Classics

From the Renaissance to the nineteenth century, Latin and Greek were compulsory subjects in almost all European universities, and most early modern scholars published their research and conducted international correspondence in Latin. Latin had continued in use in Western Europe long after the fall of the Roman empire as the lingua franca of the educated classes and of law, diplomacy, religion and university teaching. The flight of Greek scholars to the West after the fall of Constantinople in 1453 gave impetus to the study of ancient Greek literature and the Greek New Testament. Eventually, just as nineteenth-century reforms of university curricula were beginning to erode this ascendancy, developments in textual criticism and linguistic analysis, and new ways of studying ancient societies, especially archaeology, led to renewed enthusiasm for the Classics. This collection offers works of criticism, interpretation and synthesis by the outstanding scholars of the nineteenth century.

Dialogues of Plato

One of the leading scholars and academic administrators of his time, Benjamin Jowett (1817–93) was Master of Balliol College as well as Regius Professor of Greek and, for a time, vice-chancellor at Oxford University. Along with his achievements in the area of academic reform, Jowett is remembered for this four-volume translation of Plato's dialogues. Characterising Plato as the 'father of idealism', Jowett reminds readers that while 'he may be illustrated by the writings of moderns ... he must be interpreted by his own, and by his place in the history of philosophy'. In this first volume, he includes fourteen early and middle dialogues such as Charmides, Apology, Crito, and Phaedo, each presented with a separate editorial introduction. Jowett's work represents a towering achievement in the field of classical and philosophical studies that had important influence on the subsequent study of Plato.
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Dialogues of Plato

Translated into English, with Analyses and Introduction

Volume 1

Benjamin Jowett
London
MACMILLAN AND CO.

PUBLISHERS TO THE UNIVERSITY OF
Oxford
THE

DIALOGUES OF PLATO

Translated into English

WITH ANALYSES AND INTRODUCTIONS

BY

B. JOWETT, M.A.

MASTER OF BALLIOl COLLEGE

REGIUS PROFESSOR OF GREEK IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

IN FOUR VOLUMES

VOL. 1

Oxford

AT THE CLARENDON PRESS

M DCCC LXXI

[All Rights reserved]
TO MY FORMER PUPILS

IN BALLIOL COLLEGE

AND IN THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD,

WHO DURING THIRTY YEARS

HAVE BEEN THE BEST OF FRIENDS TO ME,

THES VOLUMES ARE INSCRIBED,

IN GRATEFUL RECOGNITION

OF THEIR NEVER FAILING ATTACHMENT.
PREFACE.

The Text which has been mostly followed in this Translation of Plato is the latest 8vo. edition of Stallbaum; the principal deviations are noted at the bottom of the page.

I have to acknowledge many obligations to old friends and pupils. These are:—Mr. John Purves, Fellow of Balliol College, with whom I have revised about half of the entire Translation; the Rev. Professor Campbell, of St. Andrew’s, who has helped me in the revision of several parts of the work, especially of the Theaetetus, Sophist, and Politicus; Mr. Robinson Ellis, Fellow of Trinity College, and Mr. Alfred Robinson, Fellow of New College, who read with me the Cratylus and the Gorgias; Mr. Paravicini, Student of Christ Church, who assisted me in the Symposium; Mr. Raper, Fellow of Queen’s College, Mr. Monro, Fellow of Oriel College, and Mr. Shadwell, Student of Christ Church, who gave me similar assistance in the Laws. Dr. Greenhill, of Hastings, has also kindly sent me remarks on the physiological part of the Timaeus, which I have inserted as corrections under the head of errata at the end of the Introduction. The degree of accuracy which I have been enabled to attain is in great measure due to these gentlemen, and I
PREFACE.

heartily thank them for the pains and time which they have bestowed on my work.

I have further to explain how far I have received help from other labourers in the same field. The books which I have found of most use are Steinhart and Müller's German Translation of Plato with Introductions; Zeller's 'Philosophie der Griechen,' and 'Platonische Studien'; Susemihl's 'Genetische Entwicklung der Platonischen Philosophie;' Hermann's 'Geschichte der Platonischen Philosophie;' Bonitz, 'Platonische Studien;' Stallbaum's Notes and Introductions; Professor Campbell's editions of the 'Theaetetus,' the 'Sophist,' and the 'Politicus;' Professor Thompson's 'Phaedrus;' Th. Martin's 'Études sur le Timée;' Mr. Poste's edition and translation of the 'Philebus;' the Translation of the 'Republic,' by Messrs. Davies and Vaughan, and the Translation of the 'Gorgias,' by Mr. Cope.

I have also derived much assistance from the great work of Mr. Grote, which contains excellent analyses of the Dialogues, and is rich in original thoughts and observations. I agree with him in rejecting as futile the attempt of Schleiermacher and others to arrange the Dialogues of Plato into a harmonious whole. Any such arrangement appears to me not only to be unsupported by evidence, but to involve an anachronism in the history of philosophy. There is a common spirit in the writings of Plato, but not a unity of design in the whole, nor perhaps a perfect unity in any single Dialogue. The hypothesis of a general plan which is worked out in the successive Dialogues is an after-thought of the critics who have attributed a
system to writings belonging to an age when system had not as yet taken possession of philosophy.

If Mr. Grote should do me the honour to read any portion of this work he will probably remark that I have endeavoured to approach Plato from a point of view which is opposed to his own. The aim of the Introductions in these volumes has been to represent Plato as the father of idealism, who is not to be measured by the standard of utilitarianism or any other modern philosophical system. He is the poet or maker of ideas, satisfying the wants of his own age, providing the instruments of thought for future generations. He is no dreamer, but a great philosophical genius struggling with the unequal conditions of light and knowledge under which he is living. He may be illustrated by the writings of moderns, but he must be interpreted by his own, and by his place in the history of philosophy. We are not concerned to determine what is the residuum of truth which remains for ourselves. His truth may not be our truth, and nevertheless may have an extraordinary value and interest for us.

I cannot agree with Mr. Grote in admitting as genuine all the writings commonly attributed to Plato in antiquity, any more than with Schaarschmidt and some other German critics who reject nearly half of them. The German critics, to whom I refer, proceed chiefly on grounds of internal evidence; they appear to me to lay too much stress on the variety of doctrine and style, which must be equally acknowledged as a fact, even in the Dialogues regarded by Schaarschmidt as genuine, e.g. in the Phaedrus, or Symposium, when compared with the Laws. He who admits works so different in style and
matter to have been the composition of the same author, need have no difficulty (see vol. iv, Appendix) in admitting the Sophist or the Politicus. On the other hand, Mr. Grote trusts mainly to the Alexandrian Canon. But I hardly think that we are justified in attributing much weight to the authority of the Alexandrian librarians in an age when there was no regular publication of books, and every temptation to forge them; and in which the writings of a school were naturally attributed to the founder of the school. And even without intentional fraud, there was an inclination to believe rather than to enquire. Would Mr. Grote accept as genuine all the writings which he finds in the lists of learned ancients attributed to Hippocrates, to Xenophon, to Aristotle? The Alexandrian Canon of the Platonic writings is deprived of credit by the admission of the Epistles, which are not only unworthy of Plato, and in several passages plagiarized from him, but flagrantly at variance with historical fact. It will be seen also that I do not agree with Mr. Grote's views about the Sophists; nor with the low estimate which he has formed of Plato's Laws; nor with his opinion respecting Plato's doctrine of the rotation of the earth. But I am not going to lay hands on my father Parmenides' [Soph. 241 D], who will, I hope, forgive me for differing from him on these points. I cannot close this Preface without expressing my deep respect for his noble and gentle character, and the great services which he has rendered to Greek Literature.

Balliol College,
January, 1871.
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