

【了如指掌·人物馆】

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了如指掌



在咖啡馆遇见亚里士多德

【英】乔纳森·巴尔内斯 / 著 袁琳 / 译



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JONATHAN BARNES
FOREWORD BY JULIAN BARNES

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COFFEE WITH

ARISTOTLE

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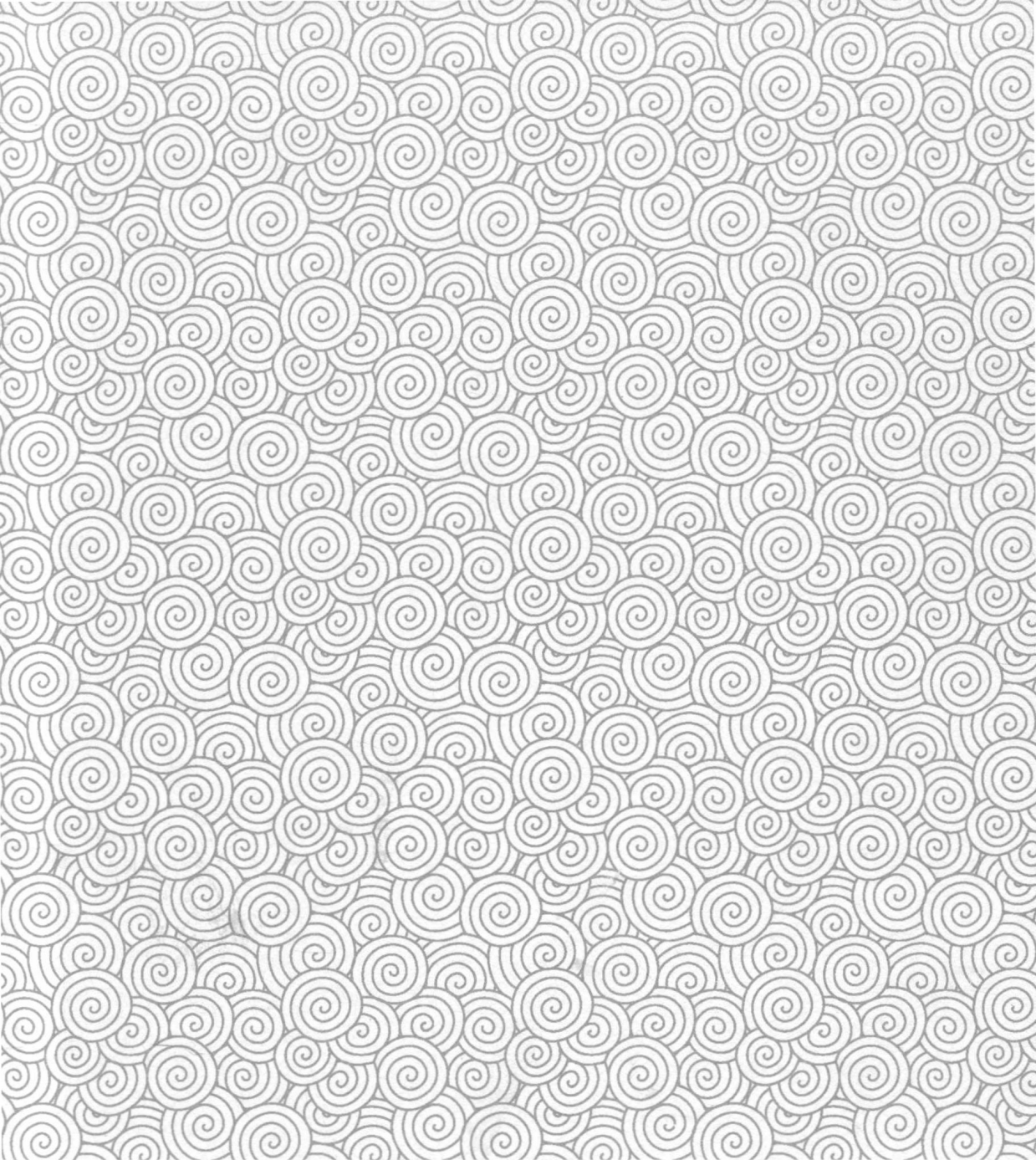
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Foreword

by JULIAN BARNES

In the Middle Ages, a common male fear—part of a wider apprehension about the world being turned upside down—was of the Woman Wearing the Breeches. From the 13th century onward there are countless decorative representations of one version of this theme. Aristotle and his companion Herpyllis (or Phyllis) are shown in extreme role reversal: the philosopher crawling on all fours like a beast, while his companion rides him sidesaddle, goading him, beating him, and tugging on his philosophic beard. It is a ribald image, but also admonitory: if the most intelligent male who ever lived could be thus overmastered and brought low by woman and the flesh, then none of us is safe.

Nowadays, someone only has to step out of one field of competence into another—a plutocrat flies a balloon across the Atlantic, a cricketer becomes a psychotherapist—for them to be dubbed a Renaissance Man (the Renaissance Woman is more rarely identified). But as the modern two-talent person was to the original multi-skilled Renaissance Man, so the latter was to Aristotle. Even to read this short account of Aristotle's intellectual activities is to be left breathless and envious: breathless at the range, energy and attack of the man; envious for two reasons. First, because he didn't just discover things, but invented entire new disciplines (logic and zoology) while developing many others; second, because he was working and thinking at a time when it still seemed possible for one human being—admittedly, one of the highest mental calibre—to grasp all that could be grasped about the

序言

在中世纪，男性普遍对女性身穿马裤十分畏惧，因为这让他们感觉世界被颠倒了。自13世纪以来，在这一主题的影响下出现了无数装饰化的表现形式。亚里士多德和他的妻子赫尔皮莉丝（或菲丽丝）则身体力行地表现出了对世界的颠覆：亚里士多德四肢着地，像野兽一样爬行，而他的妻子则骑在他的背上驱赶他、鞭打他，甚至还扯着他象征哲学的胡子。这一景象实在不堪入目，然而，这同样也是一种告诫：如果世上最聪明的男人都能够被女人和肉体征服，那么我们之中谁都无法幸免。

如今，有些人不得不放弃自己熟悉的领域，转而投身其他领域——一个富豪乘热气球横越大西洋，一名板球运动员成为心理治疗师——这些人被称为多才多艺的人^[1]（多才多艺的女人很少被人们认可）。然而，随着现代具有两种才华的人逐渐转化成具有独创性和多种技能的博学之士，他们随后将发展成为亚里士多德式的人物。读过以上对亚里士多德聪明才智的简短介绍，你应该已经被深深震撼，并深表羡慕：震撼于他的研究领域的广度、丰富多彩的经历和对一切事物充满攻击性；而对他羡慕不已则是出于以下两个原因：首先，他不仅发现了一些新鲜事物，还开创了两门前所未有的学科（动物学和逻辑学），同时还推动了其他领域的发展；其次，他在有生之年始终没有停止过工作和思考。诚然，他有着公认的高级智商，但他仍然竭尽全力地领会宇宙中所有可以被认知的事物。如果世间有人可以的话，那么那个人

universe. If anyone could, Aristotle could: hence the shock of him being turned into a four-footed ninny.

The author of this book has edited *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, co-edited the four-volume *Articles on Aristotle*, and in the course of his distinguished career has written articles and books on the philosopher. He is also my brother. So if I were to say that the text you are about to read is cogent, learned, accessible, witty and well-expressed, you might not consider the adjectives unprejudiced. On the other hand, this judgment is not lightly given, and has a longer context. His early magnum opus, the two-volume *The Presocratic Philosophers*, gave me a lot of trouble; and I even got bogged down in his more approachable *Aristotle: A Very Short Introduction*. So my praise for this book has some claim to validity.

I asked my brother if Aristotle ever mentioned nepotism—or fraternalism, as in the present instance. Apparently not; though the great man did say, “Brothers are equal in all things, apart from age.” This—to my non-specialist eye—seems alas neither memorable nor particularly true. But it reminds me of a complaint that our mother once addressed to a friend: “I have two sons. One of them writes books I can read but can’t understand, and the other writes books I can understand but can’t read.” She agreed with Aristotle in finding us equal, if only in putdownability. However, I suspect that, had she lived, she would have been relieved to discover that one of us has at long last come up with a text that would have satisfied even her.

Julian Barnes

一定是亚里士多德。因此，他对人类产生的震撼让人们觉得自己就像一群四脚着地的白痴。

本书的作者曾主编《亚里士多德全集》，并参与编辑《亚里士多德文集》（四卷本）。在他卓越的写作事业历程中，还撰写过关于这位哲学家的文章和著作。他同时也是我的兄弟。所以，如果我说你要读的这本书具有很强的说服力、教育意义和可读性，且语言通俗易懂，思路巧妙清晰，你很可能会认为我的评价并不公正。但是，这个评价并不是我随便给出的。作者早期的代表作《前苏格拉底哲学家》（两卷本）给我带来了不少困惑，之后的《亚里士多德导读》虽然较以前的作品更加通俗易懂，但我在阅读过程中同样也遇到了诸多困难。因此，我对这本书的赞许是合理的。

我曾经问过我的兄弟，亚里士多德是否曾经提到过现代社会中的偏袒亲戚或兄弟友爱现象。很显然，亚里士多德并没有提出相关论述，尽管他曾经这样说：“无论兄弟两人谁更年长，他们在任何事上都应该是平等的。”在我以非专业眼光看来，这既不令人难忘也不那么真实。但是这使我想起我们母亲的一次抱怨，她对朋友这样说：“我有两个儿子。其中一个儿子写的书我能看懂，但是不能理解其中的意思；另一个儿子写的书我能理解其中的意思，但是却看不懂。”她在这一点上延用了亚里士多德的观点，在贬低我们的能力的时候，我们是平等的。但是，我猜测她已经欣慰地发现我们其中的一个终于写出了令人满意的作品，甚至让她也认同。

朱利安·巴尔内斯

[1] 原文中Renaissance Man表示具有多项才能、多才多艺的男人，女人则不被包括在内。——译者注

INTRODUCTION

Coffee with Aristotle? Why not? True, he never drank a cup in his lifetime—nor tasted turkey, or tomatoes, or tobacco. He lived and died 23 centuries ago. But his work and his thought did not die. He is in that way still among us. Coffee with Aristotle, then.

He was a scientist, a historian, a philosopher. Not many people invent a new science: Aristotle invented two—zoology and logic. His zoology is outdated—but modern zoologists admire him, and Darwin said that Aristotle was his god. His logic, too, is outmoded—but for more than two millennia Aristotelian logic was the starting-point of Western thought.

His philosophy was preserved, and sometimes refined, by his successors. It had an influence on the astronomy of Ptolemy and the medicine of Galen. It was—after much controversy—accepted by the Christian Church, and it became the foundation of medieval scholasticism. It helped to shape Arabic thought. It was admired by the great men of the Renaissance. If it was eclipsed in the 17th and 18th centuries, it shone out again, so that present-day philosophers treat Aristotle not only as a giant among their predecessors but also as an honorary and honored colleague. And we are all influenced, remotely and unconsciously, by Aristotelian thought: when we use such words as “substance” and “accident,” “potential” and “actual,” “theory” and “practice,” we are speaking Aristotle’s language.

This interview took place in the last year of Aristotle’s life, after he had retired from Athens to his estate on the island of Euboea. It wasn’t easy. Everyone knows,