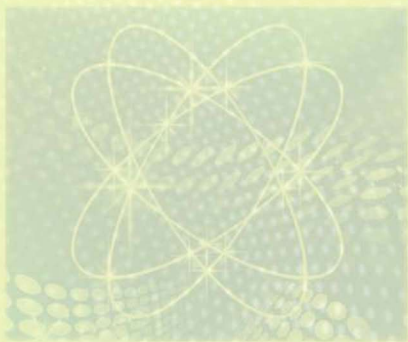


罗马帝国衰亡史

The History of the Decline
and Fall of the Roman Empire

(英) 爱德华



辽宁人民出版社



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HISTORY OF THE DECLINE AND FALL OF THE ROMAN EMPIRE

VOLUME I

by Edward Gibbon



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Edward Gibbon

Edward Gibbon (8 May 1737 - 16 January 1794) was an English historian. His most important work, *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, was published in six volumes between 1776 and 1788 and is known for the quality and irony of its prose, its use of primary sources, and its open criticism of organized religion.

Is This Book for You?

“地上之国总是无常”

——“最经典英语文库”第六辑之
《罗马帝国衰亡史》导读

刘秀玉

如果说古希腊是人类文明的童年时，盛世罗马则是人类青春时代的最好象征。罗马的伟大与光荣不仅在于恺撒、奥古斯都、君士坦丁等一众英雄的丰功伟绩，它还诞生了维吉尔、贺拉斯、奥维德、西塞罗等众多文学家、艺术家和政论家。罗马的辉煌成就激发了不朽的文艺复兴，乃至后来整个欧洲的主流文明。

罗马非一日建成。罗马原为意大利第伯河畔的一座小城，地理位置优越，资源丰富，居民成分比较复杂。从公元前8世纪建城到公元2世纪，罗马经历了由城邦到帝国，由帝国到衰亡的历史进程。从一个不到15万人的小国，成长为称雄世界的帝国，罗马用了1000多年的时间，却在不到200年的时间里迅速瓦解衰落。也许，一个像罗马这样伟大的文明国家，其灭亡并非完全为外力摧毁，而更可能来自内部。长久以来的太平盛世慢慢侵蚀了帝国的精神与肌体，原有的活力日渐式微，不知不觉间，安逸使罗马人对潜在的风险失去了敏感度。罗马文明衰落之后，欧洲经历了漫长的黑暗期，直

至文艺复兴再次迎来文明的曙光。

“地上之国总是无常。”

《罗马帝国衰亡史》是英国历史学家爱德华·吉本的一部巨著。全书共六卷，第一卷出版于1776年，第二、三卷出版于1781年，第四、五、六卷出版于1788年。该书问世至今两百余年，鲜有能与之比肩的同类作品。罗马是西方人引以为傲的昔日荣光，而他们每言及罗马，必称《罗马帝国衰亡史》。可见这部皇然巨著在西方的地位。

爱德华·吉本（1737—1794）出生于英国一个资产阶级大家族，其父曾就读于剑桥大学，当选过英国议会下院议员，其母为伦敦富商之女。由于年幼体弱，加之10岁丧母，吉本的启蒙教育并不完整。幸亏有姨母照料、辅导，他读了许多古希腊罗马的人物传记，这为他打下了深厚的希腊文和拉丁文基础。1752年，15岁的吉本进入牛津大学学习世界史。然而，吉本并不适应学校的沉闷生活。苦闷之中，他改信了天主教，为此，他不得不离开仅待了一年的牛津大学。1753年到1758年间，在父亲的安排下，吉本到瑞士洛桑，师从帕维亚尔，一位博学多识的加尔文派牧师。五年里，吉本研读哲学和自然科学著作，接受了法国启蒙主义思想；他主攻拉丁文古典文献，兼习希腊文作品。这段时间的学习，为他后来的事业打下了坚实基础。也是这期间，经过学习和反思，他放弃了天主教，重新皈依新教。吉本后来将这五年称作“幸运的流放”，可见他对这段学习生活的留恋之情。

1758年回到英国后，吉本过着富足悠闲的生活，以藏书和读书为乐。他对政治等社会工作没有多少热情，矢志著书立说。最初，吉本的写作兴趣是文学，但

是并不顺利。1763—1765年，吉本在意大利生活了两年，遍访名胜古迹，尤其对罗马古城情有独钟。罗马广场的废墟引发他的思古幽情，撰写一部关于这座城市衰亡史的念头第一次迸发出来。然而，真正提笔创作，已是五年后。1770年，忙完家事、社交、国民军训练等事务，吉本终于可以享受自由时间，开始建构这部历史巨著。

完成这样一部历时长久、内容繁杂的巨作，其困难程度可想而知。吉本绞尽脑汁，最后决定以他所钟爱的罗马城作为全书的基点，千头万绪的枝蔓都从罗马生发出去。他打破常规的编年体叙事，以内在联系编织起大量历史事件，勾勒出罗马帝国由盛而衰的各个阶段。吉本首次从政府、文化、社会等视角描写罗马历史，而此前的历史著作都从宗教角度展开，也因此，该书被称为一部“现代”的历史著作。

《罗马帝国衰亡史》从奥古斯都称帝、罗马由共和国变为帝国写起，直到东罗马帝国灭亡，其间1000多年的风云变幻，尽收笔下，气势恢宏。书中还记述了基督教和伊斯兰教的兴起，罗马帝国周边波斯、阿拉伯、匈牙利、俄罗斯、蒙古等国家的简史，甚至还有汉武帝与匈奴人的战争以及匈奴人西迁等事件。准确的洞见，周密的布局，审慎的判断与怀疑，这一切都使本书具有了超越时代的意义。

吉本51岁诞辰时，《罗马帝国衰亡史》六卷本终于全部出版。二十年修史不辍，甘苦自知，对此，吉本却深感幸福和欣慰。吉本终身未婚，一生与史为伴，幸有少数好友往来。晚年他在瑞士洛桑过着孤寂的生活。1793年，吉本回到伦敦，次年年初病逝，享年57岁。

《罗马帝国衰亡史》的可读性很强。所谓“良史

莫不工文”。态度严谨的吉本在动笔之初，就考虑到行文风格的问题。他不喜欢编年体史书的枯燥乏味，也讨厌演说体的华丽辞藻，因此，他采用了文学而非论文的创作形式。《罗马帝国衰亡史》自诞生之日起，历经二百余年传诵不绝，除却重要的学术价值，其引人入胜、栩栩如生的笔法不但使学者专家为之倾倒，普通读者更是痴迷不已。

作为具有批评精神的启蒙史学家，吉本在《罗马帝国衰亡史》中提出了许多新思想、新观念。他将孟德斯鸠的启蒙历史学发扬光大，以理性烛照当时史学的黑暗，不畏暴政和宗教权威，脱离了低俗的历史观。迄今，《罗马帝国衰亡史》依然是罗马历史的最权威著作，吉本的史学思想也将永远在世界史坛熠熠生辉。

General Preface

Millions of Chinese are learning English to acquire knowledge and skills for communication in a world where English has become the primary language for international discourse. Yet not many learners have come to realize that the command of the English language also enables them to have an easy access to the world literary classics such as Shakespeare's plays, Shelley's poems, mark Twain's novels and Nietzsche's works which are an important part of liberal-arts education. The most important goals of universities are not vocational, that is, not merely the giving of knowledge and the training of skills.

In a broad sense, education aims at broadening young people's mental horizon, cultivating virtues and shaping their character. Lincoln, Mao Zedong and many other great leaders and personages of distinction declared how they drew immense inspiration and strength from literary works. As a matter of fact, many of them had aspired to become writers in their young age. Alexander the Great (356-323 B.C.) is said to take along with him two things, waking or sleeping: a book and a dagger, and the book is Iliad, a literary classic, by Homer. He would put these two much treasured things under his pillow when he went to bed.

Today, we face an unprecedented complex and changing world. To cope with this rapid changing world requires not only communication skills, but also adequate knowledge of cultures other than our own home culture. Among the most important developments in present-day global culture is the ever increasing cultural exchanges and understanding between different nations and peoples. And one of the best ways to know foreign cultures is to read their literary works, particularly their literary classics, the soul of a country's culture. They also give you the best language and the feeling of sublimity.

Liaoning People's Publishing House is to be congratulated for its foresight and courage in making a new series of world literary classics available to the reading public. It is hoped that people with an adequate command of the English language will read them, like them and keep them as their lifetime companions.

I am convinced that the series will make an important contribution to the literary education of the young people in China. At a time when the whole country is emphasizing "spiritual civilization", it is certainly a very timely venture to put out the series of literary classics for literary and cultural education.

Zhang Zhongzai

Professor

Beijing Foreign Studies University

July, 2013 Beijing

总序

经典名著的语言无疑是最凝练、最优美、最有审美价值的。雪莱的那句“如冬已来临，春天还会远吗？”让多少陷于绝望的人重新燃起希望之火，鼓起勇气，迎接严冬过后的春天。徐志摩一句“悄悄的我走了，正如我悄悄的来；我挥一挥衣袖，不带走一片云彩”又让多少人陶醉。尼采的那句“上帝死了”，又给多少人以振聋发聩的启迪作用。

读经典名著，尤其阅读原汁原味作品，可以怡情养性，增长知识，加添才干，丰富情感，开阔视野。所谓“经典”，其实就是作者所属的那个民族的文化积淀，是那个民族的灵魂缩影。英国戏剧泰斗莎士比亚的《哈姆雷特》和《麦克白》等、“意大利语言之父”的但丁的《神曲》之《地狱篇》《炼狱篇》及《天堂篇》、爱尔兰世界一流作家詹姆斯·乔伊斯的《尤利西斯》及《一个艺术家的肖像》等、美国风趣而笔法超一流的著名小说家马克·吐温的《哈克历险记》以及《汤姆索亚历险记》等，德国著名哲学家尼采的《查拉图斯特拉如是说》及《快乐的科学》等等，都为塑造自己民族的文化积淀，做出了永恒的贡献，也同时向世界展示了他们所属的民族的优秀剪影。

很多著名领袖如林肯、毛泽东等伟大人物，也都曾从经典名著中汲取力量，甚至获得治国理念。耶鲁大学教授查尔斯·希尔曾在题为《经典与治国理念》的文章，阐述了读书与治国之间的绝妙关系。他这样写道：“在几乎所有经典名著中，都可以找到让人叹为观止、深藏其中的治国艺术原则。”

经典名著，不仅仅有治国理念，更具提升读者审美情趣的功能。世界上不同时代、不同地域的优秀经典作品，都存在一个共同属性：歌颂赞美人间的真善美，揭露抨击世间的假恶丑。

读欧美自但丁以来的经典名著，你会看到，西方无论是在漫长的黑暗时期，抑或进入现代进程时期，总有经典作品问世，对世间的负面，进行冷峻的批判。与此同时，也有更多的大家作品问世，热情讴歌人间的真诚与善良，使读者不由自主地沉浸于经典作品的审美情感之中。

英语经典名著，显然是除了汉语经典名著以外，人类整个进程中至关重要的文化遗产的一部分。从历史上看，英语是全世界经典阅读作品中，使用得最广泛的国际性语言。这一事实，没有产生根本性变化。本世纪相当长一段时间，这一事实也似乎不会发生任何变化。而要更深入地了解并切身感受英语经典名著的风采，阅读原汁原味的英语经典作品的过程，显然是必不可少的。

辽宁人民出版社及时并隆重推出“最经典英语文库”系列丛书，是具有远见与卓识的出版行为。我相信，这套既可供阅读，同时也具收藏价值的英语原版经

典作品系列丛书，在帮助人们了解什么才是经典作品的同时，也一定会成为广大英语爱好者、大中学生以及学生家长们的挚爱的“最经典英语文库”。

北京外国语大学英语学院
北外公共外交研究中心
欧美文学研究中心主任
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CHAPTER 1

The Extent of the Empire in the Age of the Antonines

Part I

*I*n the second century of the Christian Aera, the empire of Rome comprehended the fairest part of the earth, and the most civilized portion of mankind. The frontiers of that extensive monarchy were guarded by ancient renown and disciplined valor. The gentle but powerful influence of laws and manners had gradually cemented the union of the provinces. Their peaceful inhabitants enjoyed and abused the advantages of wealth and luxury. The image of a free constitution was preserved with decent reverence: the Roman senate appeared to possess the sovereign authority, and devolved on the emperors all the executive powers of government. During a happy period of more than fourscore years, the public administration was conducted by the virtue and abilities of Nerva, Trajan, Hadrian, and the two Antonines. It is the design of this, and of the two succeeding chapters, to describe the prosperous condition of their empire; and after wards, from the death of Marcus Antoninus, to deduce the most important circumstances of its decline and fall; a revolution which will ever be remembered, and is still felt by the nations of the earth.