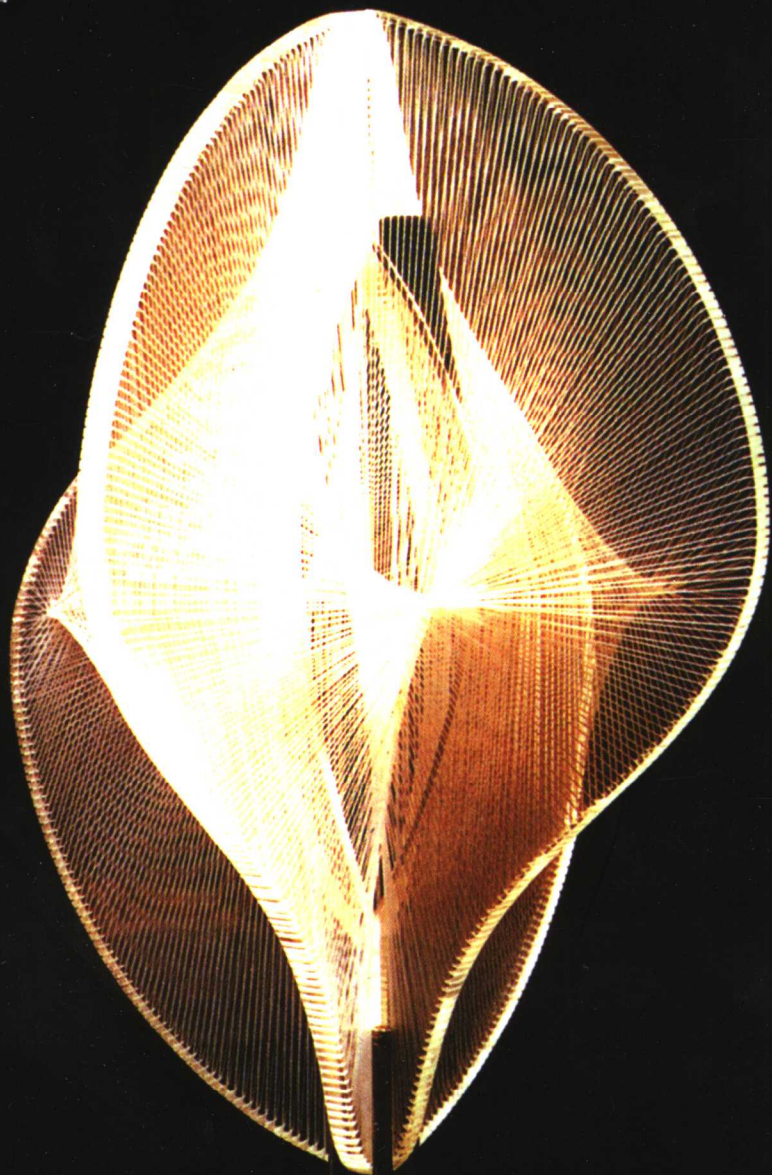


FRANCIS BACON/ESSAYS

培根论人生

英中文双语读本

[英] 培根 著



A black and white portrait of Francis Bacon, showing him from the chest up. He is wearing a dark, wide-brimmed hat and a large, ornate ruff collar. His clothing features intricate patterns and textures. He has a serious expression and a full beard.

培根论人生

◎ 苏菲译

To the right Honourable my very good lord
the Duke of Buckingham his Grace,
Lord High Admiral of England

EXCELLENT LORD—Solomon says: a good name is as a precious ointment; and I assure my self, such will your Grace's name be, with posterity. For your fortune, and merit both, have been eminent. And you have planted things, that are like to last. I do now publish my essays; which, of all my other works, have been most current: for that, as it seems, they come home, to men's business, and bosoms. I have enlarged them, both in number, and weight; so that they are indeed a new work. I thought it therefore agreeable, to my affection, and obligation to your Grace, to prefix your name before them, both in English, and in

Francis Bacon



献辞

谨以此献于与

英格兰海军大将巴金汉公爵

公爵阁下：

伟大的所罗门有一句名言说得好：一个好名声犹如珍贵的膏药。我敢担保说，阁下美好的名声必将必将流给子孙后裔。因为您的财富与精神都是无比杰出的。您所种植的，最终将得到收获，并且永远流传下去。现在我把我的一些随笔还有其他一些作品整理出版，其中大部分内容是关于流行的日常一些事情，比如家庭、事业、还有人格道德修养的。我在内容和文字上对其进行修饰增添，使之成为一本全新的著作。请允许我将阁下的大名冠于拉丁语和英语两种版本的书首，以表示我对阁下的尊敬爱慕之情。因为我认为拉丁语是全世界语言中最为历史悠久，经久不衰的语言，该书将会像拉丁语一样流传下去。在此之前，我曾经把《伟大的复兴》奉献给英王陛下，将《亨利七

Latin. For I do conceive, that the Latin volume of them (being in the universal language) may last, as long as books last. My Instauration, I dedicated to the King: my History of Henry the Seventh (which I have now also translated into Latin) and my portions of Natural History, to the Prince: and these I dedicate to your Grace; being of the best fruits, that by the good increase, which God gives to my pen and labours, I could yield.

God lead your Grace by the hand.
Your Grace's most obliged and faithful servant,
FRANCIS ST ALBAN

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世传》(那本书我也翻译了拉丁文版本)以及《自然及实验史》奉献给王子殿下。而这一本书,请允许我奉献给阁下您。获得如此丰盛的成果,为了以上几部书的完成,首先自当感谢上帝赐我以灵感,但鄙人也曾为之付出了而且不断增加,首先感谢上帝赐予我灵感和劳动,使我得以孜孜不倦的努力。

上帝保佑您!引导您的前进!

您最恭顺和最忠诚的仆人

弗兰西斯·圣奥尔本子爵

[编者按:1621年培根被授予圣奥尔本子爵的封号]



这本书是作者人生经验与智慧之凝聚，它表达了培根的人生观，更表达了文艺复兴以来西方古典人文主义者之共同的人生观，之共同的价值追求与理想信念。

这本书记载着作者对人世炎凉的通透理解，历四百年而不朽。它被视为“垂之不朽之书”、“足以永为垂范”，被视为“世界散文与思想史上的一块绝世瑰宝”……

诗人雪莱称颂本书说：“其文字有优美庄严之韵律，给感情以动人之美感；其论述有超人之智慧，给理智以深刻启迪。”

阅读本书的理由

莱布尼茨称培根为“使哲学再生的人”。狄德罗称他是“杰出的天才”。阿朗贝尔称他是“哲学家中最伟大、最普遍和最最有口才的人”。著名哲学家、史学家威尔·杜兰特称他为“当代最伟大、最值得骄傲之智慧人物”，视他为“理性的司晨者”、西方理性时代的“先驱”，认为他的精神“为英国工业革命做了铺路工作”。马克思说他是“英国唯物主义和整个现代实验科学的真正始祖”。

建议以下人群阅读本书

文艺复兴之爱好者或专家，英国文明之爱好者或反对者，人生观已成之“成人”或人生观未定之“青年”，文化史专家或爱好者，大中小学生……

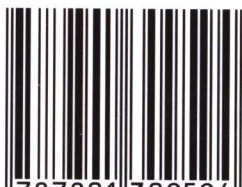


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培根的性格，有令人厌恶的一面：心肠冷淡，趋炎附势；收受贿赂，还厚颜无耻地说并未受贿赂的影响；……

也有令人喜爱的一面：坚定务实的风格；以纯然世俗且充满最高智慧力量之心为人类进步而工作；……

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1. Of Truth

What is truth; said jesting Pilate; and would not stay for an answer. Certainly there be, that delight in giddiness; and count it a bondage, to fix a belief; affecting 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 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 labour, which men take in finding out of truth; nor again, that when it is found, it imposeth upon men thoughts; that doth bring lies in favour: 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 should love lies; where neither

Francis Bacon



1. 关于真理

彼拉多曾经取笑耶稣说：“什么是真理？”[见《圣经·新约·维翰福音》第18章。彼拉多(Pontius Pilate)是罗马委任的犹太总督。耶稣由他审讯。当耶稣申辩说，我来到世间是为了传播真理时，他用这句话嘲笑耶稣。——编者(下同)]，他当然不会指望得到这个问题的答案。的确有一种观点认为世人因为轻率而快乐[指古希腊的智者派，古罗马的怀疑派哲学]，认为坚持信念就等于戴上枷锁，妨碍思想和行动的自由。虽然怀疑派作为一种学派早已消逝，但持继承衣钵者却还有一些人——尽管他们的观念已经不像古人那样强烈和深刻了。

使人们在追求真理的过程中受欺骗的原因，不仅由于探索真理的困难，也不仅由于真理使人的幻想破灭，而且是由于假象更适合

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 daylight, that doth not show, the masques, and mummeries, and triumphs of the world, half so stately, and daintily, as candlelights.

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, 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, and indisposition, and unpleasing to themselves?

One of the fathers, in great severity, called poesy, vinum daemonum; 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

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人性中喜欢自我安慰、自我欺骗的恶习。晚期希腊哲学学派一位哲学家[指古希腊哲学家卢奇安(Lucian, 约120-180), 晚期希腊哲学中怀疑主义的批判者]曾经研究过这个问题。他陷入迷惑中——人们喜欢的谎言到底应该是什么, 它们既非像诗歌那样优美流畅、予人愉悦, 也不能像生意那样使人富有。我也不能明白其中的道理——真理是毫无遮拦的, 是暴露在光天化日之下的, 正如这世间的种种假面舞会、哑剧表演、胜利庆典, 在明亮的日光下远不如在半明半暗的烛光下那样庄严而华丽。

真理的价值也许犹如珍珠, 在阳光的照耀下最为璀璨。真理不是宝石, 能在各色各样的烛光中幻化出它们的美丽。

一个掺有假象的事物甚至会给人带来愉快。假如人们去除心中种种虚荣、自诩的希望、虚妄的自我估计及种种天花乱坠的想像, 许多人将会发现自己是那么的渺小、忧郁、丑恶, 以至人们要厌恶自己。这一点难道会有人怀疑吗?

settlesh in it, that doth the hurt, such as we spake of before.

But howsoever these things are thus, in men's depraved judgements, and affections, yet truth, which only doth judge itself, teacheth, that the inquiry of truth, which is the love-making, or wooing 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 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 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, that beautified the sect, 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 compara-

Francis Bacon

曾有先哲很严厉地将“诗”比做“魔鬼的迷幻药”[语出圣徒罗姆(St Jerome, 约342-420), 圣奥古斯丁(354-430)也指责诗歌是“魔鬼之诱饵”、“药酒”等], 因为诗充满想像, 是的, 但它不过是谎言的影子。然而最可怕的还不是那种一时的谎言, 而是那种深入人们的头脑和习俗, 并且扎根于人心深处的错误与偏见。



不论世间怎样, 一旦人认识到真理的存在, 还是会膜拜真理的伟大。因为真理既是衡量人类堕落的判断与情感的尺度, 又是衡量自身的尺度。神圣的信念是——追求真理而与真理同在, 认识真理从而敢于面对事实, 相信真理并且皈依它, 只有这样才能达到人性至高无上的境界。

上帝创造世界, 在最初的日子里, 他首先创造了对光的知觉, 然后是理智, 最后赐予人类的是心智灵魂的启发[见《圣经·旧约·创世纪》第1章]。上帝赐予混沌不清的物质世界以智慧之光, 又以智慧之光启蒙

ble, 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.

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 honour of man's nature; and that mixture of falsehood, is like allay in coin of gold and silver; which may make the metal work the better, but it embaseth it. For these winding and crooked courses, are the goings of the serpent; which goeth basely upon the belly, and not upon the feet.

There is no vice, that doth so cover a man with shame, as to be found false, and perfidious. And therefore Mountaigny saith prettily, when he enquired

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人类的心智,至今他还赐予那些被他恩宠的选民以神圣的光辉。

有一派感性主义哲学在许多方面很拙劣,但其中有一位诗人为这个派别倍增光彩[指伊壁鸠鲁派哲学家卢克莱修(Lucretius,罗马人,约前93-前50)。著有《物性论》。他认为感觉是一切的尺度]。他曾说过:“站在岸上遥看航船在大海中颠簸是件很惬意的事,站在城堡的窗边遥看一场战役也是件轻松的事,不过他们不能比站在真理的有利地位——而俯视谷底尘世中的错误与迷惑、烟雾与曲折更让人轻松的了!”——只要这种俯视者带着怜悯之心或者不自傲自满,那么这些话的确说得非常好!当然,一个人如能在心中充满了慈悲,行为遵守神圣的天意,围绕真理的枢轴转动,那么他就步入了尘世的天堂。

谈过了神学和哲学方面的真理,还要再谈谈现实中的真理。即使那些根本不相信真理的人,也不能不承认光明正大地办事是一种人性的崇高之处。掺和地作假,就像用金银掺和制币,也许使金属发挥

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 lay 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 falsehoods, 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.

Francis Bacon

了更好的作用,但实际上使货币贬值。那些欺诈的行为,像蛇一样无法立足,只能下贱地靠肚皮爬行[《圣经》故事,蛇引诱亚当、夏娃犯罪,于是,神就对蛇发出一句这样的咒语:“你必须用肚子行走,终生吃土。”]。

没有比虚伪和背信弃义更为可耻的罪恶了!因此蒙田[蒙田(Michel de Montaigne 1533-1592),法国人,著名作家,有《散文集》,引文见该书卷二《论谎言》]在研究“骗子”这个词为何如此耻辱和可憎时说得好:“好好衡量一下!谎话连篇者正是这样一类人,他敢于狂妄地面对上帝,却在世人面前当懦夫!”

曾经有一个预言,说如果大地上找不到诚实者的时候,就是救世主基督返回人间的时候,——请求上帝来进行末日审判的丧钟之声,就是谎言。这是对虚伪者和骗子一个严肃的警告啊!



2. Of Death

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 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 unto nature, is weak. Yet in religious meditations, there is sometimes mixture of vanity, and of superstition. You shall read, in some of the friars' books of mortifications, 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, then the torture of a limb: for the most vital parts are not the quickest of sense. And by him, that spoke only as a

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2. 关于死亡

对死亡的恐惧,由于人们听信太多的鬼怪传说而更加严重,这正如儿童害怕黑暗。

其实,与其害怕死亡,将死亡视为人类对大自然的无奈之下的献祭,倒不如冷静地面对死亡,采取一种宗教性的虔诚——将死亡看作人生注定的归宿以及对活着时罪孽的救赎。不过,那种宗教性的关于死亡思考中,往往混含有虚妄与迷信的成分。你可以在一些行乞修道士的苦行书中读到这种观点:一个人手指受伤是多么的痛苦!可以想像,当死亡来临,人的全身开始腐烂和消解时,其痛苦更不知大多少倍。很多时候,死亡的痛苦比手指的伤痛折磨要轻——因

philosopher and natural man, it was well said; pompa mortis magis terret, quam mors ipsa. Groans and convulsions, and a discoloured face, and friends weeping, and blacks, and obsequies, and the like, show death terrible.

It is worthy the observing, that there is no passion in the mind of man so weak, but it mates, 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 it; honour aspireth to it; grief flieth to it; fear preoccupieth it; nay we read, 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 adds niceness and satiety; cogita quam diu eadem feceris; mori velle, non tantum fortis, aut miser, sed etiam fastidiosus potest. A man would die, though he were neither valiant, nor miserable, only upon a weariness to do the same thing, so oft over and over.

It is no less worthy to observe, how little alteration, in good spirits, the

Franco's Bacon

为人身上生死攸关的器官,并非是感觉最灵敏的!所以,塞内加[Lucius Seneca, 4-65, 罗马哲学家、作家、道德哲学家],作为一个没有受世俗宗教哲学影响的哲人说得好:“伴随死亡而来的一切,甚至比死亡本身更恐怖。”临终前的呻吟与抽搐,失血苍白的脸,亲友的哭泣,黑色与葬仪,诸如此类都显示出死亡的恐怖。



但是,人类的心灵没有软弱到不能抵御和克服对死亡的恐惧。人类可以拥有许多助手,帮助自己战胜对死亡的恐惧——报仇与求胜之情战胜死亡,爱情蔑视死亡,荣誉感号召人献身至死亡,哀痛之心使人不惜奔赴死亡。而怯懦软弱会使心灵先死亡,即使真正的死亡尚未到来。从历史书中可以读到,奥陶大帝自杀后[参见塔西佗《历史》第2卷第49章],他的随从们出自对他的忠诚和怜悯(一种最软弱的感情)纷纷自杀。他们的死纯粹是因为对于君王的哀恻,以及表达自己对君主的忠诚。

approaches of death make; for they appear to be the same men, till the last instant.

Augustus Caesar died in a compliment; Livia, coniugii nostri memor, vive et vale.

Tiberius in dissimulation; as Tacitus saith of him; iam Tiberium vires, et corpus, non dissimulatio, deserebant.

Vespasian in a jest; sitting upon the stool, ut puto deus fio.

Galba with a sentence; feri, si ex re sit populi Romani, holding forth his neck.

Septimius Severus in dispatch; adeste, si quid mihi restat agendum. And the like.

Certainly, the Stoics 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 nature.

It is as natural to die, as to be born; and to a little infant, perhaps, the

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除此以外,塞内加说过:“一个人的死,即使不是因为他过于勇敢或者过于可怜,也是因为对事物的厌倦和无聊使人自杀,乏味与空虚也能使人走向死亡。”(原文为拉丁文)

应该注意的一点是,死亡无法征服崇高的灵魂。这种人,在死亡来临时的生命的最后一刻,他们仍然和平时一样,面不改色。

奥古斯都大帝的生命最后一刻是在向他的皇后致意:“利维娅,永别了,不要忘记我们结婚以来的幸福生活。”(原文为拉丁文)

提比略大帝对死亡装糊涂,塔西佗认为:“他虽然体力衰弱,智慧却仍旧敏锐。”

韦斯巴芗坐在椅子上开着玩笑等待死亡。他说:“我想,我是不是正在成为一个神灵?”

加尔巴面对死亡振臂高呼,他对那些刺客们说:“你们杀吧,只要这对罗马人民有利。”然后 he 从容地引颈就戮。

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 is, nunc dimittis; 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.

Francis Bacon

临死前的塞维鲁最惦念的还是工作，他最后说的话是：“假如还需要我办点什么事情的话，那就快点拿出来吧。”[编者按：奥古斯都、提比略、韦斯巴芗、塞维鲁，都是古罗马皇帝及英雄。上述史事参见苏维托尼乌斯《罗马十二帝王传》]像这样视死如归的人还有很多。



那些斯多葛学者们把死亡看得太过严重了，他们对于死亡作出的种种精神和身体的准备，使死亡看上去更加可怕。而维纳尔说得好：“应该把死亡也看作是大自然对人类的恩宠之一。”

死亡与出生都是自然的，一个婴儿的出生也许与死亡同样痛苦。在激愤暴躁中受伤的人感觉不到痛楚，同样一个坚定执著的人也不会畏惧死亡。最美好的挽歌，是在你度过努力并且有所成就的一生后的祈祷：“主啊，是您的仆人离去的时候了。”

死亡，除了它的恐怖之外，还有另外一种作用：它打开赞美与荣誉之门，消歇世人的妒忌——生前受到妒恨，死后为人敬仰，正是这样！