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# EMOTION

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## 解读情感

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Dylan Evans 著 石 林 译



通识教育  
双语文库

A VERY SHORT  
INTRODUCTION

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# Preface

The word 'sentiment' has fallen on hard times. Today, it is hardly used, and its cousin, 'sentimental', has negative connotations. Two and a half centuries ago, towards the end of the Enlightenment, things were very different. Then, sentiment meant roughly what 'emotion' means today.

The philosophers of the Enlightenment were fascinated by the emotions. David Hume, Adam Smith, and Thomas Reid all wrote at length about the sentiments and the passions. These thinkers believed that emotions were vital to individual and social existence. Smith did not just found the 'dismal science' (economics); he also helped to pioneer the 'sentimental science' (the psychology of emotion). In his first book, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759), he proposed that emotions were the thread that wove together the fabric of society. Like Hume and Reid, Smith did not regard emotion and thought as implacable enemies. For all of these thinkers, it was rational to be emotional, and no science of the mind could be complete without also addressing the heart.

The Romantics rejected this view, reviving an older view of emotions as fundamentally at odds with reason. Humans were faced with a stark choice between emotion and reason, and the wise ones chose to follow their hearts rather than their heads. Rousseau argued that reason had led man out of his innocent 'state of nature' into decadence. To

return to innocence meant listening to one's feelings rather than consulting logic. The secrets of sentiment were to be unlocked by poetry, not by science.

I have used the word 'sentiment' in the subtitle of this book to signal my sympathy with the Enlightenment view of emotion. Unlike the Romantics, I do not believe that emotions are fundamentally at odds with reason, nor that we should always follow our hearts rather than our heads. Rather, like Adam Smith, I believe that intelligent action results from a harmonious blend of emotion and reason. I believe that a creature without emotions would be less rational than us, not more, but I also believe that there are times when it is better to listen to the head rather than the heart. Knowing when to follow our feelings and when to ignore them is a valuable talent that some have called 'emotional intelligence'.

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In this book I argue for a return to the view of emotions as reason's ally, not its enemy. Like Smith and Hume, I believe that the scientific study of emotion is not only possible, but of great value. This is not because I think we can ever reduce emotional experience to a dry formula. However, thinking more clearly about emotion need not be opposed to feeling more deeply. It is my hope that knowing more about how emotions work can help us to lead richer lives, not poorer. At the very least, it can be exciting to learn about the recent scientific advances in our understanding of these mysterious phenomena.

Scientific interest in the emotions underwent something of a renaissance in the 1990s. For much of the twentieth century, research in the emotions was confined to a few psychologists and even fewer anthropologists. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, however, things are rather different. Emotion is now a hot topic. Anthropologists have begun to question their previous views on the cultural relativity of emotional experience. Cognitive psychologists have abandoned their exclusive focus on reasoning, perception, and memory, and are rediscovering the importance of affective processes. Neuroscientists and researchers in artificial intelligence have also joined the debate,

contributing further pieces to the jigsaw. This book attempts to step back and put some of these pieces together.

Needless to say, a short book like this cannot hope to cover all aspects of such a complex area. I have had to leave some very interesting areas of emotion research to one side. The reader will not find, for example, a discussion of how emotions develop in children, although this too is a burgeoning area of study. Nor is there any mention of the growing literature on individual differences in emotional experience. My choice of topics reflects my own idiosyncratic interests and my guesses about what will prove most interesting to you.

I start with a discussion of the variety of emotional experiences in different cultures. Every culture has its own emotional climate, and I draw on anthropological research that has documented some of these variations. However, many anthropologists now think that the differences between emotional experiences around the world are minor when compared with the similarities. In Chapter One I argue that emotions constitute a kind of ‘universal language’ that binds humanity together into a single family. Our common emotional heritage goes deeper than the cultural differences that set us apart.

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We owe this shared emotional repertoire to our common ancestry. We are all descended from a few thousand hominids who lived on the African plains a hundred thousand years ago. Many of our emotions were forged in this bygone age. Many more emotions go back even further, to a time when our ancestors were not even human. In Chapter Two I explore the evolutionary history of emotion, and argue that emotions were – and still are – vital for survival. Emotions are not just luxuries. Still less are they obstacles to intelligent action, as Plato believed. The creators of *Star Trek* were wrong to suppose that the Vulcans, an imaginary alien race that lacked emotions, would be more intelligent than humans. Spock notwithstanding, an intelligent creature that lacked emotions simply could not evolve.

Of course, we now live in very different environments from those in



which our ancestors evolved. In particular, we have many means of inducing happiness in ourselves that our ancestors never even dreamt of. In Chapter Three I discuss these ‘technologies of mood’ that promise to provide us with short cuts to happiness, from psychotherapy and art to drugs and meditation. I ask whether or not they work, and discuss the dangers that beset some of these attempts to circumvent the more circuitous path to happiness that natural selection laid out for us.

In Chapter Four I explain how emotions affect ‘cognitive’ capacities such as memory, attention, and perception. The power of emotions to affect these things makes emotional technologies very appealing to advertisers and politicians. Appealing to feelings offers a way of making people change their minds without having to provide good arguments or evidence. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of the various emotional technologies of persuasion such as subliminal advertising.

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The most recent discipline to have entered the debate on emotion is artificial intelligence. Since the early 1990s, computer scientists have become increasingly interested in building emotional machines, and workers in robotics are already making some progress in this area. In the final chapter I discuss these recent developments, and speculate on where it will all lead. Will we succeed in building robots that have feelings just like we do? And what might be the consequences of such technology?

I do not pretend to have the last word on emotion. A really good theory of emotion may remain forever beyond our grasp. However, I find the attempt to construct such a theory a fascinating thing in its own right. I hope that reading this book will lead you to share my enthusiasm.

Dylan Evans

*London*

*September 2000*

# 前言

如今，“感性”（sentiment）一词已遭遇冷落，很少有人用了，其相关词“感性的”（sentimental）也有着消极的含义。而两个半世纪以前，在启蒙运动的末期，情况则完全不同。那时，“感性”与今天的“情绪”（emotion）一词含义基本相同。

启蒙运动时期的哲学家们对于情绪研究非常着迷。大卫·休谟（David Hume）、亚当·斯密（Adam Smith）、托马斯·里德（Thomas Reid）都曾就感性和激情写过长篇大论。这些思想家们认为情感对于个体和社会的存在是至关重要的。斯密不仅发现了“沉闷科学”（经济学），还帮助创立了“感性科学”（情绪心理学）。在他的第一本著作《道德情操论》（1759）中，斯密提出，如果社会是件衣服的话，情感就是将衣服缝在一起的线。与休谟和里德一样，斯密认为情绪与思想并非不可调和的敌人。对于所有这些思想家来说，情绪化是合理的，一门关于思想的科学如果不讨论心灵就是不完整的。

而浪漫主义者则反对这一观点，他们重新采用了以前的情绪观点，认为情绪与理智在本质上是矛盾的。人类面临着情绪和理智的矛盾抉择，智者选择跟随心灵而不是被理性牵着走。卢梭认为理性将人从无邪的“自然状态”引向了堕落。重返无邪意味着要倾听自己的感觉而不是诉诸逻辑。感性之谜要通过诗句来揭示，而不是由科学来破解。

我用了“感性”一词作为本书的副标题，以此来表示我对启蒙运动时期的情绪观的支持。与浪漫主义者不同，我认为情绪与理智在本质上并不矛盾，我们也不应该总是跟随心灵而不听从大脑指挥。相反，与亚当·斯密一样，我认为智慧的行动来自于感性和理性的和谐交融。没有情绪的生灵比人类还缺少理性，而非更加理性，但我也相信有时候倾听理性的声音要比跟随情感的指引更好一些。知道什么时候跟随情感，什么时候不要被情感支配，这就是一种被称作“情商”的宝贵天分。

在本书中我提出要回到情绪是理性的同盟、而不是敌人这一观点。与斯密和休谟一样，我认为对情绪的科学的研究不仅可行，而且有着巨大的价值。这并不是因为我认为情绪体验可以被提炼成枯燥的公式。然而对情绪分析得更清楚不一定就意味着无法获得更深刻的感受。我希望了解更多的情绪运作知识能有助于我们活得更丰富，而不是更贫乏。至少，了解科学在解释这些神秘现象方面的最新进展是非常有意思的。

科学界对情绪的关注在 20 世纪 90 年代经历了一次复兴。在 20 世纪的大部分时间里，对于情绪的研究仅局限于少数心理学家和更少的几位人类学家。而在 21 世纪初，情况有了很大转变。现在情绪是一个热点话题。人类学家开始质疑以前关于情绪体验的文化相对性的观点。认知心理学家也不再一味关注理性、感知和记忆，他们开始重新探索情感过程的重要性。神经科学家和人工智能的研究者也参加了讨论，为这张拼图又添加了几张图片。而本书的目的就是试图从一个旁观者的角度将其中的一些图片拼在一起。

显然，我不奢望这样一本小书能够覆盖一个复杂领域的方方面面。我必须将情绪研究中一些很有趣的东西放在一边。例如，本书不会讨论儿童的情绪发展，虽然这是一个迅速发展的领域。本书也没有提到有关情绪体验的个体差异的研究文献，

虽然这方面的文献也越来越多。我所选择的话题反映了我的兴趣，以及我认为读者最感兴趣的题目。

本书从对不同文化中的各种情绪体验的讨论入手。每一种文化都有独特的情绪气氛，这些差异在人类学研究中都有文献证明，我会予以借鉴。然而，现在许多人类学家认为与情绪体验的共通性相比，世界上情绪体验的差异是微乎其微的。在第一章中，我提出情绪构成了一种“共通的语言”，它像一根纽带，将人类联结成一个大家庭。与那些将我们分隔开来的文化差异相比，我们传承下来的情绪的共通性更为厚重。

这种共同的情绪来自于我们共同的祖先。我们都是10万年前生活在非洲平原上的几千个原始人的后代。在过去的那个年代，我们的许多情绪都已塑造成形。更多的情绪则可以追溯到更远，那时我们的祖先尚未进化为人类。第二章中，我探索了情绪的进化史，提出无论过去还是现在，情绪都是生存的必要条件。情感不只是奢侈品，更不像柏拉图（Plato）所认为的那样是理智行动的障碍。《星际旅行》的创作者认为瓦尔肯人——一种想象中的外星种族——由于缺乏情感而比人类更加智慧，这种看法是错误的。尽管《星际旅行》中有斯波克这个人，缺乏情感的智慧生命还是根本无法进化出来。

当然，我们现在的生活环境与祖先进化时的大不相同。特别是我们现在拥有许多祖先们做梦也想不到的激发幸福感的方法。在第三章中，我介绍了一些“情绪技术”，从心理治疗、艺术到药物和冥想，这些东西都许诺会让我们通过捷径获得幸福感。它们是否有用呢？自然选择留给我们的通往幸福的路是曲折的，企图绕过这条路就会有危险，我会在这一章进行讨论。

第四章解释了情绪如何影响“认知”能力，如记忆、注意、感知。情绪对这些能力的影响使得情绪技术颇受广告商和政客们的青睐。煽情提供了一种无需通过有力的论证和举例就可以

改变人们思想的方式。该章的结尾讨论了各种说服他人的情感技术，如隐性广告。

在有关情绪话题的争论中，人工智能是最新加入的一门学科。20世纪90年代初期，计算机科学家对制造有情感的机器人越来越感兴趣，机器人制造者在这一方面已经有所进展。最后一章讨论了这些最新进展，并对今后将走向何方进行了一番推测。我们能够成功制造像人类一样有情感的机器人吗？这样的技术将会产生什么结果？

我没试图对情绪问题作一定论，我们可能永远都无法建立一套完善的情绪理论。然而，对我来说，尝试建立这样一种理论本身就是一件趣味无穷的事情。希望你们通过阅读这本书能感受到我的热情。

XIV

迪伦·埃文斯  
伦敦  
2000年9月

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