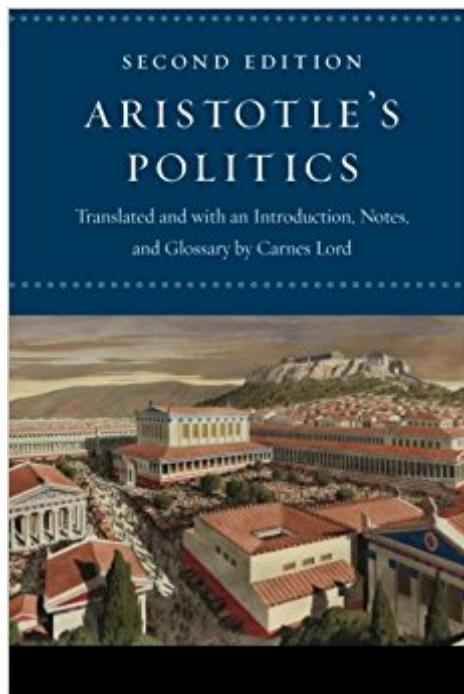


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# Aristotle's "Politics": Second Edition



## Synopsis

One of the fundamental works of Western political thought, Aristotle's masterwork is the first systematic treatise on the science of politics. For almost three decades, Carnes Lord's justly acclaimed translation has served as the standard English edition. Widely regarded as the most faithful to both the original Greek and Aristotle's distinctive style, it is also written in clear, contemporary English. This new edition of the *Politics* retains and adds to Lord's already extensive notes, clarifying the flow of Aristotle's argument and identifying literary and historical references. A glossary defines key terms in Aristotle's philosophical-political vocabulary. Lord has made revisions to problematic passages throughout the translation in order to enhance both its accuracy and its readability. He has also substantially revised his introduction for the new edition, presenting an account of Aristotle's life in relation to political events of his time; the character and history of his writings and of the *Politics* in particular; his overall conception of political science; and his impact on subsequent political thought from antiquity to the present. Further enhancing this new edition is an up-to-date selected bibliography.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

"This revised edition of Aristotle's 'Politics' easily establishes it as the best available in English. By offering a longer introductory essay that grapples with the substance of Aristotle's argument, a new index, revamped notes, and most important by revising and correcting the text, Carnes Lord has substantially improved what

was already a fine rendering of Aristotle's classic account of political science. A great service to students and scholars alike. (Robert C. Bartlett, cotranslator of Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*) "This new edition of Lord's will continue to be a widely used translation of Aristotle's *Politics*." (Bryn Mawr Classical Review 2013-12-30) Praise for the previous edition: "Lord's translation is clearly the best available. (Claremont Review of Books) "Lord contributed to raising scholarly interest in Aristotle with his groundbreaking translation. Now, nearly thirty years later, we are presented with a new edition. . . . The new format was chosen prudently. . . . The choice of footnotes will doubtless help students, scholars, and interested readers to solve the problems of textual analysis and interpretation more quickly and in the process of reading the text." (History of Political Thought 2015-05-22)

Carnes Lord is professor of strategic leadership at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island. He is the author of *Education and Culture in the Political Thought of Aristotle* and *The Modern Prince: What Leaders Need to Know Now*, among other works.

The first edition was very good; this one is excellent. The translation is literal, the introduction is helpful, and the presentation is better than the first edition.

While the subject matter of the book is fine, the binding of this specific book is awful. I've barely used it and pages are falling out of it. I bought it brand new 2 months ago so this shouldn't be happening.

I initially read Sir Ernest Barker's translation of Aristotle's *Politics* in 1965. The present edition by Carnes Lord includes an excellent translation and introduction with helpful endnotes regarding the meaning of important Greek terms, relevant ancient history, alternative translations, and variations in the manuscript sources. As for Aristotle's work itself, one finds many objectionable things (slavery, the inferior role of women typical of ancient Athenian society, the also typical incorporation of the religious priesthood into the government of the polis, the limitations of citizenship, and so forth) as well as some important insights. Even the empiricist, Aristotle discusses at great length the many varieties of government that the Greeks and others had created during and before his era. All in all, it is quite a puzzling picture for us denizens of the twenty-first century. The five-star rating is for the editorial and translation work of the subject edition. It is impossible to rate Aristotle himself,

but the fact that his work has survived for more than two millennia is itself an indication that we can still learn from him, even while disagreeing with some of his apparent teachings. In this connection, no less a democrat than Thomas Jefferson wrote, with regard to the Declaration of Independence (which he substantially authored), that "[a]ll its authority rests then on the harmonizing sentiments of the day, whether expressed in conversation, in letters, printed essays, or in the elementary books of public right, as Aristotle, Cicero, Locke, Sidney, &c." Thomas Jefferson to Henry Lee, May 8, 1825, in Thomas Jefferson: Writings, ed. Merrill D. Peterson (New York: Library of America, 1984), 1501. Many historians and political scientists also attribute certain aspects of the U.S. Constitution (especially the mixed nature of the republican framework) to Aristotle's *Politics*. Aristotle is not the last word, but his contribution to political philosophy should not be ignored. As another reviewer mentioned, the translation by Joe Sachs is also very good, though I have not read the entirety of it.

Certainly one of the best translations available of Aristotle's "Politics".

very good

Wasn't a bad read. Sparknotes was a life saver, but I thoroughly enjoyed it. Take it with a grain of salt.

Readers of Aristotle in English now have three very serviceable translations of the *Politics* - this second edition by Carnes Lord, Joe Sachs, and Peter L. Phillips Simpson. Barker's older Oxford translation should also be mentioned although it is not as literal as the others. They all have useful features apart from the translation itself to recommend them over say the Penguin translation. On balance, I would prefer Lord's second edition as he has tightened up translations throughout the work to make them more strictly literal beginning with "community" in place of "partnership" in the very first sentence of the book. Further, he has a very interesting introduction, excellent footnotes and glossary. It has to be said that both Sachs and Simpson have very useful analytical outlines and notes as well. Simpson's English is the most pleasant to read and has student friendly chapter headings and chapter introductions albeit non-authorial of course. The format of Carnes Lord's second edition has been made uniform to its University of Chicago Press twin "Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics" translated by Robert Bartlett and Susan Collins but, unlike the later, it is without an interpretative essay which would have been most welcome. The natural appendix to the *Politics* is the *Poetics* ably translated by Seth Benardete and Michael Davis as "Aristotle On Poetics"

under St. Augustine's Press. As of 2013, all three are highly recommendable as the best scholarly translations of these three works. One can only hope some enterprising scholar will now provide avid Aristotelians with a literal translation of Aristotle's "Rhetoric" to complete the series of his "philosophy of things human". As an addendum, the student of "Aristotle's Politics" would find in "Aristotle's Teaching in the Politics" by Thomas Pangle a good companion interpretation.

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