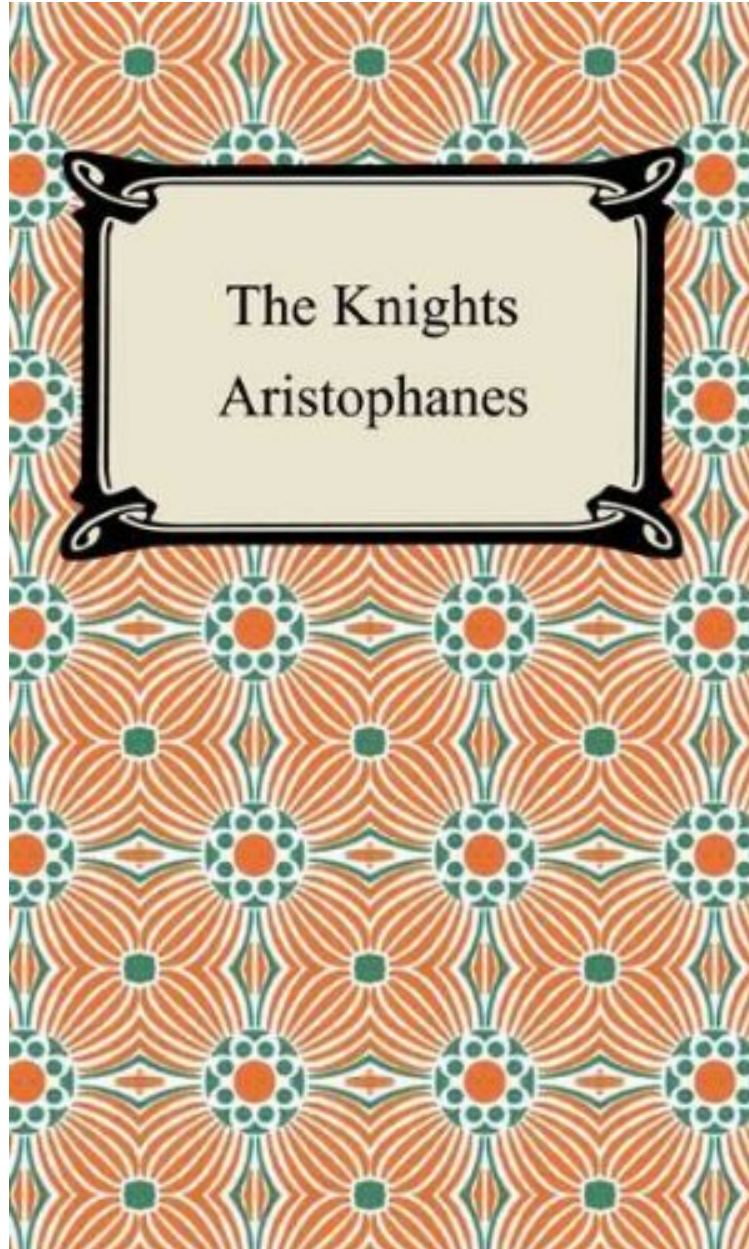


The Knights

Aristophanes

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Aristophanes : The Knights before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised The Knights:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. paladin999 was excellentBy Paul J Giordanopaladin999 the shipper was excellent.As for the book ---if you are going to read the Knights, read this translation with the notes and the Greek

on the facing page.0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Aristophanes has Cleon replaced by a sausage seller . . .By Lawrence Bernabo "The Knights," produced in 424 B.C., is clearly an all-out attack on Cleon, the leader of Athens after the death of Pericles. As related by Thucydides, earlier that year Cleon had induced the Spartans to propose peace. Consequently, Aristophanes opens the comedy with two slaves of the crotchety old Demos ("the people of Athens") dressed up to resemble the generals Demosthenes and Nicias. The two slaves complain about how everyone is picking on Paphlagon, a leather seller who is the favorite of Demos and clearly intended to be Cleon. The oracles tell that Paphlagon is going to be replaced by a sausage seller named Agoracritus. "The Knights" is a second-tier comedy by Aristophanes because it is devoted entirely to making fun of Cleon. Consequently, Aristophanes makes his point early on and by the time Agoracritus the sausage seller beats Cleon at his own game, the comic dramatist is beating a dead horse all the way into the ground. This comedy always struck me as being like a SNL skit that lasts the entire show. In the end Demos, rejuvenated by being stewed in a plot by Agoracritus, takes control and declares he will abolish all innovations and restore the old traditions. The legend is that the mask makers of Athens, fearing reprisals from Cleon, refused to make a mask of the Athenian leader and that Aristophanes played the part himself. Of course, Cleon would have been in the audience watching the play at the festival that year, but unlike what happened when Socrates stood throughout the production of "The Clouds," we know nothing of Cleon's response aside from the fact that Aristophanes survived to write more comedies.

In many respects 'The Knights' may be reckoned the great Comedian's masterpiece, the direct personal attack on the then all-powerful Cleon, with its scathing satire and tremendous invective, being one of the most vigorous and startling things in literature. Already in 'The Acharnians' he had threatened to "cut up Cleon the Tanner into shoe-leather for the Knights," and he now proceeds to carry his menace into execution, "concentrating the whole force of his wit in the most unscrupulous and merciless fashion against his personal enemy."mdash;From the introduction to [The Knights](#) of Aristophanes.

Especially admirable is the syllabic and metrical approximation of the choral passages" (N.E.xl.N. 1997)Language NotesText: English (translation) Original Language: GreekAbout the AuthorARISTOPHANES, the most famous comic dramatist of ancient Greece, was born an Athenian citizen in about 445 B.C. Forty-four plays have been attributed to Aristophanes; eleven of these have survived. His plays are the only extant representatives of Greek Old Comedy, a dramatic form whose conventions made it inevitable that the author would comment on the political and social issues of fifth-century Athens. This Aristophanes did so well that Plato, asked by the tyrant of Syracuse for an analysis of Athenians, sent a copy of Aristophanes' plays in reply.#160;#160;#160;#160;His earliest play, the *Banqueters*, won the second prize in 427 B.C. when the dramatist must have been less than eighteen years old, since, as he notes in the *Clouds* (423), he was too young to produce it in his own name. Another early play, the *Babylonians*, criticized the demagogue Cleon, who responded by subjecting Aristophanes to legal persecution, and as the author charges in the *Acharnians*, Cleon had "slanged, and lied, and slandered and betongued me . . . till I well nigh was done to death." Nevertheless, in the *Knights* (424), he renewed his attack on the popular Athenian leader and won first prize in that year's contest. *Plutus* (388) was the last of the author's plays to be produced in his lifetime.