



高等教育“十二五”规划教材

新 编 英国文学史及 选 读 赏 析

XINBIAN YINGGUO WENXUESHI JI XUANDU SHANGXI

English literature

黄 吟 李冬鹏 编著
王建光 范艳宏 秦 思

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高等教育“十二五”规划教材

新编英国文学史及选读赏析

(维多利亚至当代部分)

A New Course Book of British Literature and Reading Appreciation

(From Victorian Age to Contemporary Period)

编 著 黄 吟 李冬鹏
王建光 范艳宏 秦 思



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前 言



本书是专为普通高校英语专业本科生学习英国文学知识而编写的一本专业教材。普通高校英美文学课学时较少,具有相当数量的学生来自理科,人文社会背景知识较薄弱。面对这种现状,我们编写了这本教材,其目的是通过通俗易懂的英国文学文本材料,培养学生学习英国文学的兴趣及对英国名家经典作品的感受力,进而提高其文学鉴赏力。

在本书的编写过程中,我们根据普通高校英语专业英国文学课教学的实际情况,参考了国内外许多著名的英国文学版本,精编了英国文学从维多利亚时期至当代这一期间的代表作家和作品,本着新颖、合理、实用的原则进行了编写。在本书的编写过程中,我们特别注意了以下几个方面:

1. 由于英国文学作品语言的特点,其阅读难度较高。因此,普通高校学生在学习英国文学课程时,兴趣索然。在本书编写过程中,我们尽量采用通俗易懂的语言,并且在每篇选文前,编写了整部作品的内容梗概,然后撰写了所选篇章的英文赏析或导读以求更好地帮助学生解读文本。

2. 鉴于英国文学教学和研究的现状及学习者的实际需求,我们在本教材的编写过程中既考虑了选择名家经典作品,又兼顾了学生考研的重点、热点作品的选取。在研究了诸多国内外英国文学教材后,我们发现目前英国文学教材对当代英国文学部分选材较少,而另一些教材虽选择了当代英国文学部分,但是赏析和导读多为中文。所以,我们在本教材的撰写过程中,加大了对当代文学热点作家作品的取材和编撰,并全部用英文撰写了作品的导读和赏析。由于普通高校学时所限和本书篇幅所限,对未选择其作品的作家,在每个时代总序中也进行了概括性的介绍。

3. 在选读作品的取舍上,我们本着典型、新颖和可读的原则来选取作品。为了使选读作品具有上述特点,本书绝大部分选文的章节均属国内首次选用。为了配合教师教学和学生自学,我们按照有助于学习者理解的体系编写作家的思想风格、作品主题、人物塑造、艺术特色以及导读或赏析,以期达到抛砖引



玉的效果。

4. 本书所选作品均出自英文原版图书。需要说明的是，编者除了对一些不规范的标点符号进行了简单的修改外，对于原文作品中的不规则拼写和不规范的语法都予以保留，以达到忠实于作品原貌的目的。

本书编写者均在全日制高等学校任教，并多为从事英美文学教学多年的骨干教师。本书系编者多年教学经验和研究的一些总结。编写的目的是和广大同行进行交流，以期进行更完善的英国文学教学研究和探讨。

本书主要由黄吟撰写，李冬鹏、王建光参与了部分篇章的撰写工作，范艳宏和秦思负责本书的打字与校对工作。本书在编写过程中，长春大学外国语学院的孟育风教授给予了教材建构方面的建议，在此谨向她表示感谢。

由于本书多人执笔，水平、风格各异，出现错误在所难免，恳请广大读者批评指正。

作 者

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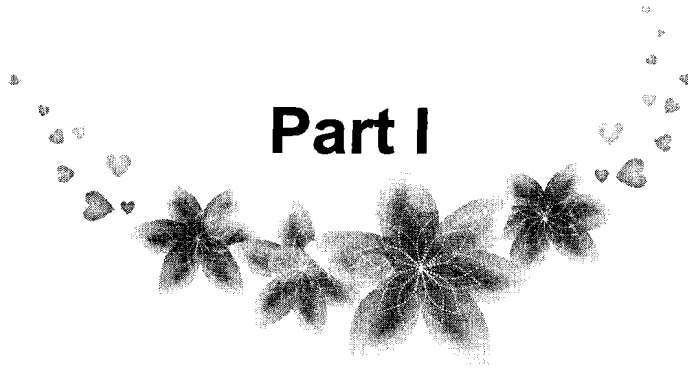
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British Literature of the Victorian Age

Victorian age is one of the most important eras in English literary history. In this era, great changes have taken place in Britain. Great social transformation emerges in politics, ideology, society, and scientific innovation. Complicated social conditions, and a variety of political and philosophical doctrines and trends lead to the prosperity of literature. Many classical works are produced and a large number of world-famous writers flower in this complex and paradoxical age.

1. The Survey to the Victorian Age Literature

The Victorian age refers to the period of Queen Victoria's reign from 1837 to 1901, which is one of the most important epoches in English history. This age witnesses a variety of changes in society.

The development of capitalism spawned the rise of the bourgeois. The 1688 Palace Coup indicated the formal establishment of the Constitutional Monarchy in England. The capitalists began to play a more important role in political power against the old aristocracy. The bourgeois' struggle for power ended in its victory over the aristocracy. Having its solid positions at home, English bourgeois began its colonial expansion all over the world. The country was in possession of many colonies overseas, competing for world markets with other powerful countries. As a

result, the contradiction between England and other nations was intensified. With the introduction of the Steam Engine, England was possible for the capitalists to hire workers, not excluding women and children at a very low pay. By extorting workers' surplus value, they began their primitive capital accumulation. From the third decades of the 19th century the contradiction between the capitalists and working class was sharpened. The misery of workers led to an upsurge of labor movement and the organization of workers into unions. The Depression of 1837 allowed the protest organizations to arouse a working class movement, known as the Chartism with intention of changing English government into a democratic one. The Chartist Movement was so popular that thousands of English people demonstrated and signed their petitions several times. The country was threatened by both domestic and foreign unrest.

Victorian age was flooded with tremendous reformation of politics, economy and culture. At that time, the English Industrial Revolution in the second half of the 18th century continued, and the capitalism first took its shape in England. The Industrial Revolution accelerated scientific invention and technological revolution. For example, in 1785 James Watt invented the Steam Engine, which marked a turning point in technological development. Such new invention laid a firm foundation for the fast development of steel, iron, and coal industries in the country. The increased production and subsequent trade development promoted the English transportation revolution. In 1814 Stephenson, an English inventor, designed his first steam locomotive that brought about the new age of English industry.

Since trade and commerce grew rapidly, peasants in England were driven to sell their houses and land, pouring into crowded cities, becoming laborers who earned their livings by slaving in the capitalists' factories, and thus England grew from an agricultural country into an industrialized one.

Development of productivity enlarged people's vision and increased their interest in scientific knowledge. In 1859 Darwin published his *Origin of Species*, whose theory shocked clergymen. He suggested that man evolved from apes instead of being made by God. Darwin's idea presented material evidence to prove the theory of free competition. Therefore such free competition and individualism became two important elements in the British capitalist values. New ideological trends were constantly emerging: democratic doctrine, feminism, socialism and Marxism, which later put a great influence on English writers. The change in people's outlook and their eagerness to gain useful knowledge made it possible for a

group of writers to arise.

From 1830s to 1840s, realism, a new literary movement which advocated presentation of details of actual life in art rose in France. Then it was copied by European and American writers. English realists wrote objectively and genuinely about the life of English people. Realism became the mainstream of the 19th century literature. English realistic literature was in full swing in the latter time of 1830s. Novels occupied the dominant position in Victorian age. The most eminent representative in Victorian age of English realism literature was Charles Dickens. In 1837 his first realistic work *The Paper of Pickwick* was published. Following Dickens, another leading figure of English realism, William Makepeace Thackeray published his important realistic works in 1840s. Mrs. Gaskell, the Brontë sisters and George Eliot stepped on the literary stage. English realistic novels were on the vast scene of prosperity unprecedentedly.

With the development of capitalism, England grew up into a powerful country, but its economic prosperity was only on surface, for there existed anxiety and worries beneath it. From 1857, England was hit by economic crisis from time to time which caused sufferings of the ordinary people. Under such circumstance, critical realism, as a new literary trend, emerged from the tense class struggle. Many writers touched the sore spot and exposed the frauds of the capitalist society by describing the miserable reality of the common people as well as criticizing the capitalist system. The critical realistic writers drew an outline of the chief features of the English society with much vividness and great artistic skill, condemned the capitalist society from a democratic perspective and delineated the crying characterization of bourgeois reality. In the 1840s, there flourished some great critical realists, represented by Charles Dickens, William Makepeace Thackeray etc. *Oliver Twist* by Dickens and *Vanity Fair* by Thackeray became the most typical works of English critical realism.

Victorian age witnessed the feminist movement which aroused the flourishing of women writers. Some gifted women novelists of the 19th century made their great contributions to the development of English novel. The Brontë sisters sought to establish guiding values to other individuals or to society at large. Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* built up British values from different respects. George Eliot was another remarkable woman writer in this age. She took a great interest in social and philosophical problems. Her important works included *Adam Bede* (1859), *The Mill on the Floss* (1860), *Silas Marner*

(1861), and *Middlemarch* (1871–1872). Mrs. Gaskell was one of the first English writers who pricked the conscience of industrial England through her description and analysis of the working class and the class conflicts. Her first novel, *Mary Barton*, reflected the severe class struggle in Manchester.

At the end of the 19th century, a famous literary figure, Thomas Hardy began to show his talent for both novel and poetry. As a 19th century novelist, he produced his famous “Wessex novels” which were set mostly in his hometown. These novels mainly depicted different conflicts between characters and environment and reflected a deep sense of loss for the passing social order, contrasting the rural values with the newer development caused by social changes. Hardy’s another devotion to English literature was embodied in his poetry which showed Victorian and modern techniques and tastes.

The year of 1832 witnessed the death of Walter Scott, a very famous romantic historical novelist. With a large number of romantic writers’ passing away, romantic poetry seemed to come to an end, but English poetry did not really stop developing because the new generation of poets appeared. Among them, there were four notable poets who became similarly absorbed in Victorian social issues and did much to perfect the form of English poetry. Alfred Tennyson, for example, was the most representative and also the most popular poet of the Victorian England. Affected by the spiritual unrest stemmed from the sharpening class confrontation, complicated philosophical doctrines and impact of new science and technology, Tennyson made his wide exploration of social problems in his early works, but with the emergence of modern prose, poetry gave its way to novel, so he dedicated himself to the inquiry of religious faith and his personal emotions. In his life Tennyson wrote some famous elegies including the most famous *In Memoriam* (1850), and *Idylls of the King* (1859–1885). Another famous Victorian poet, Robert Browning, did more than any other Victorians to modern poetry. His chief contribution to English literature consisted in his unique dramatic monologue. *Dramatic Romances and Lyrics* (1841–1846), *Men and Women* (1888), and the two collections of his short poems became the classics of the Victorian age. Following Tennyson and Browning, Mathew Arnold created more romantic lyrical poems, standing apart from his contemporaries as a more subtle and balanced thinker. His poem, *Dover Beach* (1867), expressed a sorrowful, disillusioned pessimism over the human plight but a strong sense of duty in the changing times. Elizabeth Barrett Browning, wife of Robert Browning, was the most remarkable woman poet. She

produced a lot of lyrical poems drawn on her great natural abilities and a wide range of readings about Homer in the original Greek and the *Bible* in Hebrew. She always concerned herself with social and political problems. The publication of her short poem *The Cry of the Children* criticized the criminal system of child labor which was popular in the 19th century England. Her *Sonnets from Portuguese*, beautiful lyrics which expressed a woman's love, was regarded as the finest sonnets written in any language since Shakespeare.

In addition to the flourishing of novels and poetry, different philosophical Victorian doctrines prevailed in the Victorian time. After 1840s, British people became perplexed about the social problems. The frequent economic crisis, many contradictions between capitalists and workers and the rapid social transformations provoked heated debate in the philosophical circle. A variety of theorists each aired their own political views. The most influential philosophical trend of this period was the philosophy of Utilitarianism established by Jeremy Bentham, a philosopher and thinker and continued by John Stuart Mill. It emphasized the foundation and value of any institution; government and church were determined by the question of whether such value could contribute or not to the greatest happiness of the greatest number. It was evident that this doctrine was beneficial to the industrial capitalists because "the greatest happiness of the great number" mentioned by Utilitarianism philosophers represented the interest of most of the English capitalists rather than that of the majority of English people. Other thinkers and writers such as Thomas Carlyle, Charles Kingsley, and Benjamin Disraeli opposed such point of view. Similarly alienated by materialism and commercialism of the period, Thomas Carlyle, a great Victorian prose writer advanced a heroic philosophy that "history of the world is the biography of great men." In his important books such as *Sartor Resartus*, and *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History*, he displayed the spiritual crisis in his time and clarified that the significance of human value rested with work, and people should stop worrying about themselves and go to work under leaders' guidance by his historical point of view of hero in a particular style.

Chartist literature derived from the great historical event—Chartist Movement occurred in the latter time of the 19th century in England. With the aggravation of the contradictions inherent in the capitalist system, the gap between the rich and the poor was widened. The unemployment and inhuman working conditions and meager income prompted the birth of working-class organizations. Several petitions

to the Parliament for bettering the workers' treatment were put up. This was the well-known People's Charter. Chartist Movement encouraged the outcome of Chartist literary works. In addition to the political pamphlets and essays on the social issues published in newspapers and magazines, these Chartist literary works also included poetry and short story concerning the conflict between the capitalists and working class. The greatest Chartist poet was Ernest Jones. His poem *The Song of the Lower Classes* and other lyrics with the theme of overturning the evil exploiting system spread far and wide among workers. Thomas Cooper and William James Linton were other outstanding Chartist figures who fought and wrote for the workers' emancipation. For years, they composed their emancipations for a Chartist magazine *The Poor Man's Guardian*.

At the end of the 19th century, some English aesthetes such as Ruskin, Pater and Wilde launched an aesthetic movement influenced by French poets and writers. They set forth their own aesthetic notion—art for art's sake. Oscar Wilde was the representative of this movement.

2. Novel

From the fourth decade to the end of the 19th century, groups of novelists such as Dickens, Thackeray, the Brontë sisters and Mrs. Gaskell became popular with their novels on the topic of social criticism. Dickens' *Great Expectations* and *Oliver Twist*, Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*, Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* and Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Height* reflected the reality of various conflicts existing in the Victorian age and exposed the dark side of the capitalist system to a large extent. Thomas Hardy, a famous novelist and poet, was one of the representatives of English critical realism at the turn of the 19th century. His principal works were the "Wessex novels". He truthfully depicted the impoverishment and decay of small farmers who became the hired field hands roaming the country in search of seasonal jobs. Hardy was pained to see the deterioration of the patriarchal mode of life in rural England. *Tess of the D'Urbervilles* was his most typical book.

2.1 Charles Dickens

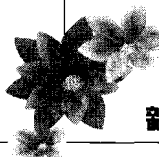
Charles Dickens is probably the most outstanding English novelist and also the representative of English realism in the 19th century. He devotes his talent to the exposure of oppression and injustice of English society in his time. His complex

plots, vivid characters, epic stories and exhaustive description of the contemporary life in his novel are unforgettable.

Charles John Huffam Dickens was born in Portsmouth on February 7, 1812 in the south of England. His father John Dickens was a dockyard clerk. Dickens' family moved to the suburb of London when he was six. Since Dickens' father could not handle his finance and got heavily in debt, he was put into debtors' prison. To support his family, 12-year old Dickens had to work in a shoe polish factory. This was the deepest wound in his young soul, the one cruelty that he would never forget, which was later reflected vividly in his novels. His classical works *Oliver Twist*, *Great Expectations*, and *David Copperfield* all recorded the story of his tragedy in his childhood.

When he was fifteen, he found a clerk job in a solicitor's office and taught himself shorthand. Then he made himself a reporter for transcribing the life around him. In 1835, he met Catherine Horgarth and married her the next year. Under the pen name "Boz", Dickens began to write his texts entitled *The Sketches by "Boz"* and achieved his success for it. His "Boz" sketches in the *Monthly Magazine* were recalled. The first monthly number came out in April, 1836, bearing the title *The Posthumous Papers of the Pickwick Club*. The celebration of this novel encouraged Dickens to turn himself into a professional writer.

In all his life, Dickens authored fifteen novels. Undoubtedly, he was a talented and productive writer. Dickens' writing periods could be classified into three periods: the early period, the mature period and the later period. In his early period (1836–1841), he published six books: *Sketches by "Boz"* (1836), *The Pickwick Papers* (1837), *Oliver Twist* (1838), *Nicholas Nickleby* (1838), *The Old Curiosity Shop* (1840–1841) and *Barnaby Rudge* (1841). From his first two books, Dickens' humor, high spirit and optimism could be read between lines. Dickens' first successful novel was *The Pickwick Papers*, which stated the experience and adventure of Samuel Pickwick and his servant Sam Weller. The vivid description of Pickwick's benevolence and goodness of heart and Sam Weller's wit and shrewdness rendered the novel to gain the immediate success. While the plot was loosely sustained, the whole thing was interesting, funny and vividly real with its comic episodes. The immense success of *The Sketches by "Boz"* and *The Posthumous Papers of The Pickwick Club* made Dickens able to write just what he liked. In 1837, he began with his first novel of his bitter social criticism *Oliver Twist*. The novel was completed in 1839. It depicted Oliver, a poor



orphan's miserable experience in his childhood. *Oliver Twist* was born and lived in a workhouse and suffered from starvation and cruel treatment. Then he was trapped in the hands of Fagin and was compelled to be a pocket picker living in the abyss of suffering. Oliver's childhood experience was the portrayal of the low class people in the Victorian age. *Nicholas Nickleby* repeated the sentimental theme of *Oliver Twist*. It uncovered the horrors of a typical English boarding school. The novel indicated such reality that the down-trodden pupils with their parents of moderate means were exploited by the school master cruelly without getting any real education. *The Old Curiosity Shop* told the story of how the keeper of the old curiosity shop, Trent and his granddaughter, Nell settled down in an out-of-the-way village to shun the user's chase from London and finally died sadly one after another. Dickens' early novels accurately and genuinely exposed the condition of England and condemned the oppression and injustice in the Victorian society from the workhouse where Oliver lived, the typical English boarding school run by Mr. Squeers and the debtor's prison, the great national institution. Dickens moulded some benevolent gentlemen in his early novels and designed happy endings in some of these novels with the purpose of indicating that virtue and benevolence could dispel the misunderstanding between the upper class and the lower class. It was obvious that his view was far more optimistic.

Dickens' mature period started in 1842. This year he paid the long-contemplated visit to America, his first tour abroad, which had a great influence on his works. What Dickens heard and saw in this so-called democratic and free country impressed him most. In America he found there was nothing but the corruption and selfishness brought about by money and power. His illusions of this democratic country had finally been cast away. This particular voyage led to the production of *American Note* (1842), which attacked the false democracy of American society and the evil of black slavery, and *Martin Chuzzlewit* (1843-1845), one of Dickens' most famous social satires. Dickens aimed at the hypocrisy and selfishness bore on both English and American bourgeoisie. In the year 1843, *A Christmas Carol*, the first of the five enduring Christmas books, came out. Following it were *The Chimes*, *The Cricket on the Hearth*, *The Battle of Life* and *The Hunted Man*. What Dickens illustrated in the five Christmas stories was to claim the right of all the common people, even the poorest to enjoy themselves in their own way and to induce people to be kind to others.

Dombey and Son appeared during 1846–1848. It marked Dickens' style had become more mature, for he successfully brought a string of episodes into a tight narrative. Meanwhile Dickens' social criticism in this novel became more bitter and powerful. The novel stated that Dombey, the owner of a shipping house, was a cold-blooded and arrogant man, who cared money and business of his firm much more than anything else, even his family members. At the beginning of the story, Dombey's first wife gave birth to a son Paul, for him, and then died in childbirth. Not long after Paul was taken life by the strick education in school. To hope for an heir earnestly he got remarried to Edith, a beautiful and proud woman. Dombey's selfishness and hard-heartedness made a crack in their relation. Edith eloped with Carker, a villain who was a manager of Dombey's company. In a financial crisis Dombey lost his fortune, and had to live in the solitary state. Eventually he was taken care of by his daughter whom he had neglected before. *Dombey and Son* reflected Dickens' social criticism of money-worship in the capitalist England. *David Copperfield* was published with curious tenderness, for there was in it something of what young Dickens was, and something of what the young Dickens wanted to be. The story was told in the first person, the hero David Copperfield. It stated David Copperfield's experience from his unhappy childhood to his success of being a man in the society through his extremely hard and bitter struggle. This novel seemed to be another Dickens' autobiographical novel partly based on his memory of the life in the blacking factory. Dickens painted the reality of present English society by David's personal life, by the abundance of life and vitality, the range of characters, and the close-knit texture of the story.

During the 1850s and 1860s, Dickens' literary career was in the period of full bloom. His many important later novels, such as *The Bleak House* (1852–1853), *Hard Times* (1854), *Little Dorrit* (1855–1857), *A Tale of Two Cities* (1859), *Great Expectations* (1860–1861), were published and printed.

Dickens' exposure and social criticism of the capitalist society in his novels became, to a large extent, most incisive in his third writing period, because with the development of capitalism, the gap between management and workers had been widened. The more exploitation and oppression the capitalists exerted on the working class, the more rebellions the workers made. Confronted to such harsh reality, Dickens abandoned his former optimistic ideas and used his pen to expose the darkness and corruption of the capitalism through his symbolic characters, fable stories and a realistic touch. The chief motif of *The Bleak House* was used to show

Dickens' objection to the abuses of the English High Court in the spring of 1852. The tale centered round a lawsuit of Jarndyce and the case of Jarndyce's inheritance of a family fortune had been unadjudicated for twenty years. As a result, some parties to the lawsuit had lost their property, youth, health, even lives. At the beginning of this novel the description of fog symbolized the rotten court system and the Victorian capitalism.

Hard Times was Dickens' masterpiece following *The Bleak House* in 1854, the main plot of which dealt with the failure of Mr. Gradgrind, a school master and Mr. Bunderby, a businessman's Utilitarian philosophy—a heartless principle of human life. Dickens satirized this, saying: the relation between man and man was a kind of cash transaction. Mr. Gradgrind inculcated this “facts” philosophy into imbuing his children and students. According to this principle he married his daughter, young Louisa, to the old Bunderby. This unhappy marriage made her a victim of her father's educational theory. It was this educational theory that made his son Tom reduced into a thief. The condemnation of the inhuman Utilitarian philosophy and the evil nature of the society ran through the whole novel.

A Tale of Two Cities was one of Dickens' most important novels. It covered something to Carlyle's *The French Revolution* and something to the old melodrama *The Dead Heart*. The story was set in the two cities of Paris and London during the French Revolution. The honest and young doctor Manette was put into the Bastille Prison because he disclosed that St. Evremonde and his younger brother kidnapped a girl and wounded her brother who came to rescue her and led to their death. After 18 years he was set free, and then he went to London living with her daughter Lucie. The nephew of the marquis, Charles Darney fell in love with Lucie and married her. After the French Revolution took place Darney went to Paris and tried to save the loyal house-keeper, but he himself was involved into a trial and sentenced to death. At last, a young lawyer assistant Carton, who also had deep love for Lucie, and whose appearance resembled Darney, rescued him and took his position to the scaffold. In this novel Dickens had a strong historic bent on the one hand: he presented French aristocrats' oppression and exploitation of people ruthlessly and illustrated the consequence of the French Revolution in great details; on the other hand, the author criticized both of the violence of the mob represented by the Defarges, and the abuses of the aristocracy represented by the marquis who prompted the revolution.

Little Dorrit ridiculed that government branches performed their duty in the