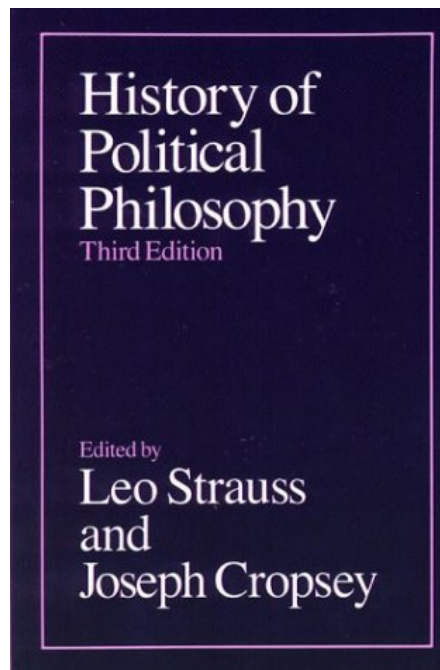




History of Political Philosophy

Leo Strauss (Editor) , Joseph Cropsey

[Download now](#)

[Read Online](#) 

History of Political Philosophy

Leo Strauss (Editor) , Joseph Cropsey

History of Political Philosophy Leo Strauss (Editor) , Joseph Cropsey

This volume provides an unequalled introduction to the thought of chief contributors to the Western tradition of political philosophy from classical Greek antiquity to the twentieth century. Written by specialists on the various philosophers, this third edition has been expanded significantly to include both new and revised essays.

History of Political Philosophy Details

Date : Published November 30th 1987 by University of Chicago Press (first published 1963)

ISBN : 9780226777108

Author : Leo Strauss (Editor) , Joseph Cropsey

Format : Paperback 980 pages

Genre : Philosophy, Politics, History, Political Science, Nonfiction

 [Download History of Political Philosophy ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online History of Political Philosophy ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online History of Political Philosophy Leo Strauss (Editor) , Joseph Cropsey

From Reader Review History of Political Philosophy for online ebook

R. Smith says

Not for light bedtime reading, but essential reading for those who want to understand the thought leaders through the centuries who have contributed to what we would call the Western tradition of political philosophy. Starts with thought leaders of classical Greek antiquity and progresses through thought leaders of the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. The reader will have at least a passing familiarity with some of the names, if not the specifics of their thought contributions. But there will be many other names that most readers have never heard of, yet they too made important contributions to the stew that is "the Western tradition." Any serious student (or practitioner) of politics should read this book at least once.

Hemin says

I have read the Chinese version several years ago. But the translation makes me a little confused. I don't know it will take me how long to finish it.

Luke says

Essential reading for anybody interested in political philosophy. Great to pick up after reading the primary source material of a political philosopher to have an essay to clarify any queries you have and analysis that you may well have missed whilst reading. From Burke to Marx, and even lesser known names (yet nowhere near insignificant), clearly this is the definitive history of political philosophy - though will, of course, require updates! Excellent work.

Francisco Gutiérrez says

Really useful! I used it in my Introduction to Political Philosophy course at Yale University, and it helped me understand a lot more about the thoughts and lives of the greatest thinkers of our time.

sologdin says

neo-conservative presentation, accurately reflected in the title. chapter per writer, beginning in Athens, and ending with Strauss himself as object of inquiry. how humble!

John says

This hefty tome has given me a broader perspective of some of the most influential thinkers throughout the

ages. Besides showing me gaps in my understanding of political philosophy, and kindling a greater thirst for knowledge, Strauss' History provides an overarching perspective of intellectual history. It traces modern thought to its roots, and opens up an invaluable conversation with the past. Thanks in part to this book, the present makes more sense.

James Violand says

Marvelous textbook for a course taken in college. Got me hooked on philosophy.

Derek Lewis says

A collection of essays, but it is an outstanding synopsis of every major (and some minor) political philosophers. It is as concise as can be, but still in-depth enough for you to learn about and speak knowledgeably of anyone you need to research.

Matt Cyprian says

OK, but wordy. Good study guide.

Drenda says

The first essays I read were on Hobbes, Locke and Rousseau and consequently had the opportunity to be amazed at their wonderfully divergent use of the concept of natural man. They all build their political theory from a foundation in this concept, and given their different formulations, it is easy to foresee much of what follows. Hobbes' natural man is one whose every waking moment is pressed into the service of self-preservation and needs to be: everyone else out there realizes that their own self preservation is dependent on taking out yours. If ever a 'dog eat dog' world was elaborated, this is it. It's a terrible situation, and who wouldn't want to leave it. However, man being man, there can be no hope that a mutual laying down of rights (the social contract) goes very far; what is needed to insure these rowdies keep the peace is a terribly strong sovereign who makes sure that all contractors equally perform their contracts. The sovereign has use of the only tactic that really works, fear of punishment. We keep the peace because we are afraid not to.

One of the reassuring aspects of Locke's natural man is that he is less extrapolated from the contemporary situation than either Hobbes' or Rousseau's. He's pretty much what you see around you, based in self preservation still, but Locke asks if that means the wanton destructiveness Hobbes manages to suggest. At one time, pre-civil man was different, but how different? For Locke, he was initially different in having no private property. Somewhere, sometime because of need and the usual human cleverness, a human specimen not only absorbed the bounty around him but put some labor into increasing it. Because of the labor he put into it, he recognized it as his own, and saw the need to safeguard it against those who had not expended theirs. "Men are quickly driven into society for the protection of their property" (p 495). At some point, men can no longer endure the problems associated with quarrels on property, and set up an independent judge to mediate them, to the benefit of at least the majority. Basically, natural man had it not so bad, civil man has it a little better. And since mankind is indeed based in self preservation, the government can't really ask too

much of you or you naturally and rationally fall back into the natural state of no government.

Rousseau would have accepted Locke's history of private property being the basis of civil society, but would have made of the demarcation the fall of man. Locke's natural man was a man looking after his interests in the quiet, English countryside; Rousseau's was Tarzan without Jane. One of the interesting aspects of Rousseau's natural man is how unsocial he is. The species continues because a man meets up with a female, they mate, and they're on their way. Rousseau was hardly unique but extremely talented in showing how once men come together in civil society, their chances of being their own man becomes essentially zero. Rousseau dreamed of the man capable of taking on the natural world, exulting in his own prowess, and then laying down to a comfortable siesta aware that he had it good. Rousseau held up this image as a way of criticizing the society around him, one that believed overall that man had attained freedom through reason and would progress toward an ever brighter future. For Rousseau, that progress was leading to an ever greater muffling of an individual's ability to think outside of culturally determined ways. As much as Rousseau wanted to be Tarzan, he knew his time has passed, and if man was to live together in society and still possess any of that sense of autonomy that is the basis of man, it demanded a certain turn of the screw. An individual needed to so identify with his community that their well-being was his well-being, their freedom was his freedom. The traditions of the community were taken on with complete acceptance and joy, the individual will was absorbed into this community identity. Whatever else can be said about this form of the social contract, it might be called the last defense for a person who truly suffered under the social conventions of his time and longed for the autonomy which was the basic human condition.

Jeff says

This book is essentially an encyclopedia of essays on the political philosophy of most of the big names in the field from Plato through to Heidegger.

Javier says

Seneca

Marts (Thinker) says

Focusing on the contributors to western philosophy, this volume is a highlight in the work of political philosopher Leo Strauss who specialized in classical philosophy and focused his research on the works of Plato and Aristotle...

C.R. says

Not really a book to read or have read, but one to be turned to at need. It's an encyclopedia of political thinkers and their thought, written by eminent friends and students of Leo Strauss and Joseph Cropsey, as well as by Strauss and Cropsey themselves. Its essays are concise and surprisingly clear, for Straussian writing.

Charles Russo says

One can posit that there are many philosophers and their many writings, but what this composite did was give me a clear, concise, and succinct look at many of the great philosophers. Excellent book and a must read as a primer to philosophy.

Scott says

This is a terrible textbook and supports the idea that there should be no textbooks--just read good books about or by political philosophers. The authors have a very circuitous communication. The authors prove they are intelligent but not smart enough to get to the point.

Gosia says

Meritoriously very valuable, although written with strictly conservative thesis. Partially anti-Jewish.

Popebrak says

I actually read this entire book from cover-to-cover.

For fun.

Because i felt somebody really ought to.

I'm of the opinion that anyone who wishes to truly understand a subject must diligently study not merely the superficial aspects of that subject, but also the subtle and arcane aspects. The tree, as they say, grows mostly below the ground. This view is also, it seems, paramount among the authors of this collection of essays. Covering the history of political philosophy from Thucydides to Hiedegger, the authors encourage the reader to consider the less-popular works of well-known thinkers, so as to better appreciate the true scope and depth of their thoughts. Many high-school children are assigned Machiavelli's "The Prince," but how many are assigned Machiavelli's "Discourses on the First Ten Books of Livy?" How many read Adam Smith's "The Theory of Moral Sentiments?"

One is tempted to read "Straussianism" into each essay, and I suppose that may be rightly so. I'm not a professional academic, and I can't pretend to appreciate the complex subtleties of debates between big-city University philosophy departments. If there is a political agenda being conveyed in this text, however, it is not one that lends itself to simple "left vs. right" characterization. The essay on Marx presents the subject's views with equal respect and fervor as does the essay on Blackstone.

The reader will also find an extremely helpful index, and copious reference notes and additional reading recommendations at the end of each chapter. Overall, this is an essential read and valuable reference tool for today's busy philoso-punk.

Steven Williams says

This is rather a long book (nine-hundred plus pages), so I am not going to provide any synopsis for it. It is an anthology written by various academics, covering a variety of political philosophers and others who while not philosophers contributed to the field of political philosophy. There are famous and not so famous among those who are written about. Some of the famous are, of course, Plato, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke, and Marx. Some of the not so famous are Hugo Grotius, Montesquieu, and William Blackstone. Some of those that are not philosophers, but still included in the book are Thucydides, John Milton, and Tocqueville. The book goes no further than Heidegger. It ends with an essay on one of the editors, who was deceased when the third edition was produced, Leo Strauss, and his work in the history of political philosophy.

I am going to forgo any comments on specific pieces of text. I only took a few notes, and none of them strike me as comment worthy now.

Being an anthology I was attracted to some chapters more than others; although, I found the writing to be pretty good in general. Seeing this, and that it took me quite awhile to finish it, and that political philosophy is not a topic that I am into, I still enjoyed reading it. One reason for my enjoyment was that a lot of the chapters went over the ethical views of the person being discussed, and ethics is one area of philosophy that I tend to think a good deal about.

My recommendation would definitely lean toward those that are really interested in political philosophy. I supposed that one could read the book in piecemeal fashion; although, that is not my style of reading.

Phillip says

It gives the reader Strauss' thoughts on what political philosophy has been and should be again. Selected for their general interest and their accessibility, the essays in the book provide a solid foundation for understanding Leo Strauss and his political philosophy. Highly Recommended!
