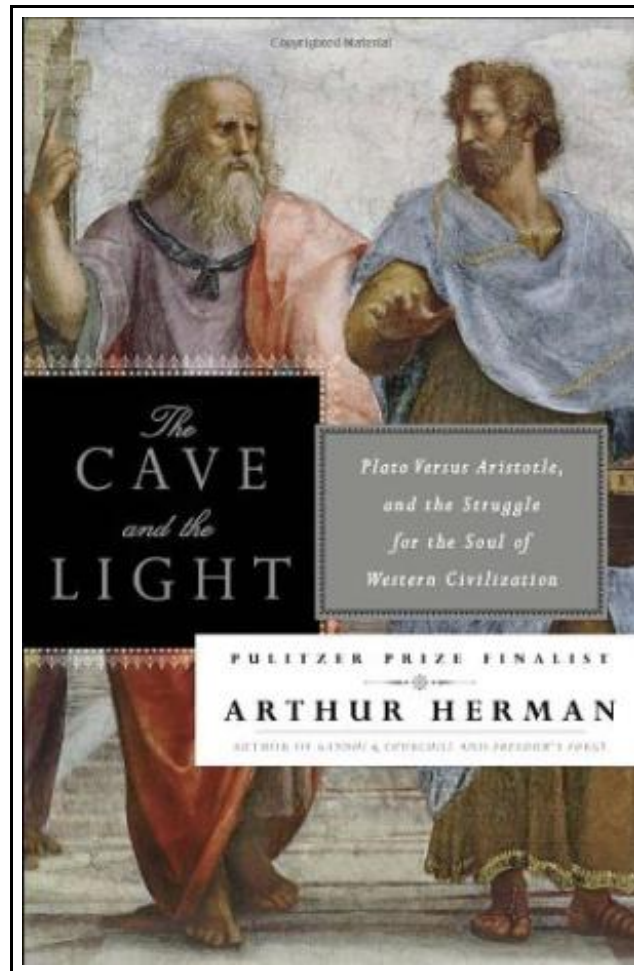


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Reviews

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(Bernardo Feeney Jr.)

THE CAVE AND THE LIGHT: PLATO VERSUS ARISTOTLE, AND THE STRUGGLE FOR THE SOUL OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION



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Random House Trade Paperbacks. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 704 pages. Dimensions: 7.8in. x 5.1in. x 1.5in. Arthur Herman has now written the definitive sequel to his New York Times bestseller, *How the Scots Invented the Modern World*, and extends the themes of the book which sold half a million copies worldwide back to the ancient Greeks and forward to the age of the Internet. *The Cave and the Light* is a magisterial account of how the two greatest thinkers of the ancient world, Plato and Aristotle, laid the foundations of Western culture and how their rivalry shaped the essential features of our culture down to the present day. Plato came from a wealthy, connected Athenian family and lived a comfortable upper-class lifestyle until he met an odd little man named Socrates, who showed him a new world of ideas and ideals. Socrates taught Plato that a man must use reason to attain wisdom, and that the life of a lover of wisdom, a philosopher, was the pinnacle of achievement. Plato dedicated himself to living that ideal and went on to create a school, his famed Academy, to teach others the path to enlightenment through contemplation. However, the same Academy that spread Plato's teachings also fostered his greatest rival. Born to a family of Greek physicians, Aristotle had learned early on the value of observation and hands-on experience. Rather than rely on pure contemplation, he insisted that the truest path to knowledge is through empirical discovery and exploration of the world around us. Aristotle, Plato's most brilliant pupil, thus settled on a philosophy very different from his instructors and launched a rivalry with profound effects on Western culture. The two men disagreed on the fundamental purpose of the philosophy. For Plato, the image of the cave summed up man's destined path, emerging from the...



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