

Thomas De Quincey

ON MURDER

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论谋杀

ON MURDER

[英] 托马斯·德·昆西 著

Thomas De Quincey

陆平 译



Thomas De Quincey ON MURDER

★ 外国文学名著丛书

从1853年起直至去世，德·昆西编辑了他自己的全集，全集共14卷，出版于1853年至1860年之间。他的文章涉及历史、政治经济学、哲学和文艺理论，他把文学分为两大类——“知识的文学”和“力量的文学”，前者教育读者，后者感动读者。

在“知识的文学”方面，他写有经济著作《三位法学家的对话》、哲学著作《论康德》、教育著作《致失学青年的信》、历史著作《贞德》等。

在“力量的文学”方面，他写有《一个英国吸食鸦片者的自白》、《自传》、《来自深处的叹息》、《英国邮车》、《谋杀，一种优雅的艺术》等。

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在欧美诸国，普通家庭在客厅、壁炉旁或卧室等处，一般都置有一个书架，上面摆满了他们称谓的“家庭读物”。在中国，所谓的家庭常备读物似乎固有所指，通常为菜谱、医疗保健或旅游指南之类，但西方的家庭常备读物却主要是经典的文学艺术作品；这些书不是整整齐齐码在书架上，纯粹为了装饰或摆设，少有开卷，仅供观瞻，而是放在床头、茶几、阳台甚至卫生间，触手可及，可以随时翻阅。出门旅行前也可以顺便带上一册，在候机候车间隙捧而读之，既打发时间，又时时受益。这样的书，父母看过可以传给孩子，孩子看完再传给自己的子女，子子孙孙，代代相传。文化的传承就这样在不知不觉间静悄悄地进行，伟大的文明就这样绵延于世。

令人遗憾的是，以文明悠久著称的中国，在经济飞速发展的今天，却缺少和自己的民族文化地位相对应的普通家庭常备读物。走进一个个越来越宽敞明亮的中国家庭，我们能看见琳琅满目、充满了艺术感的家具，能感受到灯光营造出的朦胧诗意的氛围，却很少能看到一个书架，一个承载人类文明积淀的书架；乘飞机或火车出行，多见旅人们百无聊赖无所事事地等候、聊天、打牌，亦多见时尚杂志或街头小报人手一份，却少见有人手捧一册文学艺术作品在喧嚣的环境中静静阅读。延续了五千年文明的中国人，在现时代表现出的对精神生活的漠视，让人生出一种巨大的遗憾和忧伤……

正是这样的感时伤怀，正是这样的遗憾和失落，正是这样一种久违

了的文明意识，正是这样一种萦绕于心的担当，让我们起意策划出版这样一套充满着人文气息的“家庭书架”。

这是一套在西方文化发展和文明积淀过程中影响久远的读物，这是一套影响了欧美诸民族心灵世界和集体文明无意识的读物，这是一套可以让个体的精神世界变得无比丰富和无比强大的读物，这还是一套人人皆可阅读但充满着贵族气息的读物。

这套“家庭书架”，凝聚着人类文明中最美妙的智慧和最敏锐的灵感，一群最善于思考最长于想象的伟大作者，将神奇而微妙的精神活动进行到底，凝结成人类文明最璀璨的结晶体。

这些作品是思想的圣坛，回响着每个与之结缘的个体在文明深处徜徉徘徊时细微而悠远的脚步声；这些作品是人类语言的丰碑，文字垃圾在这里被无情地埋葬，快餐文化在这里灰飞烟灭。

这套大型汉英双语版图书大致可以分为文学艺术类、传记类、历史类、游记散文、社会文化类等。作者们虽然身份、职业不同——他们或为文学家，或为艺术家，或为政治家，但都以文辞优美著称，即使深奥难测的美学著作，如佩特的《柏拉图和柏拉图主义》，也因作者优美的散文笔法而让人亲近。其他如奥威尔的《政治与英语》、吉卜林的《谈谈我自己》、康拉德的《生活笔记》、罗斯金的《艺术十讲》、杰罗姆的《小说笔记》、兰姆的《兰姆书信精粹》、卢卡斯的《佛罗伦萨的漫游者》、萨克雷的《巴黎速写》、鲍斯韦尔的《伦敦日志（1762—1763）》等，皆出名家之手。这些游记或散文，不仅充满着精神感召的力量，而且因其文辞隽美，还可以作为美文来欣赏、诵读。执一册在手，当是畅快的精神旅行。

众所周知，译事沉痾业已成为当代中国知识领域难以治愈的顽疾，草率、随性、误译、漏译、跳译、畏难等等随处可见。虽然当前仍有少数译者在译事丛林中艰难爬梳并屡有优秀成果问世，但我们已经很难看到当年傅雷先生之于《约翰·克里斯朵夫》及王道乾先生之于《情人》的译事之工了。在今天的译著中，我们看不到修辞，看不到信达雅，看

不到前人遗风，我们看到的是急功近利，看到的是用电脑翻译工具草译出来的种种无厘头。这是翻译者的悲哀，是出版人的悲哀，是读者的悲哀，是文化的悲哀。

在这种恶劣的翻译环境和悲哀的心境中，我们开始了充满挑战的组译议程。组织会聚了许多大师著作的“家庭书架”的翻译出版，于我们而言，与其说是建立出版功业，毋宁说是进入了布满陷阱的出版丛林。我们规避陷阱的种种努力，都是为了给读者朋友提供一个可资借鉴的阅读文本。

我们深知，大师著作的翻译是艰难的，用汉语来传达他们的思想总会留下或多或少的缺憾，甚至我们都怀疑这些思想是根本无法用另外一种语言传达的。这时候“迁就阅读”就必须成为我们出版人唯一的选择。尽管译者和我们都想“用优秀的作品来鼓舞人”，尽管译者和我们都努力地走在通往理想之塔的道路上，但在这些图书即将付梓之际，我们的内心仍然深感惶恐。我们深知，为读者奉献的译文仍然存在着有待克服的种种问题。

但是我们有勇气，有足够的勇气用这种英汉对照的方式将这些文本呈现给我们的读者。一则希望读者可以在英语与汉语的比照下更深地体察语言的精微和文本的精致；一则希望读者朋友在阅读过程中可以方便地提出自己的疑问，指出我们的不足，使这套丛书在今后不断的修订过程中日臻完备。

译事惟艰，出版惟艰。冀希读者朋友们一如既往地支持我们的翻译事业和出版事业。丛书如存有不当之处，希望读者朋友们宽容并谅解。

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论 谋 杀

On the Knocking at the Gate, in Macbeth

FROM my boyish days I had always felt a great perplexity on one point in *Macbeth*. It was this; the knocking at the gate, which succeeds to the murder of Duncan, produced to my feelings an effect for which I never could account. The effect was, that it reflected back upon the murder a peculiar awfulness and a depth of solemnity; yet, however obstinately I endeavored with my understanding to comprehend this, for many years I never could see why it should produce such an effect.

Here I pause for one moment, to exhort the reader never to pay any attention to his understanding when it stands in opposition to any other faculty of his mind. The mere understanding, however useful and indispensable, is the meanest faculty in the human mind, and the most to be distrusted; and yet the great majority of people trust to nothing else; which may do for ordinary life, but not for philosophical purposes. Of this out of ten thousand instances that I might produce, I will cite one. Ask of any person whatsoever, who is not previously prepared for the demand by a knowledge of perspective, to draw in the rudest way the commonest appearance which depends upon the laws of that science; as for instance, to represent the effect of two walls standing at right angles to each other, or the appearance of the houses on each side of a street, as seen by a person looking down the street from one extremity. Now in all cases, unless the person has happened to observe in pictures how it is that artists produce these effects, he will be utterly unable to make the smallest approximation to it. Yet why? For he has actually seen the effect every day of his life. The reason is—that he allows his understanding to overrule his eyes. His understanding, which includes no intuitive knowledge of the laws of vision, can furnish him with no reason why a line which is known and can be proved to be a horizontal line, should not appear a horizontal line; a line that made any angle with the perpendicular less than a right angle, would seem to him to indicate that his houses were all tumbling down together. Accordingly he makes the line of

《麦克白》中敲门场景

自孩提时代开始，我就对《麦克白》中的一个场景感到非常困惑。剧中敲门的事件导致了邓肯被谋杀，它对我的心灵产生了一种长期以来我一直无法解释的冲击效果，使我觉得这个谋杀奇特而深奥，庄严无比。尽管许多年来我一直尽我所能去理解，但我还是搞不清为何这个场景对我会产生这种效果。

我想在此劝诫读者，当他自己的理解与脑海中的其他才能相对立时，千万不要去注重这种理解。这种理解无论多么有用、多么不可或缺，都是人类思想中低劣、不可信的才能。然而大多数人群却相信自己的理解，或许这对于日常的生活是适用的，但它绝对不能为哲学原理服务。此类例子不胜枚举，我这里列出一个。举例来说，我们无法让一个没有丝毫透视基础知识的人按科学原理去粗略地绘制物体的轮廓。让他以一位站在街道尽头的人的视角来描绘两堵垂直的墙，或是描绘街道两侧房屋的外形轮廓，这些都行不通。除非此人看到过艺术家是怎样表现这些效果的，他才可能画得稍微有些像样。既然他每天的的确确看到过这种效果，那么他为何无法将它呈现出来呢？原因就是他的双眼受到了他理解力的支配。他的理解并不包含对于视觉现象的本能知识，并不会告诉他为什么广为人知的、为人证实的水平线条却不呈现出水平的形状，为什么垂直的线条的角度比直角小了一些。理解似乎暗示着他所见到的房屋都是倾斜的。这样，他就将房屋画成水平的线条，当然也就无法表现出所要求的那种效果。这只是一个例子，此类例子还有很多，这些例子的一个共性就是理解不仅支配了眼睛，甚至于完全湮没了眼睛的作用，因为人们确实是知道他们的理解与他们亲眼所见相背，但是他们却采取了荒谬和白痴似的处理方式，因为白痴

his houses a horizontal line, and fails of course to produce the effect demanded. Here then is one instance out of many, in which not only the understanding is allowed to overrule the eyes, but where the understanding is positively allowed to obliterate the eyes as it were, for not only does the man believe the evidence of his understanding in opposition to that of his eyes, but, (what is monstrous!) the idiot is not aware that his eyes ever gave such evidence. He does not know that he has seen (and therefore quoad his consciousness has not seen) that which he has seen every day of his life. But to return from this digression, my understanding could furnish no reason why the knocking at the gate in *Macbeth* should produce any effect, direct or reflected. In fact, my understanding said positively that it could not produce any effect. But I knew better; I felt that it did; and I waited and clung to the problem until further knowledge should enable me to solve it. At length, in 1812, Mr. Williams made his debut on the stage of Ratcliffe Highway, and executed those unparalleled murders which have procured for him such a brilliant and undying reputation. On which murders, by the way, I must observe, that in one respect they have had an ill effect, by making the connoisseur in murder very fastidious in his taste, and dissatisfied by anything that has been since done in that line. All other murders look pale by the deep crimson of his; and, as an amateur once said to me in a querulous tone, "There has been absolutely nothing doing since his time, or nothing that's worth speaking of." But this is wrong; for it is unreasonable to expect all men to be great artists, and born with the genius of Mr. Williams. Now it will be remembered that in the first of these murders, (that of the Marrs) the same incident (of a knocking at the door soon after the work of extermination was complete) did actually occur, which the genius of Shakespeare has invented; and all good judges, and the most eminent dilettanti, acknowledged the felicity of Shakespeare's suggestion as soon as it was actually realized. Here, then, was a fresh proof that I was right in relying on my own feeling in opposition to my understanding; and I again set myself to study the problem; at length I solved it to my own satisfaction; and my solution is this. Murder in ordinary cases, where the sympathy is wholly directed to the case of the murdered person, is an incident of coarse and vulgar horror; and for this reason, that it flings the interest exclusively upon the natural but ignoble instinct by which we cleave to life; an instinct, which, as being indispensable to the primal law of self-preservation, is the same in kind, (though different in degree) amongst all living creatures; this instinct therefore, because it annihilates all distinctions, and degrades the greatest of men to the level of "the poor beetle that we tread on", exhibits human nature in its most abject and humiliating attitude. Such an attitude would little suit the purposes of the poet. What then must he do? He must throw the interest on the murderer. Our sympathy must be with him; (of course I mean a sympathy of comprehension, a

不会意识到他们的双眼曾给予过他们类似证据，白痴不会知道他又一次看见了（因此就这点而言他没有意识到）他每天都会看见的景象。现在，重新回到我们的主题，就我的理解而言，它并不能使我明白为什么《麦克白》剧中敲门情节对我来说会产生直接或具有反省作用的效果。事实上，我的理解对我并没有产生任何效果，但我体会到的比我所理解到的内容更丰富。我体会到敲门情节确实产生了某种效果，并且我一直思索着这个问题，等待有一天自己获得更丰富的知识来解决这个问题。1812年，威廉斯先生在拉特克利夫公路上进行了“首次演出”，展现了无与伦比的谋杀，为自己获得了光辉不朽的荣誉。我顺便指出，此类谋杀从某方面来说也有不良的效果，令谋杀鉴赏家的品位更为挑剔，他们无法满足此行业与生俱来的任何特征。在威廉斯先生昂扬激情的演绎下，其他的谋杀都显得苍白无力。曾有位业余谋杀爱好者向我抱怨：“从威廉斯时代开始就再也没有任何真正意义上的谋杀，其他所谓的谋杀都不值得一提。”但这个说法完全错了。我们不能期望每个人都是伟大的艺术家，每个人都具有威廉斯先生的天赋。现在人们将会记得此类谋杀的鼻祖，即（在马尔斯特一节中）发生了类似的事件（谋杀刚结束，就有人敲门了）。这样的情节只有天才的莎士比亚才能构想出来。面当人们理解这个情节后，无论是优秀的评论家还是知名的文艺界专家都对莎士比亚的这种巧妙暗示称赞不已。这个例子说明我确实依赖于自己的感受，而我所依赖的感受与我的理解相对立。我又一次开始研究这个问题，最终，我满意地解决了这个问题，以下是我的结论。通常说来，对于谋杀，我们会完全站在被谋杀者这边，表示出自己的同情和怜悯之心，因为它是人类粗暴的行为，也是令人恐惧的事件。正由于这个原因，谋杀能够格外引起人们对人类本能的兴趣，尽管人类的本能非常低下，但却是人类求生所必需的。本能对各种生物而言都是不可缺少的自我保护意识，具有原始性，（尽管程度可能不同但都）属于同一范畴。由于本能湮没了人类的其他所有特征，并且能够将伟大的人贬低成“可怜的任人践踏的甲虫”，以低贱无比、羞辱性的态度揭示人类的本质。这种态度当然不符合诗人写诗的宗旨。那么诗人必须做什么呢？他必须将读者的兴趣引到凶手身上，我们必须同情凶手（当然我这里所指的同情是一种基于理解的同情，我们需要进入凶手的情感世界，理解他的所作所为，

sympathy by which we enter into his feelings, and are made to understand them,—not a sympathy¹¹¹ of pity or approbation.) In the murdered person all strife of thought, all flux and reflux of passion and of purpose, are crushed by one overwhelming panic; the fear of instant death smites him “with its petrific mace.” But in the murderer, such a murderer as a poet will condescend to, there must be raging some great storm of passion,—jealousy, ambition, vengeance, hatred, — which will create a hell within him; and into this hell we are to look.

In *Macbeth*, for the sake of gratifying his own enormous and teeming faculty of creation, Shakspeare has introduced two murderers; and, as usual in his hands, they are remarkably discriminated; but, though in *Macbeth* the strife of mind is greater than in his wife, the tiger spirit not so awake, and his feelings caught chiefly by contagion from her,—yet, as both were finally involved in the guilt of murder, the murderous mind of necessity is finally to be presumed in both. This was to be expressed; and on its own account, as well as to make it a more proportionable antagonist to the unoffending nature of their victim “the gracious Duncan”, and adequately to expound “the deep damnation of his taking off”, this was to be expressed with peculiar energy. We were to be made to feel that the human nature, i. e., the divine nature of love and mercy, spread through the hearts of all creatures, and seldom utterly withdrawn from man,—was gone, vanished, extinct; and that the fiendish nature had taken its place. And, as this effect is marvellously accomplished in the dialogues and soliloquies themselves, so it is finally consummated by the expedient under consideration; and it is to this that I now solicit the reader's attention. If the reader has ever witnessed a wife, daughter, or sister, in a fainting fit, he may chance to have observed that the most affecting moment in such a spectacle, is that in which a sigh and a stirring announce the recommencement of suspended life. Or, if the reader has ever been present in a vast metropolis, on the day when some great national idol was carried in funeral pomp to his grave, and chancing to walk near the course through which it passed, has felt powerfully, in the silence and desertion of the streets and in the stagnation of ordinary business, the deep interest which at that moment was possessing the heart of man,—if all at once he should hear the death-like stillness broken up by the sound of wheels rattling away from the scene, and making known that the transitory vision was dissolved, he will be aware that at no moment was his sense of the complete suspension and pause in ordinary human concerns so full and affecting, as at that moment when the suspension ceases, and the goings-on of human life are suddenly resumed. All action in any direction is best expounded, measured, and made apprehensible, by reaction. Now apply this to the case in *Macbeth*. Here, as I have said, the retiring of the human heart and the entrance of the fiendish heart was to be expressed and made sensible. Another world has stepped in; and the murderers

并不只是基于怜悯和认可的同情^[1]。对被害者来说，一切的思想变化，一切的热情目标的涌动都被汹涌袭来的恐惧所压垮，对突然死亡的恐惧折磨着他，将其吓呆。但既然诗人需要屈尊于凶手，那么凶手必须具有某些特点，他必定具有强大的情感风暴——嫉妒、野心、复仇、仇恨——这些在他身上就会建立起一个地狱，而我们必须深入这个地狱中进行分析。

在《麦克白》中，莎士比亚体现出自己无与伦比的才能，在剧中他引入了两位凶手，就如他以往剧本中的形象一样，他们受到人们强烈的鄙视。麦克白的思想斗争比他妻子激烈，虎狼般的野心并没有怎么觉醒，他的情感主要受到了妻子的感染，但是他们两个最终都卷入了罪恶的谋杀中，因此对他们两个来说，谋杀的思想已经预先形成。这是剧情所要表达的内容。此外，剧情还要自然地表达出他们对于无辜的牺牲者“邓肯”的越发敌对情绪，清楚地解释为什么他们对邓肯脱衣服会有“深深的诅咒”，要表达出这些需要特别的创造力。这样，我们就能够感受到人类神圣的爱与怜悯的本性从他们身上远去了，消失了，灭亡了，尽管这个本性一般不会从人类身上消失。接着，凶残的本性占据了他们原本美丽的心灵。由于这一震撼性的转变是通过俩人的对话和各自的喃喃自语表现出来的，因此莎士比亚就成功地将观众陷入了沉思的境地。我现在要请读者注意以上问题。如果读者曾经见过自己的妻子或者姐妹处在一种失神的状态，那么他或许正好能够在这个场景中观察到非常具有影响力的一刻：一声叹息、一个刺激激活了暂时停滞的生命。或者某天一位重要的国家级偶像人物的灵车在赶往墓地的路上，而身处大城市中的读者这天正巧从灵车的行经路线旁经过。这时，他能够强烈地感受到街道的寂静，感受到人们日常生活的停滞。此时此刻，占据他脑海的是一种深深的好奇。如果他立刻又听到了打破死寂的马车声响，那么他就会知道这个瞬间的场景消释了。他能感受到人类完全停滞和停顿的时刻非常丰满，极为震撼，因为在短暂的停滞中止的时刻，人类的活动也突然恢复了。人类的反应很好地解释和度量了各种行为，也让人能够理解。现在将以上的情况应用到《麦克白》一剧中。正如我所说的，剧中人类善良一面的退却和罪恶一面的侵入表现得合情合理。一个新世界进入了角色，两位谋杀犯失去了人类所拥有的人性，没有了企图和欲望。他们被作者美化了，成为

are taken out of the region of human things, human purposes, human desires. They are transfigured: Lady Macbeth is "unsexed"; Macbeth has forgot that he was horn of woman; both are conformed to the image of devils; and the world of devils is suddenly revealed. But how shall this be conveyed and made palpable? In order that a new world may step in, this world must for a time disappear. The murderers, and the murder, must be insulated—cut off by an immeasurable gulph from the ordinary tide and succession of human affairs—locked up and sequestered in some deep recess; we must be made sensible that the world of ordinary life is suddenly arrested—laid asleep—tranced—racked into a dread armistice; time must be annihilated; relation to things without abolished; and all must pass self-withdrawn into a deep syncope and suspension of earthly passion. Hence it is, that when the deed is done, when the work of darkness is perfect, then the world of darkness passes away like a pageantry in the clouds; the knocking at the gate is heard; and it makes known audibly that the reaction has commenced; the human has made its reflux upon the fiendish; the pulses of life are beginning to beat again; and the re-establishment of the goings-on of the world in which we live, first makes us profoundly sensible of the awful parenthesis that had suspended them.

O, mighty poet! Thy works are not as those of other men, simply and merely great works of art; but are also like the phenomena of nature, like the sun and the sea, the stars and the flowers,—like frost and snow, rain and dew, hail-storm and thunder, which are to be studied with entire submission of our own faculties, and in the perfect faith that in them there can be no too much or too little, nothing useless or inert—but that, the further we press in our discoveries, the more we shall see proofs of design and self-supporting arrangement where the careless eye had seen nothing but accident!

Notes:

[1] It seems almost ludicrous to guard and explain my use of a word in a situation where it would naturally explain itself. But it has become necessary to do so, in consequence of the unscholarlike use of the word sympathy, at present so general, by which, instead of taking it in its proper sense, as the act of reproducing in our minds the feelings of another, whether for hatred, indignation, love, pity, or approbation, it is made a mere synonyme of the word pity; and hence, instead of saying "sympathy with another", many writers adopt the monstrous barbarism of "sympathy for another".