



The Republic of Plato

Plato (c. 427 - 327 BCE) translated by Benjamin Jowett (1817 - 1893)

Read by:	Bob Neufeld	Format:	MP3 CD in DVD case
Length:	12 hours 23 minutes	Catalog:	DB-1111
Language:	English	UPC:	0684758936653
Style:	Solo	MSLP:	\$11.99
Genre:	Philosophy, Political Science		

The Republic by Plato is the greatest and best known of Plato's works and possibly the most influential work of philosophy and political theory in history. It consists of ten books of dialogs between Socrates and various Athenians and foreigners that address the question of whether a just man or unjust man achieves the greatest happiness by considering the governance and culture of a series of hypothetical cities. In *A History of Western Philosophy* (1945), Bertrand Russell identifies three parts to the Republic: the definition of the utopia or ideal state (Books I-V); the definition of the philosopher as ideal ruler (Books VI-VII); the pros and cons of various forms of government (Books VII-X). He outlines the progressive degeneration that results from the "five regimes" of Aristocracy, Timocracy, Oligarchy, Democracy and Tyranny.

Translator Benjamin Jowett writes in his introduction that "The principles of definition, the law of contradiction, the fallacy of arguing in a circle, the distinction between the essence and accidents of a thing or notion, between means and ends, between causes and conditions; also the division of the mind into the rational, concupiscent, and irascible elements, or of pleasures and desires into necessary and unnecessary—these and other great forms of thought are all of them to be found in the Republic, and were probably first invented by Plato." It is no wonder that *The Republic* has been a centerpiece of a classical education for centuries.

Plato (c. 428 – 348 BCE) was an ancient Greek philosopher and mathematician considered by many as the greatest metaphysical thinker in history. He was a student of Socrates, a teacher of Aristotle, and the founder of the Academy in Athens, the first institute of higher learning in the West. He was born into a wealthy aristocratic family in Athens. Two events shaped his development: the first was meeting Socrates, who inspired his work; the second was the Peloponnesian War, in which Athenian democracy was replaced by a Spartan oligarchy, subsequently overthrown. His work falls into three periods. The first begins with the death of Socrates and conveys his teaching and philosophy. The second addresses the central ideas of justice, the state, and individual character. The third period focuses on metaphysical ideas and the role of the arts and morality in culture. He was the first to conceive of a method of knowledge, and in doing so articulated many fundamental concepts that remain at the core of logic, science, psychology and philosophy to this day. Historian Alfred North Whitehead once noted: "the safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato."