him single-handed. After a terrible and violent combat, Beowulf manages to tear off the arm and shoulder of the monster, who immediately retreats to die. The following night, a feast is given in the great hall to celebrate Beowulf's victory and the hall is full of joy and songs once again. After the feast, the warriors sleep in the hall, but Grendel's mother comes to avenge the death of her son. She seizes one of the king's dearest friends and rushes away. Beowulf and his warriors follow the bloody trail to the edge of a lake and Beowulf by himself plunges into the lake while his warriors wait anxiously on the shore. Beowulf finds the she-monster and after a great fight he manages to cut off her head. Also there he finds Grendel's body and cuts off his head, too. With these two trophies he goes back to Heorot, and is welcomed and rewarded by the king. Then Beowulf sails back to his homeland, the land of the Geats. In the following year when the king of the Geats dies, Beowulf is chosen as the king and reigns over his people for 50 years. Then a fire dragon comes out to disturb Beowulf's people. Though an aged man, Beowulf offers to fight the dragon himself. Beowulf eventually kills the dragon, but unfortunately he himself is mortally wounded and soon dies. The poem ends with the people lamenting Beowulf's death and praising him as a great and good king.

Though quite a number of the characters mentioned in the story are real persons in history, such as Hrothgar — the king of the Danes, and Hygelac — the king of the Geats, the hero Beowulf is essentially a legendary figure. The great physical strength and high spiritual quality of Beowulf show the primitive tribal people's best hope for a great hero who could come out to protect them whenever they were disturbed and challenged by the beasts and the mysterious and unknown nature.

As mentioned above, the poem *Beowulf* is a mixture of paganism and Christian elements. The story is about the life of Anglo-Saxons before they came to England, but the poem itself was written down after the conversion of the English to Christianity. It is suggested that such a mixture of both pagan and Christian el-

ements is the natural result of the epic descending from its original oral form and passing through the hand of a number of different scribes from generation to generation, that is, the paganism is in the original oral form, and when the poem was finally written down, Christian ideas are interpolated. Nevertheless, on the whole, the pagan ideas are more dominant in the poem.

The poem *Beowulf* is written in the form of alliterative verse. In alliterative verse, certain accented words in a line begin with the same consonant sound. Generally, there are three alliterations per line: two in the first half line and one in the first foot of the second half line. Besides alliteration, the poem uses a kind of figurative language called "kenning" or metaphor to add beauty to ordinary objects. For example, in the poem, "helmet bearer" and "hearth-companion" are used for "warrior"; "swan-road", "whale-path" and "seal-path" for "the sea", and "the world candle" for "the sun". The third stylistic device worthy to be mentioned is understatement, which provides the poem with a touch of ironical humour. For example, "not troublesome" is a way of saying "very welcome", and "need not praise" is a way of saying "a right to condemn".

## Section II The Anglo-Norman Period

(1066~1500)

Middle English literature is a combination of French and Anglo-Saxon elements. During the three centuries after the Norman Conquest, large scale of French culture and literature was introduced into England. And because the church had a practical monopoly of literature during much of the Middle Ages, by far the largest proportion of surviving Middle English literature is religious. Literature that the Normans brought to England is remarkable for its bright, romantic tales of love and adventure, while Anglo-Saxon literature is somber and serious. These features can be easily seen in Romance, the most prevailing kind of literature in the feudal England.

Romance as a literary form means a long composition in verse or prose form dealing with the life and adventures of a noble hero, generally a knight. The knights are unfailingly devoted to the king and the church. They are commonly described as riding forth to seek adventures, involving in a large amount of fighting for their lords and always encountering romantic love affairs. In romances, loyalty to king and lord is repeatedly emphasized. Romance as a form of literature, is the upper class literature. The romances are always tales of the noble, they are composed to entertain the noble, and in most cases they are composed by the poets patronized by the noble. In a word, romance has nothing to do with the common people.

The great majority of Romances deal with three major themes: "The Matter of Britain", about the adventures of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table; "The Matter of France", about stories concerning Emperor Charlemagne and his peers; and "The Matter of Rome", about stories concerning Alexander the Great and so forth. Of these all, the legend of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table is comparatively important in the history of English literature. The Arthurian legend has its origin in Celtic legends. There are many cycles of Arthurian romances, among which the anonymous *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* in alliterative verse is the culmination.

Besides the literature for upper class, folk literature also emerged in feudal England. These writings are generally the complaint of peasants' miseries under



the cruel suppression of the ruling class. Among these is one titled *Piers the Plowman*, by William Langland. Langland was probably a priest of the lowest status. His life experience taught him to see the miseries of the common people. His poem *Piers the Plowman* begins with a vision of a “field full of folk” and then in a long and complicated succession of scenes he portrays realistically almost every side of the 14th century life. He exposes the corruption of the wealthy and the inadequacy of the government. To Langland the only salvation lies in honest labour and in the service to Christ.