

<<维多利亚人>>

图书基本信息

书名：<<维多利亚人>>

13位ISBN编号：9787560066479

10位ISBN编号：756006647X

出版时间：2007-6

出版时间：外语教学与研究

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页数：631

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内容概要

《牛津英国文学史—维多利亚人1830—1880(英美文学文库)》迥异于一般文学史写作遵循年代顺序的模式，以对整个社会 and 思想观念产生深远影响的若干重大主题为线索，分析、归纳和总结了1830-1880年这一历史时期英国文学的特点及成因，此外，书的卷末附有数十位维多利亚作家小传，并介绍了其作品的可靠版本及相关的评论专著。本书史料丰富，见解独到，不仅是颇具特色的文学史，亦可作为通论维多利亚社会历史文化的专著，实为不可多得的上佳之作。

摆在读者面前的这部《维多利亚人》，是牛津大学出版社为新世纪策划的十三卷英国文学史系列中的第8卷，也是最早出版的分卷之一。

作者大学英文教授菲利普·戴维斯。

本书打破了在我国的外国文学教学研究中常见的思维定式，以社会和文化背景为主线，分析、归纳和总结了1830-1880年这一历史时期英国文学的特点及成因。

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章节摘录

In what de Tocqueville had characterized as essentially an individualistic nation, Kay and Southwood Smith thus belonged with Edwin Chadwick, in defending the need for state intervention, as from the a new brain centre of society. 'Centralization'-the creation of national laws on public health and town planning, and the use of an inspectorate to ensure their implementation-was the century's most practical version of the long-desired need for a view from outside and above. It came out of the single most coherent secular philosophy of the times-the one overall modernizing system of thought coherently flexible enough to be susceptible to application under many, varying circumstances-namely, Benthamite Utilitarianism. For Bentham and for his closest follower James Mill, the Archimedean lever by which to lift society was the impersonally rational principle of utility, cutting a path through the individualistic thickets of short-sighted sentiment and blind self-interest: the usefulness of any measure was to be calculated at the micro-level in terms of the measurable balance between the basics of pleasure and pain, at the macro-level as to whether it served the greater happiness of the greatest possible number. As progressivist professionals, new middle-class reformers opposing aristocratic dominance and administrative muddle, Kay, Smith, and Chadwick were effectively Benthamites. Yet such were the confused cross-currents of early Victorian England, that Dickens himself could hardly believe that out of the very Utilitarianism which he had satirized in *Hard Times* as the enemy of the poor, there came the organization of social welfare which was the poor's salvation. For perhaps the greatest seeming incongruity of all was that Edwin Chadwick, author of the First Report of the Commissioners for Inquiring into the State of Large Towns and Populous Districts of 1844, had also been the main administrator of the New Poor Law of 1834. Where the 1844 Report was a humane landmark in urging the necessity for statutory improvement in public health, the New Poor Law had insisted that no able-bodied man would receive assistance unless he entered a workhouse-a deliberately not to say punitively 'uninviting place of wholesome restraint' where he would be separated from his wife and children and forced to live under conditions deliberately designed to be lower ('less eligible') than the lowest wage obtainable outside. The difference between 1844 and 1834 not only seemed to be one between humane and inhumane intent, it also looked like a difference in principle between the creation of intervention and its removal. In the case of the New Poor Law it had been argued that the statutory payment of outdoor relief under the old welfare system, offered as an automatic right that could always be counted on, had undermined the poor's capacity for independence, by making the defence against poverty economically unnecessary. What was centralization in matters of public health but just such artificial interference?

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