



英汉 对照全译

人口论

AN ESSAY ON THE PRINCIPLE
OF POPULATION

[英]托马斯·罗伯特·马尔萨斯 著
袁凯成 译

English-Chinese Comparison of Great Classical Library

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Preface

THE following Essay owes its origin to a conversation with a friend, on the subject of Mr Godwin's essay on 'Avarice and Profusion' in his Enquirer. The discussion started the general question of the future improvement of society. and the Author at first sat down with an intention of merely stating his thoughts to his friend, upon paper, in a clearer manner than he thought he could do in conversation. But as the subject opened upon him, some ideas occurred, which he did not recollect to have met with before; and as he conceived that every least light, on a topic so generally interesting, might be received with candour, he determined to put his thoughts in a form for publication.

The Essay might, undoubtedly, have been rendered much more complete by a collection of a greater number of facts in elucidation of the general argument. But a long and almost total interruption from very particular business, joined to a desire (perhaps imprudent) of not delaying

序言

有一次,与一个朋友进行了一次谈话,谈的话题是葛德文先生的《研究者》中那篇关于贪婪和奢侈的文章,这本书的起源就在于此。在谈论的时候谈到了一个大问题,那就是未来社会的进步问题。开始我坐下来只是想把我的思想传给我的朋友,把它写到纸上,因为这样比谈话更能把自己的思想明白地传达给朋友。但是这个课题刚开始,一些想法就出现在脑海中,这些想法在过去是从来没有过的。因为相信这一微不足道的见解会让大家很感兴趣,会受到大家真诚的欢迎,所以决定把自己的思想形成一个整体发表出来。

毋庸置疑,如果能收集到更多的事实来解释主要思想,这本书将会比现在完善得多。但是由于出现了很特殊的事情,在很长时间内几乎完全中止了本书的写作,而我又不想(也许这样做是不慎重的)把

the publication much beyond the time that he originally proposed, prevented the Author from giving to the subject an undivided attention. He presumes, however, that the facts which he has adduced will be found to form no inconsiderable evidence for the truth of his opinion respecting the future improvement of mankind. As the Author contemplates this opinion at present, little more appears to him to be necessary than a plain statement, in addition to the most cursory view of society, to establish it.

It is an obvious truth, which has been taken notice of by many writers, that population must always be kept down to the level of the means of subsistence; but no writer that the Author recollects has inquired particularly into the means by which this level is effected; and it is a view of these means which forms, to his mind, the strongest obstacle in the way to any very great future improvement of society. He hopes it will appear that, in the discussion of this interesting subject, he is actuated solely by a love of truth, and not by any prejudices against any particular set of men, or of opinions. He professes to have read some of the speculations on the future improvement of society

开始计划的出版时间向后推得太久,这就使我未能一心一意地考虑这个课题。但是我觉得,人们将会发现我所举出的事实在很大程度上证明了我的那些关于人类未来进步问题的观点的正确性。现在我思考着我的观点,觉得非常有必要对我的观点做一个简单的陈述,另外还要很粗略地观察一下社会。

一个显而易见的事实是,人口总是必然保持在生存资料的水平之下,很多作家已经认识到了这一点;但是我记得,到现在为止还没有哪位作家认真研究过这种水平是怎样形成的,但我认为,如果不对这一形成方式进行考察,那么对社会的任何巨大的进步都是最大的障碍。我希望,在对这个使人感兴趣的话题进行讨论的时候,我只是被对真理的热爱所鼓舞,而不是由于对某派人或某派观点的偏见。我声明一下,我已经阅读了一些有关社会未来进步方面的著作,目的并不是想发现它们

in a temper very different from a wish to find them visionary, but he has not acquired that command over his understanding which would enable him to believe what he wishes, without evidence, or to refuse his assent to what might be unpleasant, when accompanied with evidence.

The view which he has given of human life has a melancholy hue, but he feels conscious that he has drawn these dark tints from a conviction that they are really in the picture, and not from a jaundiced eye or an inherent spleen of disposition. The theory of mind which he has sketched in the two last chapters accounts to his own understanding in a satisfactory manner for the existence of most of the evils of life, but whether it will have the same effect upon others must be left to the judgment of his readers.

If he should succeed in drawing the attention of more able men to what he conceives to be the principal difficulty in the way to the improvement of society and should, in consequence, see this difficulty removed, even in theory, he will gladly retract his present opinions and rejoice in a conviction of his error.

7 June 1798

的空想,不过我的分析和理解的习惯不允许我相信自己所希望的事情,就算无证据也如此,拒绝接受不愉快的事情,即使有证据也这样。

我在人类生活方面的观点有些忧郁的意味,不过我觉得,我之所以绘出这些暗淡的色彩,是因为在现实中它们的确如此,并不是因为我的眼光有偏见或者我的性格天生忧郁。我觉得,在最后两章中对人类精神的理论的有关概述,以令人满意的方式说明了生活中大部分罪恶存在的原因,但是对别人是否具有同样的影响,那就留给读者来判断了。

如果我成功地把那些有才能的人的注意力吸引到我所认为的妨碍社会进步的主要困难上,并且随之见到这种困难被消除,即便只是在理论上被消除,我也会很高兴地收回我现在的观点,并且很乐意承认自己的错误。

1798年6月7日

CHAPTER 1

Question stated - Little prospect of a determination of it, from the enmity of the opposing parties - The principal argument against the perfectibility of man and of society has never been fairly answered - Nature of the difficulty arising from population - Outline of the principal argument of the Essay

THE great and unlooked for discoveries that have taken place of late years in natural philosophy, the increasing diffusion of general knowledge from the extension of the art of printing, the ardent and unshackled spirit of inquiry that prevails throughout the lettered and even unlettered world, the new and extraordinary lights that have been thrown on political subjects which dazzle and astonish the understanding, and particularly that tremendous phenomenon in the political horizon, the French Revolution, which, like a blazing comet, seems destined either to inspire with fresh life and vigour, or to scorch up and destroy the shrinking inhabitants of the earth, have all concurred to lead many able men into the opinion

第一章

问题的提出——敌对派别之间的憎恨使得解决这个问题的前景非常渺茫——这一基本论点否认人类以及社会的可完善性,它从未得到公正的回答——人口带来的困难的本质——概括这本书的基本论点。

近年来,在自然哲学方面,出乎人们预料的伟大发现大量涌现,印刷术的传播加速了一般知识的传播,热情而豪放的探索精神在知识界、甚至非知识界都很盛行,在政治方面抛出的新鲜而非凡的观点使人感到眩目和惊讶,特别是政治方面的惊人现象,法国大革命像一颗燃烧着的慧星,好像注定要给地球上那畏缩不前的居民注入新的生命与精力,或者烧焦和毁灭他们。所有这一切使很多有才能的人认识到,我们正接近一个有着巨大变化的重大时期,在某种程度上这些变化将决定人类未来的命运。

that we were touching on a period big with the most important changes, changes that would in some measure be decisive of the future fate of mankind.

It has been said that the great question is now at issue, whether man shall henceforth start forwards with accelerated velocity towards illimitable, and hitherto unconceived improvement, or be condemned to a perpetual oscillation between happiness and misery, and after every effort remain still at an immeasurable distance from the wished-for goal.

Yet, anxiously as every friend of mankind must look forwards to the termination of this painful suspense, and eagerly as the inquiring mind would hail every ray of light that might assist its view into futurity, it is much to be lamented that the writers on each side of this momentous question still keep far aloof from each other. Their mutual arguments do not meet with a candid examination. The question is not brought to rest on fewer points, and even in theory scarcely seems to be approaching to a decision.

The advocate for the present order of things is apt to treat the sect of speculative philosophers either as a set of artful and designing knaves who preach up ar-

据说,现在正在争论的巨大问题是,从此以后,人类是加速向无限的未来前进,前景是现在不可想象的,还是注定要在幸福与灾难之间永远徘徊下去,在做出所有的努力之后,仍然与想要达到的目标之间存在着不可估量的距离。

但是,虽然人类所有的朋友都焦急地盼望着这种痛苦的、悬而未决的状态结束,虽然爱探索的智者盼望得到每一道光亮来帮助他们观察未来,但是令人遗憾的是,在这个重大问题上,辩论双方都冷漠地远离对方。他们对对方的观点从来没有公正地考虑过,这个问题总是被不着边际地争论着,甚至在理论上似乎也不可能取得一致意见。

现有秩序的拥护者倾向于把思辨哲学家看做是一群狡猾的、爱耍阴谋诡计的流氓,认为他们称赞热心仁慈,

dent benevolence and draw captivating pictures of a happier state of society only the better to enable them to destroy the present establishments and to forward their own deep-laid schemes of ambition, or as wild and mad-headed enthusiasts whose silly speculations and absurd paradoxes are not worthy the attention of any reasonable man.

The advocate for the perfectibility of man, and of society, retorts on the defender of establishments a more than equal contempt. He brands him as the slave of the most miserable and narrow prejudices; or as the defender of the abuses of civil society only because he profits by them. He paints him either as a character who prostitutes his understanding to his interest, or as one whose powers of mind are not of a size to grasp any thing great and noble, who cannot see above five yards before him, and who must therefore be utterly unable to take in the views of the enlightened benefactor of mankind.

In this unamicable contest the cause of truth cannot but suffer. The really good arguments on each side of the question are not allowed to have their proper weight. Each pursues his own theory, little solicitous to correct or improve it by an atten-

描绘更幸福迷人的社会图像,只是想更好地摧毁目前的制度,从而迅速实现他们深埋在心底的野心,或者把他们看做是疯狂的、脑子有毛病的狂热家,他们那些愚蠢的思想和荒谬的、似是而非的理论不值得任何一个有理性的人关注。

人类和社会完善性的倡导者更加轻蔑地反击了对方,指斥现存制度的拥护者就好比是最可怜、最狭隘的偏见的奴隶,说他们之所以维护当前社会的弊端是因为他们从中得到了利益,说他们为了自己的利益而自欺欺人,还说他们的脑力不够,不能领会任何伟大和高大的事物,自己面前五码以外的地方他们就不能看到了,所以完全不能考虑那些开明人士的观点。

真理在这种夹杂着谩骂的争论中只会受到损害。双方提出的真正好的观点没有得到适当的重视。每一方都坚持自己的观点,而不是热心关注对手的观点,并纠正或改

tion to what is advanced by his opponents.

The friend of the present order of things condemns all political speculations in the gross. He will not even condescend to examine the grounds from which the perfectibility of society is inferred. Much less will he give himself the trouble in a fair and candid manner to attempt an exposition of their fallacy.

The speculative philosopher equally offends against the cause of truth. With eyes fixed on a happier state of society, the blessings of which he paints in the most captivating colours, he allows himself to indulge in the most bitter invectives against every present establishment, without applying his talents to consider the best and safest means of removing abuses and without seeming to be aware of the tremendous obstacles that threaten, even in theory, to oppose the progress of man towards perfection.

It is an acknowledged truth in philosophy that a just theory will always be confirmed by experiment. Yet so much friction, and so many minute circumstances occur in practice, which it is next to impossible for the most enlarged and penetrating mind to foresee, that on few sub-

进自己的观点。

现有秩序的朋友对所有的政治思辨进行全面的谴责,他们不愿意屈尊思考一下社会可完善性理论的基础,更不愿意自找麻烦公平而不抱偏见地揭露一下它们的错误之处。

思辨哲学家同样也在损害着真理。他们的眼睛固定在更幸福的社会上,用最富有魅力的色彩描绘这个社会将会给人类带来的幸福,他们让自己沉溺于对现存一切制度的最恶毒的谩骂之中,没有运用自己的才能去考虑铲除弊端的最好而又最安全的办法,他们似乎并没有认识到,甚至理论上也存在着巨大的障碍,阻碍人类向完美的方向发展。

正确的理论总是要通过实践来证明的,在哲学上这是一条公认的真理。但是在实践中,会出现很多阻力,很多细小的事情,这是连知识最渊博、思想最敏锐的人也不可能预见到的。但是,在人们没有

jects can any theory be pronounced just, till all the arguments against it have been maturely weighed and clearly and consistently refuted.

I have read some of the speculations on the perfectibility of man and of society with great pleasure. I have been warmed and delighted with the enchanting picture which they hold forth. I ardently wish for such happy improvements. But I see great, and, to my understanding, unconquerable difficulties in the way to them. These difficulties it is my present purpose to state, declaring, at the same time, that so far from exulting in them, as a cause of triumph over the friends of innovation, nothing would give me greater pleasure than to see them completely removed.

The most important argument that I shall adduce is certainly not new. The principles on which it depends have been explained in part by Hume, and more at large by Dr Adam Smith. It has been advanced and applied to the present subject, though not with its proper weight, or in the most forcible point of view, by Mr Wallace, and it may probably have been stated by many writers that I have never

对所有的反对观点进行充分的考虑和明确的彻底的反驳之前,很少有理论能被宣称是真理。

我曾经很兴奋地读过一些关于人类和社会可完善性方面的理论,他们所描绘的关于未来的迷人情景,使我感到激动和欣喜。我热切地期望着这种能给人类带来幸福的改良。但是我看到也理解到,一些不可征服的困难存在于通往幸福的路上。我现在的目的是想把这些困难叙述一下,不过首先要声明,我对它们没有任何兴趣,虽然它们是击败改革派朋友的一个因素;相反,看到它们没有被完全去除,我感到不高兴,没有什么事能比这更让我不高兴的了。

我要举出的最重要的论点肯定不是新论点。它所依赖的原理休谟已进行了部分说明,亚当·斯密博士更进一步地做了解释。华莱士先生也提出过这个论点,并把它应用到我们当前的话题中,虽然没有对它进行适当的衡量,或者说,没有在最强有力的观点方面运用它。也许它还曾被

met with. I should certainly therefore not think of advancing it again, though I mean to place it in a point of view in some degree different from any that I have hitherto seen, if it had ever been fairly and satisfactorily answered.

The cause of this neglect on the part of the advocates for the perfectibility of mankind is not easily accounted for. I cannot doubt the talents of such men as Godwin and Condorcet. I am unwilling to doubt their candour. To my understanding, and probably to that of most others, the difficulty appears insurmountable. Yet these men of acknowledged ability and penetration scarcely deign to notice it, and hold on their course in such speculations with unabated ardour and undiminished confidence. I have certainly no right to say that they purposely shut their eyes to such arguments. I ought rather to doubt the validity of them, when neglected by such men, however forcibly their truth may strike my own mind. Yet in this respect it must be acknowledged that we are all of us too prone to err. If I saw a glass of wine repeatedly presented to a man, and he took no notice of it, I should be

很多作家提起过,那些作家是我从来没有听说过的。所以,如果这个论点曾经得到了公平的令人满意的回答,那我肯定不会想着再去提起它,尽管我打算从另一个不同的角度提出来,这个角度与我们现在所看到的有些不同。

人类可完善性的倡导者忽略这一论点的原因不大容易说清楚。我不能怀疑像葛德文和孔多塞那样的人的才能,我也不愿意怀疑他们的公正。在我的理解中,也许在其他大多数人的理解中,困难似乎是不可克服的。但是这些公认的有才能又有洞察力的人几乎不屈尊去注意它,只是一味热情地信心丝毫不减地坚持着自己的思考方法。我当然没有权利说他们是有意在这样的论点前闭上眼睛。如果这些人忽视了它,那么不管它的真实性在我的脑海中留下多么深刻的印象,我都会怀疑它的真实性。但是在这一点上,必须承认我们所有的人都容易犯错误。如果我看到一个人再三地向另一个人敬酒,而后者却没有在意,那

apt to think that he was blind or uncivil. A juster philosophy might teach me rather to think that my eyes deceived me and that the offer was not really what I conceived it to be.

In entering upon the argument I must premise that I put out of the question, at present, all mere conjectures, that is, all suppositions, the probable realization of which cannot be inferred upon any just philosophical grounds. A writer may tell me that he thinks man will ultimately become an ostrich. I cannot properly contradict him. But before he can expect to bring any reasonable person over to his opinion, he ought to shew that the necks of mankind have been gradually elongating, that the lips have grown harder and more prominent, that the legs and feet are daily altering their shape, and that the hair is beginning to change into stubs of feathers. And till the probability of so wonderful a conversion can be shewn, it is surely lost time and lost eloquence to expatiate on the happiness of man in such a state; to describe his powers, both of running and flying, to paint him in a condition where all narrow luxuries would be condemned, where he would be employed

么我倾向于认为他是个瞎子或者是个粗鲁的人。然而更公正合理的哲学有可能教会我,宁肯认为是我的眼睛欺骗了我,敬酒的事是不真实的,是我臆想出来的。

在准备讨论这一论点的时候,我必须先说明一下,现在,我已经排除了所有的假说,假说都是些想象,是不可能从任何正确的哲学基础上推论出来的。也许有某位作家对我说,他觉得人类最终会变成鸵鸟。我不能恰当地反驳他。但是,在他期盼让有理性的人同意他的观点之前,他应该证明人类的脖子正在逐渐地增长,嘴唇也变得越来越硬越来越突出,腿和脚每天都在改变着自己的形状,头发开始向毛管的方向转化。在能够证明人类有可能发生这些令人惊奇的变化之前,解释成为鸵鸟后会怎样幸福,描述他们的力量和飞奔时的速度,说他们会处于一种很轻视小里小气的奢侈品的生活形态之中,他们在那里只需采集生活必需品,所以每个人的劳动量都会减轻,每个人都将拥有充

only in collecting the necessities of life, and where, consequently, each man's share of labour would be light, and his portion of leisure ample.

I think I may fairly make two postulata.

First, That food is necessary to the existence of man.

Secondly, That the passion between the sexes is necessary and will remain nearly in its present state.

These two laws, ever since we have had any knowledge of mankind, appear to have been fixed laws of our nature, and, as we have not hitherto seen any alteration in them, we have no right to conclude that they will ever cease to be what they now are, without an immediate act of power in that Being who first arranged the system of the universe, and for the advantage of his creatures, still executes, according to fixed laws, all its various operations.

I do not know that any writer has supposed that on this earth man will ultimately be able to live without food. But Mr Godwin has conjectured that the passion between the sexes may in time be extinguished. As, however, he calls this part

分的休闲时间,那绝对是浪费时间,白费口舌。

我想我可以公正地提出两条理由。

第一,食物对人类的生存来说是必需的。

第二,两性间的情欲也是必需的,且几乎会保持目前的状态。

这两条法则,自从我们有了些有关人类的知识后,好像就成了我们本性的固定法则。既然到现在为止我们还没有发现它们有什么变化,我们就没有权力得出这样的结论:于今日为然者,于将来当不为然,除非当初安排了宇宙秩序的神用力量进行了某种直接的干预,但是神为了他所创造的物体的缘故,仍然按照它那固定法则对世间进行着各种各样的操作。

我不知道有哪位作家设想过,在地球上,人类最终会离开食物而生存。但是葛德文先生推测说,两性间的情欲到一定的时候总会消除的。不过,由于他声称他著作的这

of his work a deviation into the land of conjecture, I will not dwell longer upon it at present than to say that the best arguments for the perfectibility of man are drawn from a contemplation of the great progress that he has already made from the savage state and the difficulty of saying where he is to stop. But towards the extinction of the passion between the sexes, no progress whatever has hitherto been made. It appears to exist in as much force at present as it did two thousand or four thousand years ago. There are individual exceptions now as there always have been. But, as these exceptions do not appear to increase in number, it would surely be a very unphilosophical mode of arguing to infer, merely from the existence of an exception, that the exception would, in time, become the rule, and the rule the exception.

Assuming then my postulata as granted, I say, that the power of population is indefinitely greater than the power in the earth to produce subsistence for man.

Population, when unchecked, increases in a geometrical ratio. Subsistence increases only in an arithmetical ratio. A slight acquaintance with numbers will shew the immensity of the first power in

一部分是进入了推测的境地,所以现在我不想在这里浪费太多的时间,我只想说,人类可完善性的最好论据是人类已摆脱了野蛮状态,并且取得了很大的进步,很难说人类会在什么地方停下来。但是在两性间的激情泯灭这个方面,到现在还没有任何进步,现在这种激情的力量似乎仍然与两千年前或者四千年前一样。现在也有一些个别的例外,这与过去一样。但是,这种例外在数目上似乎并没有增加,所以,仅仅从例外的存在就推论说例外终有一日将成为规则,而规则却成为例外,这肯定是缺乏哲理的推断方法。

如果同意上面提到的两个公理,我就要说,人口的增殖力无限大于土地为人类生产产品的力量。

人口如果不受制约,将会以几何比率增加。生存资料只是以算术比率增加。对数字稍有一点了解的人就会知道,与后者相比,前者的力量

comparison of the second.

By that law of our nature which makes food necessary to the life of man, the effects of these two unequal powers must be kept equal. This implies a strong and constantly operating check on population from the difficulty of subsistence. This difficulty must fall somewhere and must necessarily be severely felt by a large portion of mankind.

Through the animal and vegetable kingdoms, nature has scattered the seeds of life abroad with the most profuse and liberal hand. She has been comparatively sparing in the room and the nourishment necessary to rear them. The germs of existence contained in this spot of earth, with ample food, and ample room to expand in, would fill millions of worlds in the course of a few thousand years. Necessity, that imperious all pervading law of nature, restrains them within the prescribed bounds. The race of plants and the race of animals shrink under this great restrictive law. And the race of man cannot, by any efforts of reason, escape from it. Among plants and animals its effects are waste of seed, sickness, and premature death. Among mankind, misery and vice. The former, misery, is an absolute-

是多么巨大。

根据食物是人类生活所必需的这一人类本性方面的法则,必须使这两种不相等的力量保持相等。这意味着,时常会从获取的生存资料的困难中产生对人口强有力的抑制力量。这种困难一定会在某个地方发生,一定会被很大一部分人强烈地感受到。

在整个动物王国和植物王国,大自然慷慨大方地广泛地撒播着生命的种子。但她在提供养育这些生命所必需的空间和营养方面,却相当地吝啬。这个小小的地球上所存在的生命的种子,如果有充足的食物和空间来繁殖,经过几千年的过程,就会挤满成百万个地球。但贫困这一专横而又无处不在的自然法则,却把它们限制在了规定的范围内。植物与动物都受到了这一伟大的限制性法则的限制,人类也不能逃脱这个法则,虽然他具有推理能力。在植物和动物中,它的影响表现在种子不发芽,害病和夭折;在人类当中,它表现为苦难与罪恶。前者,也就是苦难,是这

ly necessary consequence of it. Vice is a highly probable consequence, and we therefore see it abundantly prevail, but it ought not, perhaps, to be called an absolutely necessary consequence. The ordeal of virtue is to resist all temptation to evil.

This natural inequality of the two powers of population and of production in the earth, and that great law of our nature which must constantly keep their effects equal, form the great difficulty that to me appears insurmountable in the way to the perfectibility of society. All other arguments are of slight and subordinate consideration in comparison of this. I see no way by which man can escape from the weight of this law which pervades all animated nature. No fancied equality, no agrarian regulations in their utmost extent, could remove the pressure of it even for a single century. And it appears, therefore, to be decisive against the possible existence of a society, all the members of which should live in ease, happiness, and comparative leisure; and feel no anxiety about providing the means of subsistence for themselves and families.

Consequently, if the premises are just, the argument is conclusive against the

一法则绝对必然的结果。罪恶在很大程度上也有可能是它的后果,所以我们看到它很盛行,但也许不应该把它称为绝对必然的后果。可以通过磨练道德,限制所有的罪恶的诱惑物。

人口增殖力和土地生产力是两种不相等的天然的力量,而我们自然界那伟大的法则却总能使它们的作用始终保持相等,在我看来,这就是存在于通向社会完美的道路上的不可克服的巨大困难。与这个相比,其他所有的困难都是轻微的、渺小的。这一法则遍及活生生的整个生物界,我看人类是没有方法逃脱这一法则的重负了。空想出来的平等,最大程度上的土地的调整,都不能把这个法则的压力去掉,甚至只去掉一个世纪也不行。因此,要想使全体社会成员都过上悠闲的、幸福的、相当轻松的生活,要想让自己和家人在生活方面没有什么可担忧的,那是完全不可能的。

所以,如果前提是正确的,那么最后的结论就是:全