

英国文学名家导读丛书（影印本）
Preface books

莎士比亚悲剧导读



A Preface to

*Shakespeare's
Tragedies*

〔英〕Michael Mangan 著



北京大学出版社
PEKING UNIVERSITY PRESS

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著作权合同登记 图字:01-2004-5648 号

图书在版编目(CIP)数据

莎士比亚悲剧导读/(英)Michael Mangan 著. —北京:北京大学出版社,
2005.3

(英国文学名家导读丛书影印本)

ISBN 7-301-08437-4

I. 莎… II. M… III. 悲剧—文学欣赏—英国—中世纪—英文 IV.
I 106

中国版本图书馆 CIP 数据核字(2004)第 132766 号

This edition of *A Preface to Shakespeare's Tragedies*, First Edition is published
by arrangement with Pearson Education Limited.

书 名: 莎士比亚悲剧导读

著作责任者:〔英〕Michael Mangan 著

责任编辑:汪晓丹

标准书号:ISBN 7-301-08437-4/H·1383

出版发行:北京大学出版社

地 址:北京市海淀区成府路 205 号 100081

网 址: <http://cbs.pku.edu.cn>

电子信箱: zpup@pup.pku.edu.cn

电 话: 邮购部 62752015 发行部 62750672 编辑部 62765014

排 版 者: 兴盛达打字服务社 82715400

印 刷 者: 北京原创阳光印业有限公司

650 毫米×980 毫米 16 开本 16.5印张 260 千字

2005 年 3 月第 1 版 2005 年 3 月第 1 次印刷

定 价: 22.00 元

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总 序

1970年英国朗文出版集团 Pearson 教育出版社出版了《华兹华斯导读》，作者是华兹华斯研究专家约翰·珀金斯。该书首先提供华兹华斯的基本信息，介绍诗人的教育背景、哲学和宗教思想，特别强调了他与英国当时经济发展的关系，随后对华兹华斯各个时期代表作品进行深入细致的解读，分析其诗歌创作的成就及其特点，最后提供相关资料，如华兹华斯圈子内的人、阅读书目等信息。《华兹华斯导读》是一部学习和研究华兹华斯诗歌极为有用的参考书，深受学生、教师和研究工作者欢迎。时隔多年，Pearson 教育出版社又推出《华兹华斯导读》修订版，原作者对该书内容作了调整，并增加对自传体长诗《序曲》的论述。《华兹华斯导读》是 Pearson 教育出版社出版的“英国文学名家导读丛书”第一册，入选该丛书的其他名家有莎士比亚、弥尔顿、邓恩、斯威夫特、蒲柏、约翰逊、雪莱、济慈、奥斯丁、狄更斯、勃朗特姐妹、霍普金斯、王尔德、哈代、康拉德、H. G. 威尔斯、E. M. 福斯特、欧文、劳伦斯、庞德、T. S. 艾略特、乔伊斯、奥威尔、格林等，在时间上涵盖文艺复兴、新古典主义、浪漫主义、现实主义、现代主义及战后等不同历史阶段，在文体上包括小说、诗歌、戏剧等文学样式。

“英国文学名家导读丛书”作为一套“学术与研究丛书”，旨在向英国名家作品的读者提供“现代和权威的导引”，帮助他们克服在阅读时遇到的特有的困难，达到“智性理解和艺术欣赏”之目的。一如《华兹华斯导读》，该丛书各册的结构一般分为三个部分，第一部分是关于作家的生平经历，所处的历史时代背景，所受到的文学、文化、宗教、哲学思潮的影响。第二部分是评论研究，以文本分析为主，涉及作家的代表性作品、创作思想、艺术手法，同时展示各种研究视角。第三部分是参考信息，包括对作家有重要影响或与作家关系密切的人物的简介、较为完备的研究书目等内容。

“英国文学名家导读丛书”各册的作者均为学有所成的专家学者,他们学术研究功底深厚,对英语文学文化传统以及当代西方文学理论有深入了解,注意将作家及其作品置于历史和社会文化背景之下,对文本进行深度解读,论证充分,剖析精辟,有不少独到的见解,形成了鲜明特色。例如,《莎士比亚喜剧导读》从研究笑的社会功能入手,分析莎剧中的幽默和丑角,将伊丽莎白时代观众对喜剧的期待与二十世纪读者对莎士比亚喜剧的接受进行区别。《莎士比亚悲剧导读》研究莎士比亚四大悲剧,对莎士比亚的语言有精当的论述。《弥尔顿导读》精选诗人不同时期的诗篇进行细读,有效帮助现代读者理解弥尔顿作品中所包含的清教主义思想以及他的诗歌艺术。《奥斯丁导读》对奥斯丁与十八世纪文学的关系进行梳理,详尽分析了她的人物塑造和小说结构,并专门讨论《爱玛》中的两位男性人物。《王尔德导读》按照王尔德的创作轨迹评析他的诗歌、小说、社会喜剧和自传,试图解开他经久不衰的魅力之谜,对王尔德的性倾向问题也有专门论述。《哈代导读》展示了哈代在小说中描写悲剧情感和普遍人性时所表现出来的深度和力度,并有专门章节讨论他的短篇小说和诗歌创作成就。《康拉德导读》揭示了康拉德复杂的欧洲文化思想背景,关于《诺斯特罗摩》的解读成为全书的亮点。《劳伦斯导读》将劳伦斯的生平经历、时代背景与文学创作结合起来考察,对《儿子与情人》和《虹》的评析清晰明了,令人信服。《庞德导读》以较多的篇幅介绍庞德这位有争议的诗人的生活 and 文学、文化、政治背景,对其鸿篇巨制《诗章》内容的复杂性以及诗人在二十世纪诗歌中的地位进行较为客观中肯的评析论述。《艾略特导读》强调了历史文化传统在艾略特生活和文学创作中的重要性,对他的代表作品诗歌《荒原》、《四个四重奏》和诗剧《大教堂谋杀案》作了现代阐释。《乔伊斯导读》分析了乔伊斯作品中的爱尔兰文学意识和现代主义特征,对《一个青年艺术家的画像》、《尤利西斯》和《芬尼根的苏醒》文本的分析解读起到了解惑释疑的功能,是学习乔伊斯小说的良师益友。

“英国文学名家导读丛书”各册均由相关领域的专家学者一人独撰,这保证了书中内容结构的系统性和连贯性。该丛书注重学术严谨性,考证细致,阐释得当,同时,论述力求深入浅出,体现导读的特点,既有综合介绍,又有重点分析,可读性强。丛书的作者把作家的文本适当地穿引在评述之中,从而使得论证有理有据,没有脱离文本。书中采用各种研究视角,对一般读者具有启迪作用。作为教学与研究参考书,该丛书的资料不仅丰富全面,而且准确可靠。参考文献汇总了该领域的研究成果,很有针

对性,是查询相关材料的好助手。分类索引便于读者快捷地了解到所需信息在书中的位置。另外,书中附有珍贵的人物照片、历史地图、插图等,图文并茂成为该丛书的一个特点。

Pearson 教育出版社在上世纪七十年代推出“英国文学名家导读丛书”后,受到读者好评。为使该丛书及时反映学术研究最新进展,扩大其规模 and 影响,Pearson 教育出版社对已出版的导读进行修订再版,并继续出版新的导读。长期以来,我国高校英语文学教学与研究原版书刊匮乏,学生写论文时收集资料成为一大难题,教师和研究人员开展学术研究也受资料不足的制约,影响了研究工作的质量和水平。北京大学出版社决定引进 Pearson 教育出版社的“英国文学名家导读丛书”,将有助于改变这种状况。惠普尔说:“书籍是屹立在时间的汪洋上的灯塔。”对于在英国文学海洋中畅游的众多学子来说,该丛书如同灯塔一样,可以起到指引作用。

“英国文学名家导读丛书”在中国出版,将促进我们国家的英国文学教学和研究工作。

王守仁

南京大学外国语学院教授

2005 年 1 月



Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the staff of the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington DC, who offered invaluable help in the early stages of this book, as did friends and colleagues at the University of Maryland. Maurice Hussey provided patient and expert advice on matters both editorial and academic. Roland Clare and his students in Bristol provided me with a hospitable forum for some of the early ideas on *Hamlet*. Finally, my principal debt is to students and colleagues in the Department of English Literature at the University of Sheffield, and in particular to those involved in the Theatre Workshop there; their contribution to this book is probably far greater than I realize.

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Foreword

The general study of Shakespearean tragedy that I want to consult explores paths through the 1590s that look most promising to us in the 1990s who have been formed by the literature and theatre of our own times. Since Shakespeare is not our contemporary it takes a renaissance scholar such as Michael Mangan to propose the most fruitful areas for discussion in the historical and artistic realms to produce that desirable volume today.

Our theatres, never slackening in the pace of their Shakespearean output, seek a great variety of ways to please the audience. Sometimes we find all-day performances of the English epic plays which remind us of the dawn-to-dusk acting of the York Mysteries, their dramatic ancestors which acted out a larger pattern of history than the tribal rituals of Yorkists and Lancastrians. At other times the greatest individual challenges will be *Hamlet*, *Othello*, *King Lear* and *Macbeth*: for directors and actors to deliver the texts without lapsing into fiascos of egocentricity and for audiences to mark and remember the tones of the spoken rhetoric as it projects inward human and moral issues as they take wing in performance. Here, both singly and briefly in inter-relation, Dr Mangan establishes his highly stimulating critique of these four tragedies. He has a fine touch for selecting key moments and major speeches, discussing them undogmatically, showing how they lay down the exposition, development and dénouement of tragedy and how we ourselves should concentrate upon them.

In the earlier half of the book readers find a variety of topics that grow in significance as the studies proceed. Dwelling upon their attitudes to language, for instance, we are prepared for the high level of the dramatic verse in the plays of the period through which we know subtle and life-like characters. Discussing the foundation of the texts as printed books enables us to study the rhetoric at close quarters. *King Lear*, as an example, now seems to us to have been written by the dramatist twice (in versions printed in 1608 and 1623 respectively) and by an earlier, anonymous figure before him in a chronicle play: all these help us to understand the meanings that Shakespeare elicited from a tale that haunted him as he grew older. The whole of Part III below deserves the closest attention, even if the reader has only a primary interest in one of the four plays at the time. Attending to another play will help the student to become more familiar with Shakespeare's technique of developing his imagery and his control of syntax as keys to the intonation, identity and depth of the characters;



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the decisiveness of their self-deception, their places in the writer's process of staging human understanding and cognition that take us further than our common notions of sympathy. These parts of Michael Mangan's book deserve study and discussion for the illumination they cast upon plays with which we need to engage because as we read them they seem to read us as well.

MAURICE HUSSEY
General Editor

Maurice Hussey died suddenly in June 1991. The Publishers and author would like to pay tribute to his wisdom, inspiration and friendship as Editor of Preface Books. He will be sadly missed.



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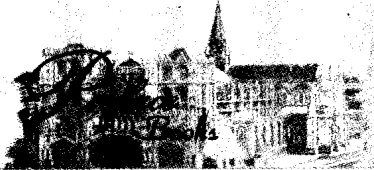
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Introduction

'Soule of the Age!': The Historical Context of Shakespeare's Plays

When William Shakespeare died in 1616, his great contemporary Ben Jonson wrote a poem entitled 'To the Memory of My Beloved, the Author, Mr William Shakespeare'. In it he included the famous phrase, 'He was not of an age, but for all time!', and by this he meant to offer Shakespeare the compliment of suggesting that his writings would live on beyond his own time, and that Shakespeare would attain a kind of 'immortality' because of the fame and virtue of his works. To an extent, as we know, Jonson's literary instinct was right: we cannot say that Shakespeare has proved himself to be 'for all time', but we can say that he has lasted exceptionally well. Three hundred and seventy years after his death he remains a dominant figure in the two major cultural spheres of theatre and education. He still outsells most other playwrights at the box-office; several English-speaking countries have one or more major professional theatre companies dedicated solely or primarily to staging his plays; most educational establishments, whether universities, colleges or examination boards, still regard it as virtually unthinkable to offer a course in English Literature which does not devote a sizeable percentage of its time to the study of his works. And if his pre-eminence as a cultural force is most noticeable in the English-speaking world, it is not confined to that section of the globe. In France, in Japan, in Russia, in Brazil, his works are known, respected, read, studied and performed. Somehow the works of this particular man, writing at a particular time in history, have become universalized.

Shakespeare's undeniable central importance as a cultural figure has come about, not by magic but because of successive generations of readers and audiences responding to his plays and making sense of them. The sense which has been made of them differs from generation to generation – each age, each culture has its own Shakespeare. Sometimes the differences from one age to another are slight, sometimes they are radical. The process is not at an end. The Victorians had one Shakespeare, the early twentieth century had another: the Shakespeare of the late twentieth century is still in the making.

One of the features of the way in which the late twentieth century is constructing its version of Shakespeare involves a renewed willingness to see the man and his works in their relationship to the culture which produced them. This is not to deny the generosity of Jonson's tribute to Shakespeare: rather it is to see that tribute for what it is,

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Jonson seems to offer us a choice between Shakespeare's being 'of an age' and his being 'for all time'. It has become far more common in recent years to argue that he is 'for all time' *because* he is 'of an age', and that he continues to interest us today, not because he is somehow 'above' the culture, the society, the ideas and the politics of his own day, but because he is so deeply engaged with them. Ben Jonson, in fact, knew this well: in another, less-frequently quoted line from the same poem, he calls Shakespeare the 'Soule of the Age!'.

But although this view of Shakespeare is becoming more common, it is by no means a universally-accepted one. What is more, those who disagree with it can point to some formidable allies. Compare what Jonson has to say about Shakespeare with an apparently similar tribute from another major poet, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, in his *Table Talk* (1834): 'I believe Shakespeare was not a whit more intelligible in his own day than he is now . . . except for a few local allusions of no consequence. He is of no age – nor of any religion, or party, or profession. The body and substance of his works came out of the unfathomable depths of his own oceanic mind' (T. Hawkes, *Coleridge and Shakespeare*, Penguin, p. 122). If Coleridge's tribute to Shakespeare sounds rather like Jonson's in some ways, in its overall effect and meaning it is quite different. Jonson knew too well from his own professional career that no writer ever operates outside the constraints of his own time. The playwright most of all, who speaks directly to an audience which is present *en masse*, must be continually aware that what he says is received in a particular context, determined by the events and beliefs of the day.

Coleridge argues otherwise. The four major points of his comment are as follows. The first is the highly debatable one that time does not provide any barrier to a comprehension of Shakespeare, that he is as understandable in 1834 – and therefore, presumably, in the 1990s – as he was in his own day. And yet the language which we speak today (and the language which Coleridge spoke in 1834) is only partly the language of Shakespeare. Words have changed their meaning; some of the ones which Shakespeare used are now obsolete and incomprehensible; grammatical conventions have changed, and ways of putting sentences together which seemed natural to Shakespeare and his contemporaries now seem quaint or confusing; theatrical conventions have changed, and some of the techniques used by Shakespeare may now seem artificial and 'stagey' in the hands of any but the very best actors and directors. But most importantly, the world has changed – and this brings us on to Coleridge's second point.

For Coleridge goes on to argue that if we do lose anything, it is only 'a few local allusions of no consequence'. He is wrong on two counts; firstly, we are separated from Shakespeare (and Coleridge

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was too) not just by a few local allusions, but by the history of our changing culture. The society that Shakespeare writes about is not our society; the customs, habits and ways of feeling that he takes for granted are not those that we take for granted. Take, for example, a single word whose definable meaning has not changed: 'marriage' has the same dictionary definition for us as it would have had for the Elizabethans and Jacobians. But what about the whole web of social practice that lies behind that dictionary definition? Our experiences of actual marriage, our images of marriage, our expectations about how it should affect our life, our beliefs about when one should marry, why one should marry, whether one should marry, what duties and obligations it should bring with it for one or both partners, our attitudes towards divorce – in all of these, how close is our world to that of Shakespeare? And even those 'local allusions' which Coleridge mentions in passing – that is to say, those points of contemporary reference which a dramatist shares with his or her audience – are they really 'of no consequence'? (I shall argue in a later chapter that some of them may be very significant indeed.) The picture which Coleridge is building up is that of a playwright whose works only have value in so far as they are 'eternal'; in so far as they reflect something of Shakespeare's own age, it is being suggested, they are 'of no consequence'.

Coleridge develops this notion even further in his third point, which contains such a strong echo of Ben Jonson: Shakespeare, he asserts, does not really belong to any single age. But Coleridge is saying much more than Jonson ever said, and for him Shakespeare seems not merely to transcend his own age, but never to have belonged to it in the first place. He is not of 'any religion, or party, or profession'. Coleridge is saying more than just that Shakespeare's plays cannot be reduced to the simplistic formulae of various small factions within a society – although even if that were all that he were saying, it might not necessarily be true. But Coleridge seems to be implying that, unlike ordinary mortals, Shakespeare the writer (if not Shakespeare the man) was somehow 'above' what Coleridge here suggests are the comparatively trivial concerns of an age. He concludes his characterization of Shakespeare by attributing 'the body and substance of his works' to the 'unfathomable depths of Shakespeare's mind' – a mind which, once more, he strives to suggest exists without any attachment to the normal patterns of behaviour of a society.

This book is written in the belief that this view – a view which has proved remarkably pervasive and influential – is wrong, and that to approach a writer as if he or she belonged to no age is at best superficial, and at worst totally falsifying. The exact nature of the relationship between a literary work and the society to which that work