

# 培根散文集

## The Essays

英汉双语经典系列

Francis Bacon 著 丁大刚 注释

中国对外翻译出版公司

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电 话 / (010) 68002481 68002482

邮 编 / 100044

传 真 / (010) 68002480

E-mail: ctpc@public.bta.net.cn

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## 序 言

弗兰西斯·培根（1561-1626），英国文艺复兴时期最重要的散作家、哲学家。他不但在文学、哲学上多有建树，在自然科学领域里，也取得了重大成就。培根是一位经历了诸多磨难的贵族子弟，复杂多变的生活经历丰富了他的阅历，随之，他的思想更趋成熟，言论深邃而富含哲理。

1597年，《培根散文集》在英国首版后，即以文笔优美、语句简洁、趣味隽永、格言精妙而大受欢迎，多次再版重印，历四百多年而未衰，被译为世界上几乎所有文字。2000年还被美国公众评选为最受喜爱的十本著作之一。它与《蒙田随笔集》、《帕斯卡尔思想录》一起，被人们誉为欧洲近代哲理散文三大经典。

从“论真理”、“论死亡”、“论人的天性”等篇章中，可以看到一个热爱哲学的培根；后从“论高官”、“论王权”、“论野心”等篇章中，可以看到一个热衷于政治，深谙官场运作的培根；从“论爱情”、“论友情”、“论婚姻与独身”等篇章中，可以看到一个富有生活情趣的培根；从“论逆境”、“论幸运”、“论残疾”等篇章中，可以看到一个自强不息的培根；从“论作伪与掩饰”、“论言谈”等篇章中，可以看到一个老于世故的培根。本书的中文译文在参照了水天同先生的经典原译基础上，既保留了原译的风姿，又根据时代需要酌情作了文字的修改，在此特表示对水天同先生的感谢。





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## *Of Truth*

### 论真理

What is truth? said jesting<sup>1</sup> Pilate, and would not stay for an answer. Certainly there be, that delight in giddiness<sup>2</sup>, and count it a bondage to fix a belief; affecting<sup>3</sup> free-will in thinking, as well as in acting. And though the sects of philosophers of that kind be gone, yet there remain certain discoursing<sup>4</sup> wits, which are of the same veins, though there be not so much blood in them, as was in those of the ancients. But it is not only the difficulty and labor, which men take in finding out of truth, nor again, that when it is found, it imposeth<sup>5</sup> upon men's thoughts, that doth bring lies in favor; but a natural though corrupt love, of the lie itself. One of the later school of the Grecians, examineth the matter, and is at a stand, to think what should be in it, that men

善戏谑的彼拉多曾说：“真理是什么呢？”说了之后并且不肯等候回答。世上尽有一般人喜欢把意见变来变去，并且认为固定了一种信仰即等于上了一套枷锁；在思想上和在行为上他们都一样地要求意志的自由。并且虽然这一流的各派哲学家已成过去，然而仍有些心志游移的说者和他们同声同气——虽然这般人比起古人来血气薄弱一点。但是使人们好伪说的原因，不仅是人们找寻真理时的艰难困苦，亦不是找寻着了真理之后真理所加于人们的思想的约束，而是一种天生的，虽然是恶劣的，对于伪说本身的爱好。希腊晚期哲学学派中有人曾研究过这个问题，他不懂得伪说之中有什么东西竟会使人们为伪说

1

论

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should love lies; where neither they make for pleasure, as with poets, nor for advantage, as with the merchant; but for the lie's sake. But I cannot tell; this same truth, is a naked, and open day-light, that doth not show the masks, and mummeries<sup>6</sup>, and triumphs, of the world, half so stately and daintily as candle-lights. Truth may perhaps come to the price of a pearl, that showeth best by day; but it will not rise to the price of a diamond, or carbuncle<sup>7</sup>, that showeth best in varied lights. A mixture of a lie doth ever add pleasure. Doth any man doubt, that if there were taken out of men's minds, vain opinions, flattering hopes, false valuations, imaginations as one would, and the like, but it would leave the minds, of a number of men, poor shrunken things, full of melancholy<sup>8</sup> and indisposition<sup>9</sup>, and displeasing to themselves?

One of the fathers, in great severity, called poesy<sup>10</sup> *vinum doemonum*<sup>11</sup>, because it filleth the imagination; and yet, it is but with the shadow of a lie. But it is not the lie that passeth through the mind, but the lie that sinketh in, and settleth in it, that doth the hurt; such as we spake<sup>12</sup> of before. But, howsoever these things are thus in men's depraved<sup>13</sup> judgments, and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth that the inquiry of

的本身而爱它，因为伪说既不能如诗人之所为，引人入胜；亦不能如商人之所为，导人得利。我亦不懂得这是什么缘故：可是“真理”这件东西可说是一种无隐无饰的白昼之光，世间的那些歌剧、扮演、庆典在这种光之下所显露的，远不如灯烛之光所显露的庄严美丽。真理在世人眼中其价值也许等于一颗珍珠，在日光之下看起来最好；但是它决够不上那在各种不同的光线下显得最美的钻石和红玉的价值。搀上一点伪说的道理总是给人添乐趣的。要是从人们的心中取去了虚妄的自是，自识的希望，错误的评价，武断的想象，就会使许多人的心变成一种可怜的、缩小的东西，充满忧郁和疾病，自己看起来也讨厌。对于这一点会有人怀疑么？

早期的耶教著作家中有一位曾经很严厉地把诗叫做“魔鬼的酒”，因为诗能占据人的想象，然而诗不过是伪说的影子罢了。害人的不是那从心中经过的伪说，而是那沉入心中，盘据心中的伪说，如前所言者是也。然而这些事情，无论其在人们堕落的判断力及好尚中是如何，真理（它是只受本身的评判的）却教给我们说研究真理（就是向它求爱求婚），认

truth, which is the love-making, or wooing<sup>14</sup> of it, the knowledge of truth, which is the presence of it, and the belief of truth, which is the enjoying of it, is the sovereign<sup>15</sup> good of human nature.

The first creature of God, in the works of the days, was the light of the sense; the last, was the light of reason; and his Sabbath<sup>16</sup> work ever since, is the illumination of his Spirit. First he breathed light, upon the face of the matter or chaos; then he breathed light, into the face of man; and still he breatheth and inspireth light, into the face of his chosen. The poet<sup>17</sup>, that beautified the sect<sup>18</sup>, that was otherwise inferior to the rest, saith yet excellently well: *It is a pleasure, to stand upon the shore, and to see ships tossed upon the sea; a pleasure, to stand in the window of a castle, and to see a battle, and the adventures thereof below: but no pleasure is comparable to the standing upon the vantage ground of truth* (a hill not to be commanded, and where the air is always clear and serene), *and to see the errors, and wanderings, and mists, and tempests, in the vale below: so always that this prospect be with pity, and not with swelling, or pride. Certainly, it is heaven upon earth, to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth.*

识真理（就是与之同处），和相信真理（就是享受它）乃是人性中最高的美德。

当上帝创造宇宙的那几日中，他所创造的头一件东西就是感官的光明；他所创造的末一件东西就是理智的光明；从那以后直到如今，在他工作完毕而休息的期间内，他的作为全是以他的圣灵昭示世人。最初他在物或混沌的面上吹吐光明；然后他由人的面目中吹入光明；到如今他还在往他的选民面目之中吐射光明。有一派哲学在别的方面都不如他派，可是有一位诗人在这派哲学增光不少。这位诗人曾说：“站在岸上看船舶在海上颠簸是一件乐事；站在一座堡垒的窗前看下面的战争和它的种种经过最一件乐事；但是没有一件乐事能与站在真理的高峰（一座高出一切的山陵，在那里的空气永远是澄清而宁静的）目睹下面谷中的错误、漂泊、迷雾和风雨相比拟的。”只要看的人对这种光景永存怜悯而不要自满，那末以上的话可算是说得好极了。当然，一个人的心若能以仁爱为动机，以天意为归宿，并且以真理为地轴而运转，那这人的生活可真是地上的天堂了。

To pass from theological, and philosophical truth, to the truth of civil business; it will be acknowledged, even by those that practise it not, that clear, and round dealing, is the honor of man's nature; and that mixture of falsehoods<sup>19</sup>, is like alloy in coin of gold and silver, which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth<sup>20</sup> it. For these winding, and crooked courses, are the goings of the serpent<sup>21</sup>; which goeth basely upon the belly<sup>22</sup>, and not upon the feet. There is no vice, that doth so cover a man with shame, as to be found false and perfidious<sup>23</sup>. And therefore Montaigne<sup>24</sup> saith prettily, when he inquired the reason, why the word of the lie should be such a disgrace, and such an odious charge? Saith he, *If it be well weighed, to say that a man lieth, is as much to say, as that he is brave towards God, and a coward towards men.* For a lie faces God, and shrinks from man. Surely the wickedness of falsehood, and breach of faith, cannot possibly be so highly expressed, as in that it shall be the last peal, to call the judgments of God upon the generations of men; it being foretold, that when Christ cometh, *he shall not find faith upon the earth.*

从教义中的真理和哲学中的真理再说到世上的真理。即使那些行为并不坦白正直的人也会承认坦白正直地待人是人性的光荣，而真假相混则有如金银币中杂以合金一样，也许可以使那金银用起来方便一点，但是把它们的品质却弄贱了。因为这些曲曲折折的行为可说是蛇走路的方法，蛇是不用脚而是很卑贱地用肚子走路的。没有一件恶德能和被人发现是虚伪欺诈一般使人蒙羞的。所以蒙田在他研究为什么说人说谎算是这样的一种羞辱，一种可恨之极的罪责的时候，说得极好。他说：“仔细考虑起来，要是说某人说谎就等于说他对上帝很大胆，对世人很怯懦。”因为谎言是直对着上帝而躲避着世人的。曾经有个预言，说基督重临的时候，他将在地上找不到信实；所以谎言可说是请上帝来裁判人类全体的最后的钟声。对于虚假和背信的罪恶再不能比这个说法揭露得更高明了。

## Notes 注释:

1. jesting ['dʒɛstɪŋ]: 开玩笑的, 滑稽的
2. giddiness: 眼花, 轻率
3. affecting: = loving 喜欢
4. discoursing: = windy, rambling 夸夸其谈的, 不着边际的
5. imposeth upon: = imposes upon 约束, 限制 (-th 或 -eth 为动词单数第三人称后缀, 下文同)
6. mummary ['mʌməri]: 哑剧表演
7. carbuncle ['kɑ:bʌŋkl]: 红宝石
8. melancholy ['melənkɔli]: 忧郁
9. indisposition [ˌɪndɪspə'zɪʃən]: 小病, 微恙
10. poesy ['pəʊsi:] = poetry 诗歌
11. vinum doemonum: = devils' wine 魔鬼的酒
12. spake [speɪk]: [古] speak 的过去式
13. depraved [dɪ'preɪvd]: 堕落的, 颓废的
14. woo [wu:]: 求婚, 求爱
15. sovereign ['sɔvrɪn]: 至高无上的
16. Sabbath ['sæbəθ]: 安息日, 主日
17. The poet: 这里这个诗人指 Lucretius (卢克莱修)
18. the sect: 这里这一流派指 Epicureans (伊壁鸠鲁学派)
19. falsehood ['fɔ:lshʊd]: 谬误
20. embase: = debase 贬低, 降低
21. serpent ['sə:pənt]: 大毒蛇 (在圣经中指魔鬼撒旦 Satan)
22. goeth basely upon the belly: 卑贱地用肚皮走路。《圣经》中的故事, 说蛇引诱亚当、夏娃犯罪, 于是神诅咒蛇: “你必用肚子行走, 终身吃土”
23. perfidious [pə'fɪdiəs]: 背信弃义的, 不忠的

Montaigne: Michel Eyquem de Montaigne 米歇尔·埃康·德·蒙田 (1533-1592), 法国散文作家, 其散漫而生动的有关个人的散文被认为是 16 世纪法国散文的最高表现形式。



MEN fear death, as children fear to go in the dark; and as that natural fear in children, is increased with tales, so is the other. Certainly, the contemplation<sup>1</sup> of death, as the *wages of sin*, and passage to another world, is holy and religious; but the fear of it, as a tribute due<sup>2</sup> unto<sup>3</sup> nature, is weak. Yet in religious meditations, there is sometimes mixture of vanity, and of superstition. You shall read, in some of the friars'<sup>4</sup> books of mortification<sup>5</sup>, that a man should think with himself, what the pain is, if he have but his finger's end pressed, or tortured, and thereby imagine, what the pains of death are, when the whole body is corrupted, and dissolved; when many times death passeth, with less pain than the torture of a limb; for the most vital parts, are not the quickest of sense. And by him that spake only as a philosopher, and natural man, it was well said, *Pompa mortis magis terret, quam mors ipsa*<sup>6</sup>. Groans, and convulsions, and a discolored face, and friends weeping, and blacks<sup>7</sup>, and obsequies<sup>8</sup>, and the like, show death terrible. It is worthy the observing, that there is no passion in the mind of

成人之怕死犹如儿童之怕入暗处；儿童的天然的恐惧因故事而增加，成人对于死的恐惧亦复如此。当然，静观死亡，以之为罪孽的工资，通往另一世界的去路者，是虔诚而且合乎宗教的；但是恐惧死亡，以之为我们对自然应纳的贡献，则是愚弱的。然而在宗教的沉思中有时亦杂有虚妄和迷信。在某种苦行僧的自戒书中你可以看到一种言辞，说是一个人应当自己思量，假如他有一指的末端被压或被刑，其痛苦是如何；由此再想那使人全身腐败湮灭的死亡其痛苦更当如何。实则有多次死亡的经过比一肢之受刑其痛苦尚轻：因为人体最生死攸关的器官并不是最敏于感受的器官也。那位仅以人间哲学家及世人之资格说话的古人说得很好：“与死亡俱来的一切，比死亡更骇人。”呻吟与痉挛，变色的面目，朋友哭泣，墨经及葬仪，诸如此类都显得死的可怕。值得注意者，是人心内的各种感情，无论多么薄弱，没有一种是不能克服对死亡的恐怖的；既然一个人身

## 2 Of Death 论死亡

man, so weak, but it mates<sup>9</sup>, and masters, the fear of death; and therefore, death is no such terrible enemy, when a man hath so many attendants about him, that can win the combat of him. Revenge triumphs over death; love slights<sup>10</sup> it; honor aspireth to it; grief flieth to it; fear preoccupateth<sup>11</sup> it; nay<sup>12</sup>, we read, <sup>13</sup>after Otho the emperor had slain himself, pity (which is the tenderest of affections) provoked many to die, out of mere compassion to their sovereign, and as the truest sort of followers. Nay, Seneca<sup>14</sup> adds niceness<sup>15</sup> and satiety: *Cogita quamdiu eadem feceris; mori velle, non tantum fortis aut miser, sed etiam fastidiosus potest*<sup>16</sup>. A man would die, though he were neither valiant, nor miserable, only upon a weariness to do the same thing so oft<sup>17</sup>, over and over. It is no less worthy, to observe, how little alteration in good spirits, the approaches of death make; for they appear to be the same men, till the last instant. Augustus Cesar<sup>18</sup> died in a compliment; *Livia, conjugii nostri memor, vive et vale*<sup>19</sup>. Tiberius<sup>20</sup> in dissimulation<sup>21</sup>; as Tacitus<sup>22</sup> saith of him, *Jam Tiberium vires et corpus, non dissimulatio, deserebant*<sup>23</sup>. Vespasian<sup>24</sup> in a jest, sitting upon the stool; *Ut puto deus fio*<sup>25</sup>. Galba<sup>26</sup> with a sentence; *Feri, si ex re sit populi Romani*<sup>27</sup>, holding forth his neck. Septimius

旁有这样多的侍从，都能打败死亡，可见死亡不算是那样可怕的敌人了。复仇之心胜过死亡；爱恋之心蔑视之；荣誉之心希冀之；忧伤之心奔赴之；恐怖之心先期之；不特如此，我们在书中还读到奥陶大帝自杀之后哀怜之心（感情中之最柔者）使得许多人也死了，他们之死是为了对他们的君上的同情并且要做最忠心的臣子的原故。此外塞内加还加上了苛求和厌倦两事。他说：“试想你做同样的事已有多久！不止勇者和贫困者想死，即厌倦无聊者亦想死亡。”一个人虽然既不勇敢，也不困穷，然而为了倦于屡次做同一的事，也会寻死的。同样值得注意者，是死的来临在豪杰之士的心上所引起的改变是如何地小，因为这些人好像到了最后的一刹那仍然是依然故我似的。奥古斯塔斯大帝死时还在赞颂他的皇后：“永别了，里维亚，请你终身不要忘记我们婚后生活的时光。”泰比瑞亚斯至死仍然作伪，如史家塔西佗所谓：“泰比瑞亚斯的体力日渐衰退，但他的作伪如故。”外斯帕显死时还说笑话；他坐在一个凳子上说：“我想我正在变神哪。”加尔巴临死作壮语说：“砍罢！假如这是有益于罗马人民的。”一边说着一边伸颈就死。塞普蒂米犹斯·塞外拉斯死得



Severus<sup>28</sup> in despatch: *Adeste si quid mihi restat agendum*<sup>29</sup>. And the like. Certainly the Stoics<sup>30</sup> bestowed too much cost upon death, and by their great preparations, made it appear more fearful. Better saith he, *Qui finem vitae extremum inter munera ponat naturæ*<sup>31</sup>. It is as natural to die, as to be born; and to a little infant, perhaps, the one is as painful, as the other. He that dies in an earnest pursuit, is like one that is wounded in hot blood; who, for the time, scarce feels the hurt; and therefore a mind fixed, and bent upon somewhat that is good, doth avert the dolours of death. But, above all, believe it, the sweetest canticle<sup>32</sup> is *Nunc dimittis*<sup>33</sup>; when a man hath obtained worthy ends, and expectations. Death hath this also; that it openeth the gate to good fame, and extinguisheth envy. —*Extinctus amabitur idem*<sup>34</sup>.



爽快。他说：“假如还有什么我应该做的事，快点来吧。”诸如此类。那些画廊派的哲学家把死的价值抬得太高了，并且因为他们对于死准备过甚，遂使死在人看起来更为可怕。“他把生命的终结算做自然的恩惠之一。”说这句话的那人比较说得对的多了。死与生同其自然；也许在一个婴儿方面生与死是一般痛苦的。在某种热烈的行为中死了的人有如血液正热的时候受伤的人一样，当时是不觉得痛楚的；所以一个坚定的，一心向善的心智是能免死的痛苦的。但是，尤要者，请你相信，最甜美的歌就是在一个人已经达到了某种有价值的目的和希望后所唱的：“如今请你让你的仆人离去。”死还有这一点；就是它打开名誉之门，熄灭妒忌之心。“生时受人妒嫉的人死后将受人爱。”







21. dissimulation [di,sɪmjʊ'leɪʃən]: 掩饰, 伪善
22. Tacitus: 塔西佗, 古罗马元老院议员, 历史学家
23. Jam Tiberium vires et corpus, non dissimulatio, deserebant: 拉丁语, 英译可作: His powers of body were gone, but his power of dissimulation still remained
24. Vespasian: 古罗马皇帝(69-79年), 他给罗马帝国带来了繁荣, 对军队进行了改革, 是艺术的资助者, 并营造了古罗马圆形大竞技场
25. Ut puto deus fio: 拉丁语, 英译可作: As I think, I am becoming a god
26. Galba: 全名为 Servius Sulpicius Galba, 古罗马皇帝(68-69)
27. Feri, si ex re sit populi Romani: 拉丁语, 英译可作: Strike, if it be for the good of Rome
28. Septimius Severus: 罗马皇帝(193-211年), 实施暴君统治并建立军事独裁
29. Adeste si quid mihi restat agendum: 拉丁语, 英译可作: Be at hand, if there is anything more for me to do
30. Stoic: 斯多葛派学者, 他们认为人不应为情感所动, 应把各种事情当作神意或自然法则的不可避免的结果来坦然地接受
31. Qui finem vitae extremum inter munera ponat naturæ: 拉丁语, 英译可作: who accounts the close of life as one of the benefits of nature. 语出 Juvenal (尤维纳利), 古罗马讽刺作家
32. canticle [ˈkæntɪkl]: 圣歌
33. Nunc Dimittis[ˈnʌŋk dɪ'mɪtɪs]: 拉丁语, 英译可作: Now let your servant depart. <圣经>路加福音第2章29-32节以“Nunc Dimittis”开头的颂歌
34. Extinctus amabitur idem: 拉丁语, 英译可作: The same man that was envied while he lived, shall be loved when he is gone