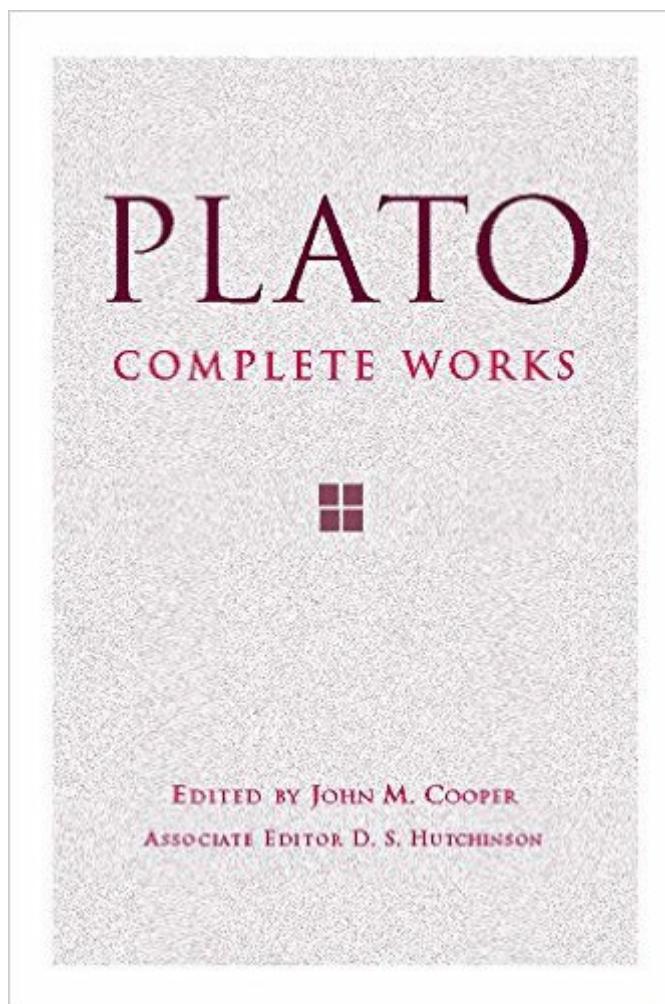


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Plato: Complete Works



Synopsis

Outstanding translations by leading contemporary scholars--many commissioned especially for this volume--are presented here in the first single edition to include the entire surviving corpus of works attributed to Plato in antiquity. In his introductory essay, John Cooper explains the presentation of these works, discusses questions concerning the chronology of their composition, comments on the dialogue form in which Plato wrote, and offers guidance on approaching the reading and study of Plato's works. Also included are concise introductions by Cooper and Hutchinson to each translation, meticulous annotation designed to serve both scholar and general reader, and a comprehensive index. This handsome volume offers fine paper and a high-quality Smyth-sewn cloth binding in a sturdy, elegant edition.

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Customer Reviews

If you are at all inclined to get all of Plato in one volume then you are well advised to get this volume, for lack of viable alternatives. The translations are a mixed bag. Cooper had little choice except to take over Grube's translations which inaugurated Hackett editions of Plato. While Grube delivers idiomatic English, he's inaccurate on so many key points that he will simply lead you into dead corners. (Instructors should seriously avoid him in classroom use. There are worthwhile Penguin volumes of "Euthyphro" and "Republic".) That said, there are real gems in this collection: Burnyeat's "Theaetetus", Frede's "Philebus", Gill's "Parmenides", Zeyl's "Timaeus", Reeve's "Cratylus", Rowe's "Statesman". But if you are a real fan of (any of) those, you should seriously consider getting the individual volumes (also by Hackett) with their substantial introductions (all of

them highly recommended) woefully if understandably omitted from this volume. (Why can't there be a Norton Plato? 3000 pages with all of the individual Hackett's... I know, the market.) Apart from this alternative (or complementation), you should also consider getting or borrowing items of the Clarendon Plato series: Gallop's "Phaedo", McDowell's "Theaetetus", Irwin's "Gorgias", and Taylor's "Protagoras" - philosophical commentaries and translations which have no superior (not so happy on Gallop, but you'll have to avoid Grube's "Phaedo" anyway). A final comment. If you are new to Plato, Cooper's volume can be a pleasure to start with. Begin with the first "Alcibiades" and the "Symposium" (both beautifully translated here) and then read Cooper's wonderful introduction to the volume. I very much doubt you'll ever live life without Plato afterwards. Edit, Dec 2013: I have recently purchased Christopher Rowe's recent (2012) translation of Plato's masterwork, the Republic, and reviewed its comparative merits vis-a-vis other translations here.

I got this book because I haven't read Plato in a while and I wanted a convenient volume that I could keep by the bedside. It would be good for me, I decided, to read a dialogue each night before bed. Who knows, maybe I would even dream of Socrates. When I am not reading it, the 1800-page volume can also serve as a sturdy little bedside table, a handsome place to put your tea and biscuits. (If you don't mind setting your cup of tea on the cornerstone of western civilisation.) It has been a delight to rediscover the dialogues in these elegant contemporary translations, and a surprise to discover so many additional works that I had never seen before. The publisher's workmanship is beautiful too, with quality paper, good cloth binding, and attractive typesetting with generous margins. I like to have room on the page to scribble my own impertinent replies to Socrates, and to ask him questions that he always affably refuses to answer. Yesterday I had left the book open in the middle of Alcibiades. When I came back into the room one of my children was reading it. "What's this?" she said. "A novel, or a collection of stories?" "It's philosophy," I said. "Philosophy!" She was stunned. "I never knew philosophy was so funny." It is a testament to the quality of these translations that a child could mistake Plato for a novelist; that she could read him without having the faintest idea that it was Serious Business; and that her first response to Plato's Socrates was laughter.

This is the best translation of Plato in English. First and foremost, it is the first and only COMPLETE English translation of Plato's works in the 20th century. All other anthologies have left out some works. Second, the individual translations are of high quality (some of the translations in other anthologies are a bit creaky). Third, the introduction and notes are extremely useful. This book is a

godsend to me, since I teach courses on Plato and now no longer have to rely on previous, seriously flawed anthologies. This translation of Plato will be the definitive one for some time to come. It supersedes all other editions.

John M. Cooper's "Comlete Works of Plato" is the best single volume anthology of Plato around. Shrouded within the eighteen hundred pages of this book lie many treasures of abundant proportions. This edition for the first time exposes these new translations: Cratylus, Alcibiades, Second Alcibiades, Hipparchus, Rival Lovers, Theages, Lesser Hippias, Menexenus, Clitophon, Timaeus, Critias, Minos, Epinomis, Definitions, On Justice, On Virtue, Demodocus, Sisyphus, Halcyon, and Eryxias. Also the introduction makes accessible techniques while reading Plato to give a more profound sense of the dialouges in order to distinguish Plato's ideas as a whole. Another point of interest is the section on definitions, which is a dictionary of 185 important philosophical terms that developed throughout the Socratic era. I am very happy to have purchased this volume and I hope you find the same joy in buying it for yourself.

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