



The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization

By Arthur Herman

Download now

Read Online ➔

The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization By Arthur Herman

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 instructor's 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 darkness of material existence to the light of a higher and more spiritual truth. Aristotle thought otherwise. Instead of rising above mundane reality, he insisted, the philosopher's job is to explain how the real world works, and how we can find our place in it. Aristotle set up a school in Athens to rival Plato's Academy: the Lyceum. The competition that ensued between the two schools, and between

Plato and Aristotle, set the world on an intellectual adventure that lasted through the Middle Ages and Renaissance and that still continues today.

From Martin Luther (who named Aristotle the third great enemy of true religion, after the devil and the Pope) to Karl Marx (whose utopian views rival Plato's), heroes and villains of history have been inspired and incensed by these two master philosophers—but never outside their influence.

Accessible, riveting, and eloquently written, *The Cave and the Light* provides a stunning new perspective on the Western world, certain to open eyes and stir debate.

Praise for *The Cave and the Light*

“A sweeping intellectual history viewed through two ancient Greek lenses . . . breezy and enthusiastic but resting on a sturdy rock of research.”—***Kirkus Reviews***

“Examining mathematics, politics, theology, and architecture, the book demonstrates the continuing relevance of the ancient world.”—***Publishers Weekly***

“A fabulous way to understand over two millennia of history, all in one book.”—***Library Journal***

“Entertaining and often illuminating.”—***The Wall Street Journal***

From the Hardcover edition.

 [Download The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, an ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, ...pdf](#)

The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization

By Arthur Herman

The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization
By Arthur Herman

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 instructor's 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 darkness of material existence to the light of a higher and more spiritual truth. Aristotle thought otherwise. Instead of rising above mundane reality, he insisted, the philosopher's job is to explain how the real world works, and how we can find our place in it. Aristotle set up a school in Athens to rival Plato's Academy: the Lyceum. The competition that ensued between the two schools, and between Plato and Aristotle, set the world on an intellectual adventure that lasted through the Middle Ages and Renaissance and that still continues today.

From Martin Luther (who named Aristotle the third great enemy of true religion, after the devil and the Pope) to Karl Marx (whose utopian views rival Plato's), heroes and villains of history have been inspired and incensed by these two master philosophers—but never outside their influence.

Accessible, riveting, and eloquently written, *The Cave and the Light* provides a stunning new perspective on the Western world, certain to open eyes and stir debate.

Praise for *The Cave and the Light*

“A sweeping intellectual history viewed through two ancient Greek lenses . . . breezy and enthusiastic but resting on a sturdy rock of research.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

“Examining mathematics, politics, theology, and architecture, the book demonstrates the continuing

relevance of the ancient world.”—*Publishers Weekly*

“A fabulous way to understand over two millennia of history, all in one book.”—*Library Journal*

“Entertaining and often illuminating.”—*The Wall Street Journal*

From the Hardcover edition.

The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization
By Arthur Herman Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #59706 in Books
- Brand: Random House Trade
- Published on: 2014-06-03
- Released on: 2014-06-03
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.00" h x 1.50" w x 5.15" l, 1.13 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 704 pages

 [Download The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, an ...pdf](#)

 [Read Online The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, ...pdf](#)

Download and Read Free Online *The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization* By Arthur Herman

Editorial Review

From [Booklist](#)

Herman (*How the Scots Invented the Modern World*, 2002) boils Western philosophy and culture down to two competing notions: the idealism of Plato and the empiricism of Aristotle. Plato, says Herman, asks, “How do you want your world to be?”; Aristotle, on the other hand, asks, “How do you fit into the world that already exists?” Walking through two and a half millennia of Western thought, Herman emphasizes that the two philosophies—the material and the spiritual aspects of existence—have repeated themselves through Western history, waxing and waning and remaining in tension with each other to the present day. Romanticism? Poetry? Totalitarian dogmatism? That’s Plato. The U.S. Constitution? The Manhattan Project? Modern consumer culture? That’s Aristotle. If it sounds like a sweeping polemic, that’s because it is; Herman seems to revel in overbroad claims, particularly when he’s talking about modern phenomena. Beneath all the broad assertions and polemic showiness, however, lies a serious argument for the primacy of Plato and Aristotle and the essential dynamism of a culture that embraces both philosophies.

Review

Praise for *The Cave and the Light*

“A sweeping intellectual history viewed through two ancient Greek lenses . . . breezy and enthusiastic but resting on a sturdy rock of research.”—*Kirkus Reviews*

“Examining mathematics, politics, theology, and architecture, the book demonstrates the continuing relevance of the ancient world.”—*Publishers Weekly*

“A fabulous way to understand over two millennia of history, all in one book.”—*Library Journal*

“Entertaining and often illuminating.”—*The Wall Street Journal*

Praise for Arthur Herman

Gandhi & Churchill

Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize

“You finish the book knowing that you can evaluate the world today, particularly modern India, with more knowledge and insight.”—*USA Today*

“Scrupulous, compelling, and unfailingly instructive . . . a detailed and richly filigreed account that introduces the Anglo-American reader to many facts and vivid if little-known personalities, both English and Indian.”—*Commentary*

Freedom’s Forge

“A rambunctious book that is itself alive with the animal spirits of the marketplace.”—*The Wall Street Journal*

How the Scots Invented the Modern World

“Professor Herman demonstrates an infectious and uplifting passion for his subject. Unlike many academics, he is a natural writer, weaving philosophical concerns seamlessly through a historical narrative that romps along at a cracking pace, producing a text that is highly accessible without compromising the rational quality of his argument.”—*The Guardian*

From the Hardcover edition.

About the Author

Arthur Herman is the bestselling author of *Freedom's Forge*, *How the Scots Invented the Modern World*, *The Idea of Decline in Western History*, *To Rule the Waves*, and *Gandhi & Churchill*, which was a 2009 finalist for the Pulitzer Prize. Dr. Herman taught the Western Heritage Program at the Smithsonian's Campus on the Mall, and he has been a professor of history at Georgetown University, The Catholic University of America, George Mason University, and The University of the South at Sewanee.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

Janet Roldan:

Hey guys, do you wish to find a new book to see? Maybe the book with the title *The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization* suitable to you? The book was written by a famous writer in this era. The book titled *The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization* is one of several books that everyone reads now. This book was inspired a lot of people in the world. When you read this guide you will enter the new age that you ever know before. The author explained their strategy in a simple way, so all of people can easily to comprehend the core of this publication. This book will give you a lot of information about this world now. In order to see the represented of the world within this book.

Kurt Haney:

The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization can be one of your beginning books that are good idea. All of us recommend that straight away because this reserve has good vocabulary that can increase your knowledge in terminology, easy to understand, bit entertaining however delivering the information. The author giving his/her effort to place every word into a delightful arrangement in writing *The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization* nevertheless doesn't forget the main stage, giving the reader the hottest and also based on confirmed resource info that maybe you can be certainly one of it. This great information can draw you into a completely new stage of crucial contemplating.

Lee Parkin:

Do you really one of the book lovers? If yes, do you ever feeling doubt while you are in the book store? Aim to pick one book that you find out the inside because don't determine book by its handle may doesn't work this is difficult job because you are afraid that the inside maybe not seeing that fantastic as in the outside

appearance likes. Maybe your answer may be *The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization* why because the fantastic cover that makes you consider about the content will not disappoint anyone. The inside or content is usually fantastic as the outside or perhaps cover. Your reading 6th sense will directly direct you to pick up this book.

Nicholas Tapia:

As a scholar exactly feel bored to be able to reading. If their teacher asked them to go to the library or make summary for some publication, they are complained. Just little students that has reading's soul or real their hobby. They just do what the teacher want, like asked to the library. They go to presently there but nothing reading critically. Any students feel that reading is not important, boring and can't see colorful pics on there. Yeah, it is to get complicated. Book is very important to suit your needs. As we know that on this period, many ways to get whatever we wish. Likewise word says, ways to reach Chinese's country. Therefore this *The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization* can make you experience more interested to read.

Download and Read Online *The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization* By Arthur Herman #0MRVY71OZC9

Read The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization By Arthur Herman for online ebook

The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization By Arthur Herman Free PDF d0wnl0ad, audio books, books to read, good books to read, cheap books, good books, online books, books online, book reviews epub, read books online, books to read online, online library, greatbooks to read, PDF best books to read, top books to read The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization By Arthur Herman books to read online.

Online The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization By Arthur Herman ebook PDF download

The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization By Arthur Herman Doc

The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization By Arthur Herman Mobipocket

The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization By Arthur Herman EPub

0MRVY71OZC9: The Cave and the Light: Plato Versus Aristotle, and the Struggle for the Soul of Western Civilization By Arthur Herman