



THE SYMPOSIUM

The Symposium

by Plato (428-347 BCE)

translated by Benjamin Jowett (1817-1893)

The Symposium (ancient Greek: Συμπόσιον) is a philosophical work written by Plato sometime after 385 BCE. On one level the book deals with the genealogy, nature and purpose of love; on another level the it tackles the topic of knowledge -- specifically how does one know what one knows. The topic of love is taken up in the form of a series of speeches, given by a group of men at a symposium or a wine drinking party at the house of the tragedian Agathon at Athens. Plato constructed *The Symposium* as a story within a story within a story. This architecture creates the space for Plato to build his philosophy of knowledge. The speech of Socrates points out that the highest purpose of Love is to become a Philosopher, or Lover of Wisdom. (*Wikipedia*)

Total running time: 2:15:06

Read by Geoffrey Edwards

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Cover design by Kathryn Delaney
Fresco depicting a symposium from the north wall of the Tomb of the Diver, Paestum, Italy, c. 475 BCE



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