

《Kant and the Platypus (ISBN=9780156011594) 》

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内容简介

How do we know a cat is a cat? And why do we call it a cat? How much of our perception of things is based on cognitive ability, and how much on linguistic resources? Here, in six remarkable essays, Umberto Eco explores in depth questions of reality, perception, and experience. Basing his ideas on common sense, Eco shares a vast wealth of literary and historical knowledge, touching on issues that affect us every day. At once philosophical and amusing, *Kant and the Platypus* is a tour of the world of our senses, told by a master of knowing what is real and what is not.

作者简介

Umberto Eco (born 5 January 1932) is an Italian medievalist, semiotician, philosopher, literary critic and novelist, best known for his novel *The Name of the Rose*, an intellectual mystery combining semiotics in fiction, biblical analysis, medieval studies and literary theory. His 1988 novel *Foucault's Pendulum* has been described as a "thinking person's Da Vinci Code". Eco is President of the *Scuola Superiore di Studi Umanistici*, University of Bologna. He has also written academic texts, children's books and many essays. Eco was born in the city of Alessandria in the region of Piedmont. His father, Giulio, was an accountant before the government called upon him to serve in three wars. During World War II, Umberto and his mother, Giovanna, moved to a small village in the Piedmontese mountainside. Eco received a Salesian education, and he has made references to the order and its founder in his works and interviews. His family name is supposedly an acronym of *ex caelis oblatus* (Latin: a gift from the heavens), which was given to his grandfather (a foundling) by a city official. His father was the son of a family with thirteen children, and urged Umberto to become a lawyer, but he entered the University of Turin in order to take up medieval philosophy and literature, writing his thesis on Thomas Aquinas and earning his BA in philosophy in 1954. During this time, Eco left the Roman Catholic Church after a crisis of faith. After this, Eco worked as a cultural editor for the state broadcasting station *Radiotelevisione Italiana* (RAI) and also lectured at the University of Turin (1956 – 64). A group of avant-garde artists—painters, musicians, writers—whom he had befriended at RAI (*Gruppo 63*) became an important and influential component in Eco's future writing career. This was especially true after the publication of his first book in 1956, *Il problema estetico di San Tommaso*, which was an extension of his doctoral thesis. This also marked the beginning of his lecturing career at his alma mater. In September 1962, he married Renate Ranke, a German art teacher with whom he has a son and a daughter. He divides his time between an apartment in Milan and a vacation house near Rimini.

[显示全部信息](#)

目录

Introduction

Chapter One :ON BEXNC

Semiotics and the Something

An unnatural problem

Why is there being?

How we talk about being

The aporia of being in Aristotle

The duplication of being

The questioning of the poets

A model of world knowledge

On the possibility that being might abscond

The resistances of being

The sense of the continuum

Positive conclusions

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