

趣·谈·英·语·系·列

[尼] 吉姆·汉金森 著
汪小玲 译
陈汉生 校

哲学

Bluff Your Way
in *Philosophy*



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INTRODUCTION

What Philosophy Is

This is something you should always contrive to avoid explaining. But you might like to get two things straight at the start.

Firstly, philosophy isn't a subject—it's an activity. Consequently one doesn't study it; one does it. This is how philosophers, at least those in the Anglo-Saxon tradition (which for some obscure historical reason seems to include the Finns), tend to put it. And secondly, philosophy is largely a matter of conceptual analysis—or thinking about thinking. For the moment, let's stick to basics.

This is something most philosophers find temperamentally impossible, but there's no reason why you should follow their example. Philosophy seems, to the casual visitor taking a swift look round it, bewilderingly complex. Not least among its difficulties is the fact that philosophers, with a few honourable exceptions, find it quite impossible to speak a language comprehensible to the ordinary person, such as English. A philosopher wanting even to refer to the Ordinary Person (a species with which he is unlikely to have had first-hand ac-

前 言

什么是哲学

关于哲学我们无法作出确切的解释。但首先必须弄清楚两点：第一，哲学不是一门学科，而是一项活动。所以，人们不是去研究哲学，而是去实践哲学。这是哲学家们，至少传统的盎格鲁——萨克森时期的哲学家们（由于某些历史原因也包括芬兰人）达到的共识；第二，哲学主要进行的是概念性分析，即对思想、概念的再思考。

现在，我们来看看哲学的基本点。

尽管多数哲学家认为，哲学是个目前无法解释的问题，我们未必要同声附和。在一些浅尝辄止，一带而过的人看来，哲学可说是混沌一片。困难之一是，哲学家们，当然少数杰出的除外，发现无法利用大家普遍可以理解接受的语言（如英语）作出解释。

quaintance, although he may have heard travellers'tales about them) will call him 'the man on the Clapham Omnibus', unaware, apparently, both that no-one uses the word 'omnibus' any more except to refer to large collections of detective fiction, and that Clapham is no longer an ideal example of drab inner-London mediocrity.

Your task, therefore, is to get at least a tenuous grip on the more arcane reaches of the technical vocabulary which is deployed in such a baffling way by the contemporary philosopher. Don't worry. Linguistic competence, as the later Wittgenstein would have said (not to be confused, of course, with the earlier Wittgenstein, who wouldn't) is a matter of getting words in the right order. You won't actually have to understand what, if anything, most of it means.

哲学家提到了普通人，这种普通人，他们并不愿意亲身结识，只是可能从游历者那里听说过一些他们的故事。哲学家称之为“克拉彭集团中人”，也就是俗称的“庸人”。他们不知道人们用“集团”一词指代侦探小说中的一伙人，也不知道克拉彭早已不再是伦敦市内那些乏味平庸人物的典型代表了。

所以，我们的任务就是要努力把握哲学家们用怪异惊人的方式展开的一些技术用语中深层的甚至是晦涩的涵义。不必担心，维特根斯坦一定会说（这必不是晚期的维特根斯坦，他在早期定不会这样说）语言能力讲究的是适当的单词放在适当的位置，实际上不必了解每个词的确切意义。

LIVES OF THE PHILOSOPHERS

Philosophy is a subject (sorry, an activity) with a history; and because it makes so little progress, if indeed it makes any at all, its history is consequently more important than that of other fields. The successful bluffer must be armed with a working knowledge of this history if he or she is to make a real success of charlatanry.

For the purposes of this book, we will confine ourselves almost exclusively to Western philosophy, that tradition begun in Greece in the 7th century. B. C. There is a good reason for this. Philosophy in the Western tradition is a very different type of project from that of the Orient. In a later section we will give some advice on how to be suitably dismissive about such matters as Meditation, Buddhism, Indian Religion, People with Shaven Heads in Grubby Yellow Robes, and similar social menaces.

Accordingly, this section contains some more or less interesting facts about some more or less famous philosophers, of both a biographical and a philosophical nature, in roughly chronological or

部分哲学家生平

哲学是一门历史悠久的学科(不,应该说是活动)。由于其发展缓慢,甚至会处于停滞不前的状态,所以,比起其它领域,哲学的历史显得尤其重要。只有了解了它的历史背景,才有可能成功地理解哲学。

本书将致力于探讨源于公元前七世纪古希腊的西方哲学。由于东西方哲学的巨大差异,我们将在后面的章节里提供一些见识,帮助读者了解诸如默念、佛教、印度教、剃度披袈裟的人等一些东方的哲学现象。

本章将按照大致的时间顺序讲述一些哲学家的日常生活和哲学活动中的趣闻轶事。

人们都知道第一批希腊哲学家,但注意不要误解为苏格拉底前哲学家,他们都生在苏格拉底之后,而且他们最终并未形成一个延续的流派。其中许多

der.

The first Greek philosophers are known generally, if misleadingly as the *Presocratics*. Misleadingly, as not all of them came before **Socrates**, and in any case they formed no coherent school; many of them in fact didn't even form coherent individuals.

No-one knows why philosophy started when it did; ambitious bluffers of a Marxist bent could try to account for it in terms of an inexorable dialectic of historical forces, but we wouldn't recommend it. A notable feature of many of them is their attempt to reduce the material constituents of the Universe to one or more basic Stuffs, such as Earth, Air, Fire, Sardines, Old Cloth Caps, etc.

Thales of Miletus (c. 620-550 B. C.) was the first recognised philosopher. There may have been others before him, but no-one knew who they were. He is remembered chiefly for two claims:

- 1) Everything is made of Water; and
- 2) Magnets have souls.

Not an auspicious start, you might think.

Anaximander (c. 610-550) thought everything was made of the Boundary and the Unlimited, a conception which has a certain spurious appeal, until you realise that it is quite meaningless.

Anaximenes (c. 570-510), struck out boldly in a new, if arbitrary, direction, saying that every

人甚至没有结合为一个统一的实体。

没有人知道哲学是何时起源的。雄心勃勃的马克思主义哲学家试图以一种不可阻挡的辩证的历史作用来解释哲学的起源。这里我们就不作介绍了。马克思主义哲学的一个显著特点是试图将宇宙的物质组成概括成几个基本要素，如土、气、火、水、红宝石、破布等等。

米利都学派的泰利斯(公元前 620 年——550 年)是第一位公认的哲人。在他之前可能还有其它人，但都未曾留名，他有两个著名的论点：

- 1) 水为万物的本源；
- 2) 磁铁有中心。

你可能会认为这是个非迷信的开端。

阿那克西曼德(公元前 610 年——550 年)认为万物由“有限”和“无限”组成。这一概念有一定的吸引力，但也具有欺骗性。人们逐渐会意识到这其实是毫无意义的。

阿那克西门内斯(公元前 570 年——510 年)大胆地朝着一个新的任意的方向拓展思维。他认为，万

thing was really made of Air, a view perhaps more plausible in Greece than, for instance, Motherwell.

Heraclitus (c. 540-490) disagreed, thinking rather it was Fire everything was made of. He also went a stage further by claiming that everything was in a state of flux and identical with its opposite, adding that you couldn't step into the same river twice, and that there was no difference between Up and Down, both of which show that he'd never been on a walking holiday in the Peak District. It is sometimes worth referring, in passing (always the best way to refer to things in philosophy), to 'Heraclitus's Metaphysic', meaning the flux, as long as there's no danger of your having to explain yourself. Heraclitus was greatly admired by **Hegel** (*q. v.*) which perhaps says more about Hegel than about Heraclitus.

Pythagoras (c. 570-10), as every schoolchild knows, invented the right-angle triangle; in fact he went further, believing that everything was made of numbers. He also believed in an extreme form of reincarnation, holding that a wide variety of improbable things, including shrubs and beans, had souls, which made his diet problematic, and was indirectly responsible for his bizarre death (*q. v.*).

物皆由空气组成。这一观点在希腊大概比马瑟韦尔的抽象表现主义的绘画更加可信一些。

赫拉克利特(公元前 540 年——490 年)不同意以上看法,认为火是万物本源。他进一步阐述说,一切都在流动变化中,事物与其对立而实质上是相同的。他认为人不可能两次踏进同一条河流,“上”与“下”并无区别,二者都表明他从未在山峰地区作徒步旅行。谈到哲学问题,值得一提的是赫拉克利特的形而上学论。他认为,一切都是流动的,一但必须作出解释时便会十分危险,赫拉克利特深受黑格尔的崇拜,赫拉克利特的观点对于我们理解黑格尔更加有利,而不是理解他本人。

毕达哥拉斯(公元前 570 年——510 年)发明了直角三角形,小学生都知道这一点。实际上,他的成就远不止这些。他相信,数为万物本源,宣扬极端形式的灵魂转生说,认为各种重要的东西,包括灌木和大豆都具有灵魂。这一观念使他饮食不当,最后直接造成了他异常的死亡。

Empedocles (c. 500-430), a notable 5th century Sicilian political wheeler-dealer, physician, and nut-case (see Deaths for details) thought everything was made of Earth, Air, Fire and Water, held together, or broken down, by Love and Strife, each taking it in turns to get the upper hand in a cycle of eternal recurrence, thus making the cosmos mirror, on a large scale, the average suburban marriage.

Then we get the Eleatics, **Parmenides** (520-430) and **Melissus** (480-420), who went further still. Instead of contending that everything was in fact made of one substance, they held that there was in reality only one Thing, large, spherical, infinite, motionless, changeless. All appearance of variety, motion, separateness of objects, etc., is an Illusion. This extraordinarily counterintuitive theory (sometimes known as **Monism**, from the Greek word 'mono', meaning an antiquated recording system) proved surprisingly popular, no doubt because it accorded with people's experience of such institutions as British Rail and the Gas Board.

Their successor, **Zeno** (500-440), advanced a series of paradoxical arguments to the effect that nothing can move. Achilles and the Tortoise is still discussed, as is the Arrow: he argued that it couldn't possibly move, which, if true, would

恩培多克勒(公元前 500 年——430 年)是公元前五世纪希希里著名的独裁者,政治家,医生和狂人(见哲人之死)。他认为万物皆由土、气、火、水组成,爱使元素结合,憎使元素分离,在永久的循环再现过程中交替占上风,由此使宇宙世界从宏观上保持平衡。

接下来我们看看埃利亚学派的巴门尼德(公元前 520 年——430 年)和米利苏斯(公元前 480 年——420 年)。他们在哲学上更进了一步,他们不仅认为世界是由物质构成的,而且认为物质是单一而巨大的球形物,物质是无限且静止不变的。各个事物的各种现象、运动、分离都是幻象。这一独特的反直觉理论(有时称作一元论,源于希腊文“Mono”,意为旧式单声道录音系统)却受到了意想不到的欢迎,因为它迎合了人们在某些团体里如“英国铁路”和“加里斯委员会”的一些活动体验。

这一派别的继承者芝诺(公元前 500 年——440 年)提出了一系列自相矛盾的说法,认为事物是不动的。阿喀里斯和龟形大盾、箭矢一样仍是谈论的话题,他辩论说,事物是不可能变化的,若是变化的话,

have been good news for St. Sebastian. The arguments turn largely on the question of whether Space and Time are infinitely divisible, or whether one or both is made up of indivisible *quanta*; mention this to give Zeno a modern-sounding air; if called upon to back it up, change the subject.

Last among the Presocratics come the *Atomists*, **Democritus** (c. 450-360) and **Leucippus** (450-390). They are sometimes held responsible for anticipating modern atomic theory. This is quite false, and one scores useful points by saying so, for the simple reason that the crucial thing about Democritean atoms is that they can't be split, whereas the crucial thing about modern ones is that they can. You might also point out that Democritus didn't like sex, though whether for theoretical reasons, or whether because of some unfortunate personal mishap, isn't known.

So much for the Presocratics; now for the man himself, **Socrates** (469-399). Socrates didn't write anything; we rely on Plato for information about him, and it is a vexed question how much Plato reproduced Socrates' own views, and how far he simply used his name. Don't get embroiled in it; a useful ploy here is to say, with a certain lofty contempt, that philosophical content is what matters, not its historical provenance.