

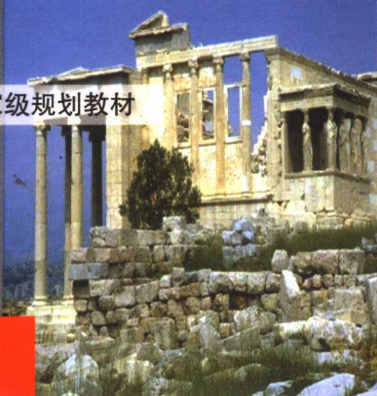


普通高等教育“十一五”国家级规划教材

丛书主编 / 刘 岩

中国大学生必读书

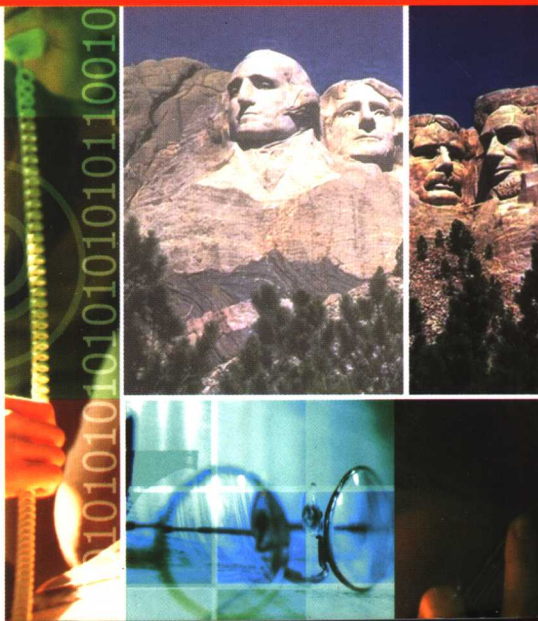
新视角英语文学与文化系列教材



英语短篇小说阅读教程

SELECTED READINGS OF ENGLISH SHORT FICTION

■ 主编 / 马建军



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英语短篇小说阅读教程

Selected Readings of English Short Fiction

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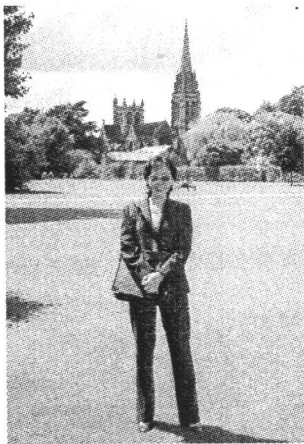
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作者简介



马建军 硕士、副教授、硕士生导师。1975 年进入武汉大学外语学院英文系学习,毕业后留校任教并获得英语文学硕士学位。2000 年调入广东外语外贸大学英语语言文化学院工作,现任文学系主任。长期从事英语专业语言与文学的教学,目前主要承担本科生英国文学史、英语短篇小说、希腊罗马神话与文学文化研究生的西方古典文论和英国小说的教学工作。个人研究方向为英国小说、女作家研究、西方文论等。

总 序

我们所处的时代是一个多元共生的时代。国际政治的多极化走向、经济的全球化趋势、社会的信息化局面以及文化的多元化态势正快速改变着我们的生活。科学技术的高速发展以及新兴学科的不断涌现加剧了世界各国文化的交流、碰撞和合作。如何培养适应新时代发展和需要的人才,这是我们这一代教育工作者面临的新的课题和挑战。

高等学校外语专业教学指导委员会英语组于2000年3月修订的《高等学校英语专业英语教学大纲》明确规定了高等学校英语专业的培养目标:“高等学校英语专业培养具有扎实的英语语言基础和广博的文化知识并能熟练地运用英语在外事、教育、经贸、文化、科技、军事等部门从事翻译、教学、管理、研究等工作的复合型英语人才。”这样的描述为我们编写英语专业教材和组织英语专业教学提供了重要依据。我校在长期的外语教学和研究实践中践行“明德尚行,学贯中西”的校训,着力推进外语与专业的融合,致力于培养一专多能、“双高”(思想素质高、专业水平高)、“两强”(外语实践能力强、信息技术运用能力强)、具有国际视野和创新意识的国际通用型人才。这要求全面提高学生的综合素质,包括拓宽人文学科知识,加强人文素质,培养创新精神,提高独立分析问题和解决问题的能力。

正是在这样的环境和背景下,我院精心策划并组织骨干教师编写了这套《新视角英语文学与文化系列教材》。这套教材可以用于英语专业高年级文学、文化、翻译等专业课和选修课的教学,也可以为其他专业的学生提供必要的相关专业知识。我们期待这套教材能



够以培养学生人文素质为根本原则,以加强学生人文修养、增强学生创新能力为目标,帮助学生批判地吸收世界文化精髓并弘扬中国优秀文化传统。

这套教材的策划和出版得到武汉大学出版社的积极推动和热情支持,没有他们的努力就不会有这套教材的问世。我院教师把多年教学经验积淀成书,每一本教材都凝结着他们的智慧和心血。还有我院一批渴求知识的学生,是他们的勤学好问让我们看到了工作的价值,也正是在教学相长的过程中我们的教材得到了不断的完善。在这套教材即将面世之际,让我们对所有参与教材编写和出版的人士表示衷心的感谢和敬意!也请同行专家对教材的缺憾不吝赐教。

广东外语外贸大学英语语言文化学院 刘岩博士

2006年4月于白云山校区

前 言

英语经典短篇小说阅读与赏析是我国高等英语语言文化教育的传统内容之一,其教学目的旨在通过介绍英语小说的基础知识和基本文学批评视角以及阅读赏析大量的经典原著文本,提高学生对英语文学的兴趣,训练他们对英语文学语言和文化的认知与鉴赏能力,帮助他们成为具有深切的人文关怀、跨文化的现代意识和较高的文学修养的新世纪人才。

教材主要分为英语短篇小说历史简述、主要短篇小说要素介绍和文本阅读三个部分。所选 20 篇故事均为不同时代的名家的经典之作,在形式、主题和文体风格等方面都具有明显的代表性。故事以作家年龄和时代为序排列,但也可以按照主题或风格流派分类,或者根据文学要素选读。课堂教授基本以一周一篇故事的进度为准,余下的文本可作为学生课外(阅读、笔头)作业或调研活动内容,也可以作为开卷考试内容。教授过程提倡以学生为中心、以启发为主的、课前预习、课堂上讨论的模式。

课文前的作者作品简介与文中的注释以及后面的思考题主要用于引导和协助学生对文本的理解。考虑到教材的实践性特征,文学赏析中的一些常用批评理论这里没有提供,只是在思考题中涉及。建议教师根据学生的实际需求,适当予以补充。

本教材用于课堂教学已达十年之久,主要使用对象为英语专业本科学生和具有文学兴趣和相当英语语言能力的非专业本科学生。在教学过程中,我们根据老师与学生们的反馈意见不断进行改进与调整,最终使之成为一本内容充实,量度适中,阅读性强,可操作性



强,系统性较好的英语教材。本教材已被列入“普通高等教育‘十一五’国家级教材规划”。但限于编者水平,教材必然还有尚待改进之处。我们恳请各位专家和学者不吝赐教,同时也欢迎广大学生提出修改建议。

编 者

2006年12月于广外白云山

Preface

This book is among the serial textbooks for college English students compiled and written by the Faculty of English Language and Culture, Guangdong University of Foreign Studies. It is intended for the students who are majoring in English language and literature as well as for those non-English majors who have an equivalent language ability and interest in English literature. The aim of the book is to introduce learners to some basic knowledge about short stories as a genre of literature; to expose them, through examples, to the large treasure house of English literature with its beautiful language and rich meaning of life; to help them pick up some basic skills in literary appreciation and criticism by training them to explicate and analyze literary works of different schools, styles and topics, and to help cultivate in them a literary and cultural understanding that is indispensable in an era of globalization.

The book contains a brief introduction to the history of English short fiction and some of the basic elements in the writing and reading of short fiction. The stories selected here, varying in length, theme, form, and style, are mostly well-known and frequently anthologized in western countries. They not only mark the development of English short fiction over the past hundred years, but also demonstrate the highest achievement in this young and yet thriving literary genre.

The authors included in the textbook are arranged in a chronological order, though users of the book may choose to begin wherever he or she



likes, or keep shifting back and forth in terms of the subject or element. The 20 stories are intended for a teaching syllabus of 16—18 weeks, following a one-story-per-week schedule, and with “The Blue Jar” for introduction and 3—5 for extra reading or writing assignment. The teaching methodology is basically learner-centered. The students are supposed to read the stories and prepare the questions before class and then come to the classroom for presentation and discussion. The brief introduction to the author and the story, the footnotes and the reference questions that immediately follow the texts are intended to aid the students and readers in their reading and comprehension. They are meaningful directions not only to students who are learning to become a good reader of literature, but also useful clues for teachers.

The textbook has been in use in class for over ten years. Many changes have been made in the process in accordance with teachers' classroom practice and students' feedback. So far the evaluation has been very good. And yet, suggestions and criticisms from more users of the textbook are always welcome.

A Brief History of Short Fiction

Stories, in one form or another, have existed throughout the human history. Either factual or fictional, the first tales we know of are those of the oral tradition, about the creation myths of ancient peoples who were trying to explain how things got started. *Works and Days* and *Theogony* by Hesiod (800—600 B. C.) are among the existent early Greek collection of mythical stories. Then there were the beast fables, stories in which animals are shown acting like humans in order to teach a moral lesson. The fables of the Greek slave Aesop (c. 620—560 B. C.) are still well known, and the beast fable form is still used occasionally by modern writers.

Another very early form of the story is the religious parable, meant as explicit didactic lessons justifying the ways of God, like those stories in the *Bible*. The stories of Cane and Abel, Samson, Joseph, Ruth and Jonah in the Old Testament, and the story of the prodigal son told by Jesus Christ in the New Testament are best examples. In the classical and post-classical literature of Greece and Rome, brief tales were often included in larger narrative collections, such as *The Satyricon* of Petronius in the first century A. D. and *The Metamorphoses* of Ovid in the second century. Such early stories were usually a mixture of various centuries and sources, being translated from language to language.

In the medieval Europe, the short stories were mostly written in verse, while prose was reserved for devotional and instructive pieces



until the fourteenth century. Around that time a great variety of secular tales in both verse and prose became popular, most notably the short prose tales of the Italian writer Giovanni Boccaccio (1313—1375). His best-known book is *The Decameron*, a series of a hundred tales told by seven ladies and three gentlemen who fled the plague that devastated Florence in 1348. In the same century, the Englishman Geoffrey Chaucer (? —1400) wrote in emulation of Boccaccio *The Canterbury Tales*, a collection of over twenty religious and secular tales which include several different short fictional genres such as the religious parable, the romance and the fabliau.

As there was widespread distrust of stories as entertainment at the time, Boccaccio and Chaucer took great care to ensure that their stories would give both pleasure and moral instruction. And most of the Renaissance storytellers of Italy, France, Spain and England were part of the Boccaccian tradition and included moral and religious values in their narratives.

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And yet, the history of short story as an established literary form we know today is brief. It wasn't until the eighteenth century, after secularization had gathered force in Europe, that fictional narratives were given the opportunity to evolve into forms we recognize as closer relations of modern stories and novels. These prose forms developed in periodicals popular with European readers from the emerging middle class, who had the education and the leisure to enjoy them. The new periodicals printed a variety of prose — character sketches, gothic tales, rogue stories, simple adventure stories, and sentimental sketches with predictable moral outcomes in which the hero or heroine is rewarded and the villain punished. In France, Voltaire also wrote philosophical tales, Diderot and the Marquis de Sade wrote stories to illustrate their theories of morality and psychology.

In the romantic period in Europe, originality and imagination were



valued above all other qualities in writing as a reaction to the emphasis on tradition and reason that shaped the attitude of the eighteenth-century neoclassical writers, and gradually narratives opened up to include satires and the works of the fancy and romantic imagination.

In view of the long development, it seems foolish to name one person as the founder of the short story or to credit one nation with its development. A form which came to us from the ancient past and was known in both the orient and occident has too rich and complicated an origin to be thus simply defined. Yet in the early years of the nineteenth century a group of writers did consciously formulate the short story as an art form. Notable among them are Walter Scott in England, Washington Irving, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Edgar Allan Poe in America, Merimee, Balzac and Guy de Maupassant in France, and E. T. A. Hoffman in Germany. The person who actually rationalized the artistic practice into a theoretic framework is Poe. In his 1842 review of Hawthorne's *Twice-Told Tales*, he defined short story as a tale that is short enough to be read at a single sitting and that is constructed to leave a vivid, uninterrupted impression upon the reader. His "single effect" theory greatly influenced the development of short story at the time. The development gained such speed and force in America at the time that the modern short story is sometimes called an American art form.

The mid-nineteenth century was a time of great transition in literature as the earlier mode of romanticism slowly gave way to realism, popular magazine tale slowly gave way to the more realistic story. Around the end of the century the tightly constructed "surprise-ending story" of O. Henry (real name William Sidney Porter) became the fashion, and Ambrose Bierce ventured close to the stream-of-consciousness technique which was to be developed by later modernist writers and wrote stories that combined elements of romanticism, realism and modernism. At the



end of the century, realists dominated the short fiction. Two Europeans, the French Guy de Maupassant and the Russian Anton Chekhov were the most influential short story writers. They brought remarkable innovations to the content and form of the short fiction.

While O. Henry and Maupassant's traditional, well-constructed "perfect" narrative remained popular among common readers, experimental writers of the next generation were primarily influenced by Chekhov, developing his loosely constructed and yet more subtly impressionistic and revealing atmosphere in their works. There were some famous modern writers in the early years of the 20th century. In Europe, this group includes Isaac Babel, Joseph Conrad, James Joyce, Franz Kafka, D. H. Lawrence, Katherine Mansfield and Virginia Woolf, and in America, Sherwood Anderson, William Faulkner, Ernest Hemingway, Katherine Ann Porter and Richard Wright. Adopting a more random and interiorized plot, they tried to represent the complicated, isolated, formless and meaningless life of the modern time. Their works seem to get away from the conventional development of plot and characterization, and take on greater psychological interest and philosophical depth.

Today's short stories tend to be varied and multiple-faceted. Though there are the "traditional" stories, including the "surprise-ending story" of de Maupassant and O. Henry, and the tale of "single effect" of Poe, which are plotted and close-ended, there are the "modern" ones, including "the slice of life" story of Chekhov, Katherine Mansfield, Sherwood Anderson and James Joyce, the symbolic and mythic stories, stories of stream-of-consciousness, and others, which are less plotted and more open in the end, and there are stories which are hard to define and classify, for instance, Vladimir Nabokov's "Signs and Symbols". It seems to have a little of everything in it, and yet is not exactly this or



that. And the latest tendency appears to be a continuation or furtherance of its diverted paths, evident in either the most direct, simple narration or the most exhaustive and artistic of all narrative endeavor.

The Elements of Short Fiction

A short story is a relatively brief fictional narrative in prose. It may range in length from 500 words (usually known as short short story) up to 12,000 or 15,000 words. It has certain formal development or elements that mark it out as a distinguished art form. To be able to appreciate or write a short story, it is necessary to know the important elements of short fiction.

Setting

Setting refers both to the time and place of the events in a story. In other words, it is the background against which the action of story occurs. The elements of setting may include specific time period — the time of day or year or century — , geographic location, and general environment such as religion, occupation, moral, and communal life style as well as the conditions of social and political reality.

Setting is often established by description, but it may also be shown through character's action, dialogue or thinking. Although defined as the background, it can have great significance in the story. It not only gives the reader the impression of verisimilitude, but may function as "objective correlative" of the internal life of the character as well. The setting can also affect characters or plot by creating a certain atmosphere or mood, and help portray the characters and develop the theme either



through symbolic suggestion or more direct imagery. But important distinctions must be made between the literal, suggestive, and symbolic uses of the setting — whether it is a realistic “mirroring” of the objective world or suggestive and symbolic of broader meanings, such as the rough moors in *Wuthering Heights*. The lines of interpretation are not always easy to draw.

The function of the setting varies. Sometimes it is minimum and hardly dramatized, but other times it plays a decisive role in establishing the needed atmosphere, such as in Poe’s “single effect” stories, or in the development of the theme as in James Joyce’s *Dubliners*. And when the setting adopts a strong color or flavor in its language, appearance, mentality of people of a particular place or a specific time in history, the story becomes an example of local color or regionalism. William Faulkner and Eudora Welty are noted for their southernness.

Plot

Plot is the sequence of events in a story and refers to their relation to each other. Because of the limited space of short fiction, it usually tends to move towards what Edgar A. Poe called “the single effect”, a culmination that pulls together and resolves the tensions created by the characters and their situations. It can be arranged chronologically or in flashbacks. Sometimes, it is made up of two or more plots which run parallel or with some subsidiary to the other(s). Whatever the strategy, it always includes the basic pattern of a beginning, a middle, and an end coming in natural sequence. Usually there is Set-up, or **Exposition**, in which the characters, the scene, the time, and the situations are introduced. This is followed by the **Rising Action**, which poses and intensifies the complications, building toward a climax or turning point of the story. Then is the moment of the highest tension, the