



The Political Writings: "Political Regime" and "Summary of Plato's Laws" (Agora Editions)

Alfarabi

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Alfarabi (ca. 870–950) founded the great tradition of Aristotelian/Platonic political philosophy in medieval Islamic and Arabic culture. In this second volume of political writings, Charles E. Butterworth presents translations of Alfarabi's *Political Regime* and *Summary of Plato's "Laws"*, accompanied by introductions that discuss the background for each work and explore its teaching. In addition, the texts are carefully annotated to aid the reader in following Alfarabi's argument. An Arabic-English/English-Arabic glossary allows interested readers to verify the way particular words are translated. Throughout, Butterworth's method is to translate consistently the same Arabic word by the same English word, rendering Alfarabi's style in an unusually faithful and yet approachable manner.

Political Regime consists of two parts. One focuses on nature and natural existing things as well as the principles beyond nature that guide the existing things. In the second part, the exposition centers on human beings and their place in the larger cosmic whole as well as on how a proper organization of human life in political association provides the conditions whereby human beings might achieve their purpose.

Summary of Plato's "Laws" gives an account of the first nine books of Plato's *Laws*. Alfarabi explains Plato's art of writing in general and the method he follows in writing the *Laws* in particular. Unlike Alfarabi's other works, which examine the place of legislation and laws in the broader context of political philosophy, the *Summary* is a more specialized study of the question of laws and how and why they are formulated, with a particular focus on the relevance of Plato's investigation concerning Greek divine laws for the study and understanding of all divine laws.

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