



The Symposium: The Shelley Translation (Annotated)

Plato

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- Includes a contextual study of Shelley and classical culture

The Greek philosopher Plato (424-348 BC) was one of history's greatest philosophers; Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792-1822) was one of its greatest poets. Shelley calls *The Symposium* "the most beautiful and perfect among all the works of Plato." In it, Socrates and his friends meet for dinner and discuss the nature of love – till Socrates is confronted by the beautiful young Alcibiades, who bursts in to confess his love for the philosopher. The dialogue is by turns funny, scandalous and profound. Besides being a great drama, the *Symposium* offers an accessible introduction to Plato's main philosophical ideas. Shelley's brilliant translation of this timeless masterpiece (which he titled "The Banquet") was suppressed during his lifetime for its brave, and perfectly faithful, rendition of the work's overt homoeroticism. Critics now recognise it as a literary masterpiece in its own right.

Lexicos Books is proud to present this great work, complete and uncensored. It has been carefully edited and formatted for Kindle. It includes Shelley's own introduction, and his essay "A Discourse on the Manners of the Ancient Greeks Relative to the Subject of Love" – a pioneering defense of homosexual love. It also includes an essay on the impact of classical culture on Shelley's poetry and thought.

"Plato's great dialogue on love is one of the supreme masterpieces of world literature. The English translation by the great English Romantic poet, Percy Bysshe Shelley, is the finest of all, though very few people have even heard of it . . . Shelley's translation is a pleasure to read. The poetical parts are fine English prose-poetry, the humorous parts are really funny, the narration is vivid, the conversations are lifelike, and the philosophical arguments are clear and cogent." William A. Percy III , *Gay & Lesbian Review*

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