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道德情操论

THE THEORY OF MORAL SENTIMENTS

[英] 亚当·斯密 著

(三)

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吕宏波 杨江涛 译

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SECTION III

Of Self-command

The man who acts according to the rules of perfect prudence, of strict justice, and of proper benevolence, may be said to be perfectly virtuous. But the most perfect knowledge of those rules will not alone enable him to act in this manner; his own passions are very apt to mislead him; sometimes to drive him and sometimes to seduce him to violate all the rules which he himself, in all his sober and cool hours, approves of. The most perfect knowledge, if it is not supported by the most perfect self-command, will not always enable him to do his duty.

Some of the best of the ancient moralists seem to have considered those passions as divided into two different classes: first, into those which it requires a considerable exertion of self-command to restrain even for a single moment; and secondly, into those which it is easy to restrain for a single moment, or even for a short period of time; but which, by their continual and almost incessant sollicitations, are, in the course of a life, very apt to mislead into great deviations.

Fear and anger, together with some other passions which are mixed or connected with them, constitute the first class. The love of ease, of pleasure, of applause, and of many other selfish gratifications, constitute the second. Extravagant fear and furious anger, it is often difficult to restrain even for a single moment. The love of ease, of pleasure, of applause, and other selfish gratifications, it is always easy to restrain for a single moment, or even for a short period of time; but, by their continual sollicitations, they often mislead us into

第三篇 论自制

一个按照十足的谨慎、严格的正义和恰当的仁慈这些准则去行事的人,可以说是具有完美德性的人。但是,单靠有关这些准则的最完备的知识,并不能使他按这种方式办事;他自己的激情非常容易误导他,这些激情有时驱使他、有时则引诱他去违背任何自己在清醒和冷静时所赞成的一切准则。如果没有最充分的自制作后盾,有关这些准则的最完备的知识也不能使他始终恪尽职守。

古代的一些最杰出的道德家,似乎已经把这些极易误导人的激情分作了两种:第一,即便是克制片刻都需要做出相当大自制努力的激情;第二,易于在瞬间、或者在短时期内加以克制的激情,但由于它们具有频繁而且连续不断的诱惑力,故而极易使人的一生中误入更大的歧途。

恐惧和愤怒,同与之相混合、相关联的其他一些激情一起,构成了第一种激情。对舒适、快乐、赞扬和许多其他自我满足感的喜好,构成了第二种激情。过度的恐惧和狂暴的愤怒,连抑制片刻都常常难以做到。而对舒适、快乐、赞扬和诸多其他自我满足感的喜好,却总是容易抑制片刻、或者一个较短时期;但是,由于它们具有连续不断的诱惑力,故而常常把我们引向许多我们以

many weaknesses which we have afterwards much reason to be ashamed of. The former set of passions may often be said to drive, the latter, to seduce us from our duty. The command of the former was, by the ancient moralists above alluded to, denominated fortitude, manhood, and strength of mind; that of the latter, temperance, decency, modesty, and moderation.

The command of each of those two sets of passions, independent of the beauty which it derives from its utility; from its enabling us upon all occasions to act according to the dictates of prudence, of justice, and of proper benevolence; has a beauty of its own, and seems to deserve for its own sake a certain degree of esteem and admiration. In the one case, the strength and greatness of the exertion excites some degree of that esteem and admiration. In the other, the uniformity, the equality and unremitting steadiness of that exertion.

The man who, in danger, in torture, upon the approach of death, preserves his tranquillity unaltered, and suffers no word, no gesture to escape him which does not perfectly accord with the feelings of the most indifferent spectator, necessarily commands a very high degree of admiration. If he suffers in the cause of liberty and justice, for the sake of humanity and the love of his country, the most tender compassion for his sufferings, the strongest indignation against the injustice of his persecutors, the warmest sympathetic gratitude for his beneficent intentions, the highest sense of his merit, all join and mix themselves with the admiration of his magnanimity, and often inflame that sentiment into the most enthusiastic and rapturous veneration. The heroes of ancient and modern history, who are remembered with the most peculiar favour and affection, are, many of them, those who, in the cause of truth, liberty, and justice, have perished upon the scaffold, and who behaved there with that ease and dignity which became them. Had the enemies of Socrates suffered him to die quietly in his bed, the glory even of that great philosopher might possibly never have acquired that dazzling splendour in which it has been beheld in all succeeding ages. In the English history, when we look over the illustrious heads which have been engraven by Vertue and

后会深以为愧的弱点之中。可以说,前一种激情常常驱使我们背离自己的职责,后一种激情却往往引诱我们去背离自己的职责。上面提到的古代的道德家,把对前一种激情的控制叫做坚韧、刚毅和坚强,而把对后一种感情的控制则叫做节制、庄重、谦逊和适度。

对这两种激情中的每一种所进行的控制,都具有一种它自己的美,这种美与那种来源于它的效用的美无关,也与那种来源于它的这种能力——使我们在所有场合都按照谨慎、正义和恰当的仁慈行事——的美无关;并且它似乎由于其自身的缘故就应该受到一定程度的尊敬和赞美。在前一种情况下,行为的力量和伟大激起了人们一定程度的尊敬和赞美;在后一种情况下,则是行为的一致性、均衡性和持之以恒的坚定性,激起了人们的尊敬和赞美。

一个处于危险和痛苦之中而濒于死亡的人,若一如既往地保持镇定,不容许自己的任何言谈举止有所闪失,不表现出与最中立的旁观者的情感有丝毫的不一致,那他必定会赢得至高无上的赞美。倘若他是为了自由和正义,为了博爱和对祖国的爱而遭受痛苦,那么,对他所受苦难的最亲切的同情,对迫害他的人的不义行径的最强烈的愤慨,对他的善意的最热烈而由衷的感激,对他的功勋的最深刻的认识,这一切都与对他的高尚行为的赞美结合在一起;并且,这一切还常常使这种赞美之情升华为热烈而狂热的崇拜。古今历史上受到人们最特殊的爱戴和纪念的英雄们,大多是这样一些人:他们为了真理、自由和正义走上了断头台,并且在此依然表现出英雄们特有的镇定自若和高贵尊严。倘若苏格拉底的敌人容许他平静地死在自己的床上,那么,即便荣耀是有关这位伟大哲学家的,也绝不可能获得那种在以后的所有时代中都可以看到的夺目光彩。在英国的历史上,当我们观看弗图和

Howbraken, there is scarce any body, I imagine, who does not feel that the axe, the emblem of having been beheaded, which is engraved under some of the most illustrious of them; under those of the Sir Thomas Mores, of the Rhaleighs, the Russels, the Sydneys, etc. sheds a real dignity and interestingness over the characters to which it is affixed, much superior to what they can derive from all the futile ornaments of heraldry, with which they are sometimes accompanied.

Nor does this magnanimity give lustre only to the characters of innocent and virtuous men. It draws some degree of favourable regard even upon those of the greatest criminals; and when a robber or highwayman is brought to the scaffold, and behaves there with decency and firmness, though we perfectly approve of his punishment, we often cannot help regretting that a man who possessed such great and noble powers should have been capable of such mean enormities.

War is the great school both for acquiring and exercising this species of magnanimity. Death, as we say, is the king of terrors; and the man who has conquered the fear of death, is not likely to lose his presence of mind at the approach of any other natural evil. In war, men become familiar with death, and are thereby necessarily cured of that superstitious horror with which it is viewed by the weak and unexperienced. They consider it merely as the loss of life, and as no further the object of aversion than as life may happen to be that of desire. They learn from experience, too, that many seemingly great dangers are not so great as they appear; and that, with courage, activity, and presence of mind, there is often a good probability of extricating themselves with honour from situations where at first they could see no hope. The dread of death is thus greatly diminished; and the confidence or hope of escaping it, augmented. They learn to expose

豪布拉肯雕刻的杰出人物头像时,我想,几乎每个人都会感到:雕刻在一些最杰出的人物——托马斯·莫尔先生、雷利、罗素、西德尼等等^[1]——头像下面的一直作为砍头标志的斧头,会给附有这种标志的人物带来一种真正的尊贵和吸引力,这要远胜于他们从偶尔佩戴在身的种种无关紧要的纹章饰物中得到的东西。

这种高尚行为不只是给清白而有德性的人的品质增添光彩;它甚至也会使罪大恶极的犯人的品质受到一定程度的关切和尊敬。当一个强盗或拦路贼被送上断头台,却仍然表现得庄重和坚定时,尽管我们完全赞同对他的惩罚,但是我们经常禁不住会惋惜道:一个拥有如此伟大、杰出能力的人,怎么能犯下如此卑劣的滔天大罪。

战争是获得和锻炼这种高尚品质的大学校。正如我们所言,死亡是恐怖之王,一个战胜了对死亡的恐惧的人,在任何其他的自然灾害临近时便不可能六神无主。在战争中,人们渐渐熟悉了死亡,因而必然会消除意志薄弱和没有战争经验的人对死亡的那种迷信般的恐怖。他们把死亡仅仅看成是生命的丧失,而不把它看成厌恶的对象,正如生命可能恰巧不是欲望的对象一样。他们从经验中也认识到:许多表面上看似很大的危险,并不像它们表现出来的那么严重;并且,借着勇敢、主动和沉着,他们常常很可能从最初看不到一点希望的处境中光荣地解脱出来。于是,对死亡的恐惧就大大减少,而逃脱死亡的信心或希望却大大增强。他

[1] 斯密所提到的这几个人都是16、17世纪英国的叛逆者或阴谋家,均被处死。他们后来都被著名的雕刻家弗图和豪布拉肯以雕刻的方式流传下来了。

themselves to danger with less reluctance. They are less anxious to get out of it, and less apt to lose their presence of mind while they are in it. It is this habitual contempt of danger and death which ennobles the profession of a soldier, and bestows upon it, in the natural apprehensions of mankind, a rank and dignity superior to that of any other profession. The skilful and successful exercise of this profession, in the service of their country, seems to have constituted the most distinguishing feature in the character of the favourite heroes of all ages.

Great warlike exploit, though undertaken contrary to every principle of justice, and carried on without any regard to humanity, sometimes interests us, and commands even some degree of a certain sort of esteem for the very worthless characters which conduct it. We are interested even in the exploits of the Buccaneers; and read with some sort of esteem and admiration, the history of the most worthless men, who, in pursuit of the most criminal purposes, endured greater hardships, surmounted greater difficulties, and encountered greater dangers, than, perhaps, any which the ordinary course of history gives an account of.

The command of anger appears upon many occasions not less generous and noble than that of fear. The proper expression of just indignation composes many of the most splendid and admired passages both of ancient and modern eloquence. The *Philippics* of Demosthenes, the *Catalinarians* of Cicero, derive their whole beauty from the noble propriety with which this passion is expressed. But this just indignation is nothing but anger restrained and properly attempered