

DEFINITIONS

Definitions is a dictionary of about 185 philosophically significant terms. Many intellectuals in ancient Greece developed definitions: mathematicians, natural philosophers, educators such as Prodicus, and also Socrates, who believed that knowing correct definitions of ethical ideas would make people morally better. But it was Plato who urged a systematic approach to definition by collection and division in his *Phaedrus* and practiced it in his *Sophist* and *Statesman*. The Academic enterprise of definition by division was satirized in a comedy of about 350 B.C., in which members of Plato's Academy cogitated over the definition of 'pumpkin' (Epicrates, frg. 11 Edmonds). Diogenes the Cynic ridiculed the Academic definition of 'man' as 'featherless, two-footed animal' by plucking a chicken and saying, "Here's Plato's man!"

Many philosophers after Plato were also interested in definitions: his nephew and successor as head of the Academy, Speusippus, was credited with a work called *Definitions*, and in a list of Aristotle's works we find "*Definitions* (in thirteen books)" and "*Definitions prefixed to the Topics* (in seven books)." Theophrastus wrote three books of *Definitions*, and Chrysippus the Stoic wrote many large books of and about definitions. Certain similarities between definitions in the present collection and Aristotelian and Stoic definitions have inclined some scholars to regard *Definitions* as a late and eclectic work, but these similarities are perhaps better explained by the fact that Aristotle and the Stoics both made use of fourth-century Academic ideas in working out their own philosophical positions.

What we find in *Definitions* is probably a tiny selection of all the definitions formulated and discussed in Plato's Academy in the middle years of the fourth century. These definitions were used in dialectical discussions, of the kind familiar to us from Aristotle's *Topics* and *Sophistical Refutations*. The definition of 'man' at 415a as 'featherless, two-footed, flat-fingernailed animal' could be a response to Diogenes' chicken, and other definitions are probably dialectical as well. Some are drawn directly from Plato's dialogues, such as the definition of 'sophist' at 415c, from *Sophist* 231d.

The individual definitions were probably coined by members of the Academy in the fourth century B.C., but we cannot know who edited them into the present collection. Indeed, *Definitions* seems to consist of two separate collections. The first collection is organized into the three branches of philosophy recognized by Plato's Academy and by the Stoics: philosophy of nature (411 a–c), ethics (411d–414a), philosophy of knowledge and language (414a–e). The second collection (from 'utility' at 414e onward) has no such internal

organization and contains independent definitions of many of the terms defined in the first collection. Certainly Plato is not to be regarded as the editor of all or part of Definitions, and the ascription to "Plato" probably signifies nothing more than "school of Plato." Some ancient scholars guessed at Speusippus as their author, probably incorrectly.

Since reference works and collections such as Definitions are not written in ordinary prose, they are especially liable to corruption in the course of transmission. That is why this translation involves a particularly high degree of guesswork, both about the text itself and about its proper construal. Some definitions have probably fallen out accidentally, and some may possibly have been interpolated by later ancient scribes and scholars.

D.S.H.

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| <p>411 αἰδῖον (<i>aïdion</i>), eternal: existent at all times, including past and present, without being destroyed.</p> <p>θεός (<i>theos</i>), god: immortal living being, self-sufficient for happiness; eternal being, the cause of the nature of goodness.</p> <p>γένεσις (<i>genesis</i>), becoming: change into being; coming to participate in being; passing into existence.</p> <p>ἥλιος (<i>hēlios</i>), sun: the only celestial fire which is visible to the same people from dawn to dusk; the daylight star; the largest eternal living creature.</p> <p>b χρόνος (<i>chronos</i>), time: the motion of the sun, the measure of its course.</p> <p>ἡμέρα (<i>hēmera</i>) day: the journey of the sun, from rising to setting; the light opposed to the night.</p> <p>ἔως (<i>heōs</i>), dawn: the beginning of the day; first light of the sun.</p> <p>μεσημβρία (<i>mesēmbria</i>), midday: the time at which the shadows of bodies are all at their shortest.</p> <p>δείλη (<i>deilē</i>), sunset: the end of the day.</p> | <p>νύξ (<i>nux</i>), night: the darkness opposed to day; the absence of the sun.</p> <p>τύχη (<i>tuchē</i>), luck: passage from the unclear to the unclear; spontaneous cause of a supernatural event.</p> <p>γῆρας (<i>gēras</i>), old age: deterioration of a living thing due to the passage of time.</p> <p>πνεῦμα (<i>pneuma</i>), wind: movement of air in the region of the earth.</p> <p>ἀήρ (<i>aēr</i>), air: the element to which every spatial motion is natural.</p> <p>οὐρανός (<i>ouranos</i>), sky: the body which surrounds all perceptible things except the uppermost air itself.</p> <p>ψυχή (<i>psuchē</i>), soul: that which moves itself; the cause of vital processes in living creatures.</p> <p>δύναμις (<i>dunamis</i>), ability: that which produces results on account of itself.</p> <p>ὄψις (<i>opsis</i>), vision: the state of being able to discern bodies.</p> <p>ὀστοῦν (<i>ostoun</i>), bone: marrow hardened by heat.</p> |
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- στοιχεῖον (*stoicheion*), element: that which complex things are composed of and resolved into.
- d ἀρετή (*aretē*), virtue: the best disposition; the state of a mortal creature which is in itself praiseworthy; the state on account of which its possessor is said to be good; the just observance of the laws; the disposition on account of which he who is so disposed¹ is said to be perfectly excellent; the state which produces faithfulness to law.
- φρόνησις (*phronēsis*), practical wisdom: the ability which by itself is productive of human happiness; the knowledge of what is good and bad; the knowledge that produces happiness;² the disposition by which we judge what is to be done and what is not to be done.
- e δικαιοσύνη (*dikaíosunē*), justice: the unanimity of the soul with itself, and the good discipline of the parts of the soul with respect to each other and concerning each other; the state that distributes to each person according to what is deserved; the state on account of which its possessor chooses what appears to him to be just; the state underlying a law-abiding way of life; social equality; the state of obedience to the laws.
- σωφροσύνη (*sōphrosunē*), self-control: moderation of the soul concerning the desires and pleasures that normally occur in it; harmony and good discipline in the soul in respect of normal pleasures and pains; concord of the soul in respect of ruling and being ruled; normal personal independence; good discipline in the soul; rational agreement within the soul about what is admirable and contemptible; the state by which its possessor chooses and is cautious about what he should.
- ἀνδρεία (*andreia*), courage: the state of the soul which is unmoved by fear; military confidence; knowledge of the facts of warfare; self-restraint in the soul about what is fearful and terrible; boldness in obedience to wisdom; being intrepid in the face of death; the state which stands on guard over correct thinking in dangerous situations; force which counterbalances danger; force of fortitude in respect of virtue; calm in the soul about what correct thinking takes to be frightening or encouraging things; the preservation of fearless³ beliefs about the terrors and experience of warfare; the state which cleaves to the law.
- ἐγκράτεια (*enkrateia*), self-restraint: the ability to endure pain; obedience to correct thinking; the unbeatable ability of the conceptions of correct thinking.
- αὐτάρκεια (*autarkeia*), self-sufficiency: perfect possession of good things; the state in respect of which those who have it are masters of themselves.

1. Omitting *echon* in d3.

2. Reading *epistēmē poiētikē eudaimonias* after *kakōn* in d6 (a misprint in Burnet).

3. Accepting the conjecture *adeilōn* for *adēlōn* in b1.

- ἐπιείκεια (*epieikeia*), fairness: ceding one's rights and advantages; moderation in agreements; the good discipline of a rational soul in respect of what is admirable and contemptible.
- c καρτερία (*karteria*), fortitude: endurance of pain for the sake of what is admirable; endurance of labor for the sake of what is admirable.
- θάρασος (*tharsos*), confidence: not foreseeing anything bad; being undisturbed by the presence of something bad.
- ἄλυσία (*alupia*), painlessness: the state in respect of which we are not subject to suffering pain.
- φιλοπονία (*philoponia*), industriousness: the state which accomplishes what one has proposed; voluntary fortitude; irreproachable state in respect of labor.
- αἰδώς (*aidōs*), modesty: voluntarily drawing back from reckless behavior, according to what is right and seems best; voluntarily holding to what is best; being cautious to avoid justified criticism.
- d ἐλευθερία (*eleutheria*), freedom: being in control of one's life; having sole authority in all respects; power to do what one likes in life; being unsparing in using and possessing property.
- ἐλευθεριότης (*eleutheriotēs*), liberality: the proper state in respect of money-making; appropriate expenditure⁴ and saving of property.
- πρᾶσις (*praiotēs*), even temper: suppression of the impulse caused by anger; an harmonious blend of the soul.
- κοσμιότης (*kosmiotēs*), decorum: voluntary submission to what seems best; being disciplined in moving the body.
- εὐδαιμονία (*eudaimonia*), success in life: the good composed of all goods; an ability which suffices for living well; perfection in respect of virtue; resources sufficient for a living creature.
- e μεγαλοπρέπεια (*megaloprepeia*), magnificence: being estimable, according to the correct reasoning of the most dignified of men.⁵
- ἄγχινοια (*anchinoia*), quick wit: talent of the soul which enables its possessor to hit upon what is necessary in each case; mental penetration.
- χρηστότης (*chrēstotēs*), honesty: moral sincerity, together with intelligence; excellence of character.
- καλοκαγαθία (*kalokagathia*), moral perfection: the state which decides to do the best things.
- μεγαλοψυχία (*megalopsuchia*), magnanimity: nobility in dealing with events; magnificence of soul, together with reason.
- φιλανθρωπία (*philanthrōpia*), love of humanity, or kindness: the easy-going character state of being friendly to people; the state of being helpful to people; the trait of gratefulness; memory, together with helpfulness.
- εὐσέβεια (*eusebeia*), piety: justice concerning the gods; the ability to serve the gods voluntarily; the correct conception of the

4. Accepting the conjecture *proesis* for *prosthesis* in d4–5.

5. Accepting the conjecture *tou semnotatou* in e2–3.

honor due to gods; knowledge of the honor due to gods.

ἀγαθόν (*agathon*), good: that which is for its own sake.

ἀφοβία (*aphobia*), fearlessness: the state in which we are not subject to fear.

ἀπάθεια (*apatheia*), passionlessness: the state in which we are not subject to passions.

εἰρήνη (*eirēnē*), peace: a quiet period in respect of military conflict.

ῥαθυμία (*rāthumia*), laziness: inertia of the soul; having no passion in the spirited part.

δεινότης (*deinotēs*), cleverness: the disposition which enables its possessor to hit upon his particular objective.

φιλία (*philia*), friendship: agreeing about what is admirable and just; deciding on the same way of life; having the same views about moral decision and moral conduct; agreeing on a way of life; sharing on the basis of benevolence; sharing in rendering and accepting favors.

εὐγένεια (*eugeneia*), nobility: the virtue of a noble character; a soul well cultivated in words and deeds.

αἵρεσις (*hairesis*), selection: correct evaluation.

εὖνοια (*eunoia*), benevolence: kindness of a man towards another.

οἰκειότης (*oikeiotēs*), kinship: sharing in the same descent.

ὁμόνοια (*homonoia*), agreement: sharing everything that is on one's mind;⁶ harmony of thoughts and assumptions.

ἀγάπησις (*agapēsis*), contentment: welcoming everything.

πολιτική (*politikē*), political skill: the knowledge of what is admirable and useful; the knowledge of how to produce justice in a city.

ἑταιρία (*hetairia*), camaraderie: the friendship among people of the same age formed by keeping company with each other.

εὐβουλία (*euboulia*), good counsel: the inborn virtue of reasoning.

πίστις (*pistis*), faith: the conception⁷ that things are as they appear to one; firmness of character.

ἀλήθεια (*alētheia*), truth, veracity: the correct state expressed in affirmation and denial; knowledge of truths.

βούλησις (*boulēsis*), will: wanting, based on correct reason; reasonable desire; natural desire, based on reason.

συμβούλευσις (*sumbouleusis*), consultation: advice to another person about conduct, how he should conduct himself.

εὐκαιρία (*eukairia*), good timing: hitting upon the right time to do something or have something done to one.

εὐλάβεια (*eulabeia*), caution: being on guard against what is bad; being sure to be on guard.

τάξις (*taxis*), order: functional similarity in all the mutual elements of a whole; due proportion in a society; cause of all the mutual elements of a whole; due proportion in respect of learning.⁸

6. Accepting the conjecture *tōn en nōi ontōn* for *tōn ontōn* in b8.

7. Accepting a conjectural transposition of *orthē* from c4 to c6.

8. Reading *summetria pros to mathein* in d4.

- πρόσεξις (*prosexis*), attention: the effort the soul makes to learn something.
 εὐφύϊα (*euphuia*), talent: speed in learning; good natural⁹ inheritance; natural virtue.
 εὐμάθεια (*eumatheia*), cleverness: the mental talent to learn quickly.
 δίκη (*dikē*), judgment, trial: authoritative declaration about a disputed matter; dispute¹⁰ about whether or not there has been
 e injustice.
 εὐνομία (*eunomia*), law-abidingness: obedience to good laws.
 εὐφροσύνη (*euphrosunē*), cheerfulness: joy in doing what a temperate man does.
 τιμή (*timē*), honor: the gift of good things given for virtuous deeds; the dignity conferred by virtue; dignified bearing; the cultivation of one's dignity.
 προθυμία (*prothumia*), zeal: manifestation of an active will.
 χάρις (*charis*), charity: voluntary beneficence; giving up something good which is of service at an opportune moment.
 ὁμόνοια (*homonoia*), concord: opinion shared between those who govern and those who are governed about how to govern and be governed.
 πολιτεία (*politeia*), republic: community of many men, self-sufficient for living successfully; community of many under the
 414 rule of law.
 πρόνοια (*pronoia*), foresight, providence: preparation for some future event.
- βουλή (*boulē*), deliberation: investigation about what would be beneficial in the future.
 νίκη (*nikē*), victory: ability triumphant in a competition.
 εὐπορία (*euporia*), inventiveness: good judgment which triumphs over something said.
 δωρεά (*dōrea*), gift: exchange of favors.
 καιρός (*kairos*), opportunity: the ideal time for something beneficial; the time that contributes to obtaining something good.
 μνήμη (*mnēmē*), memory: disposition of the soul which guards over the truth which resides in it.
 ἔννοια (*ennoia*), reflection: intense thinking.
 νόησις (*noēsis*), intuition: the starting point of knowledge.
 ἁγνεία (*hagneia*), piety: caution about mistakes with respect to the gods; paying service, in a
 b normal way, to the honor of a god.
 μαντεία (*manteia*), divining: the knowledge which predicts events without proof.
 μαντική (*mantikē*), divination: the knowledge which contemplates the present and future of mortal beings.
 σοφία (*sophia*), wisdom: non-hypothetical knowledge; knowledge of what always exists; knowledge which contemplates the cause of beings.
 φιλοσοφία (*philosophia*), philosophy: desire for the knowledge of what always exists; the state which contemplates the truth,

9. Reading *phuseōs* in d6.

10. Accepting the conjectural restoration *Dikē' apophasis . . . pragmatos' amphibētēsis peri tou adikein ē mē*.

	what makes it true; cultivation of the soul, based on correct reason.	διάλεκτος (<i>dialektos</i>), language, linguistic expression: human sound with letters; a common sign which is expressive, without music.
c	ἐπιστήμη (<i>epistēmē</i>), knowledge: conception of the soul which cannot be dislodged by reasoning; ability to conceive one or more things which cannot be dislodged by reasoning; true argument which cannot be dislodged by thinking.	συλλαβή (<i>sullabē</i>), syllable: articulation of the human voice that can be written.
	δόξα (<i>doxa</i>), opinion: conception which is open to persuasion by reason; fluctuation in reasoning; the thinking which is led by reason to the false as well as the true.	ὅρος (<i>horos</i>), definition: something said, comprised of genus and differential.
	αἴσθησις (<i>aisthēsis</i>), perception: fluctuation in the soul; movement of the mind via the body; ¹¹ an announcement for the benefit of human beings, from which arises a non-rational ability in the soul to recognize things through the body.	τεκμήριον (<i>tekmērion</i>), evidence: proof of the non-evident.
	ἕξις (<i>hexis</i>), state: disposition of the soul on account of which people are said to be of a certain sort.	ἀπόδειξις (<i>apodeixis</i>), proof: true argument reasoning to a conclusion; argument that declares something through what is previously known.
d	φωνή (<i>phōnē</i>), voiced sound: an emission of thought through the mouth.	στοιχεῖον φωνῆς (<i>stoicheion phōnēs</i>), element of voiced sound: uncompound voiced sound, the reason that the other voiced sounds are voiced sounds.
	λόγος (<i>logos</i>), speech: voice articulated in letters capable of indicating each existing thing; linguistic sound compounded of nouns and verbs, without music.	ὠφέλιμον (<i>ōphelimon</i>), utility: what causes something to be well off; what causes good.
	ὄνομα (<i>onoma</i>), noun: uncompound linguistic sound expressing both what is predicated in the essence and everything which is not said of a thing in its own right.	συμφέρον (<i>sumpheron</i>), beneficial: what conduces to the good.
		ἀγαθόν (<i>agathon</i>), good: what causes the preservation of beings; the cause toward which everything tends, from which is derived what should be chosen.
		σῶφρον (<i>sōphron</i>), self-controlled: being orderly in the soul.
		δίκαιον (<i>dikaion</i>), just: prescription of law which produces justice.
		ἐκούσιον (<i>hekousion</i>), voluntary: what produces its own action; what is chosen for itself; what is achieved with thinking.
		ἐλεύθερον (<i>eleutheron</i>), free: what rules itself.

11. Moving the semicolon from after *kinēsis* to after *sōmatos* in c5, and deleting *psuchēs*.

- μέτριον (*metrion*), moderate: in between excess and insufficiency, satisfying the strictures of skill.
- μέτρον (*metron*), measure: the mean between excess and insufficiency.
- ἄθλον ἀρετῆς (*athlon aretēs*), prize of virtue: the reward worth choosing for its own sake.
- ἀθανασία (*athanasia*), immortality: the eternal duration of a living substance.¹²
- ῥσιον (*hosion*), holy: service to a god which is agreeable to the god.
- ἑορτή (*heortē*), festival: time that is sacred by law.
- ἄνθρωπος (*anthrōpos*), man: wingless, two-footed, flat-fingernailed animal; the only being capable of acquiring rational knowledge.
- b θυσία (*thusia*), sacrifice: offering of a victim to a god.
- εὐχή (*euchē*), prayer: request by men to the gods for what is good or seems good.
- βασιλεύς (*basileus*), king: an officer who is legally beyond accountability; an officer of a political organization.
- ἀρχή (*archē*), command: being in charge of everything.
- ἐξουσία (*exousia*), legal authority: discretionary power granted by law.
- νομοθέτης (*nomothetēs*), lawgiver: the maker of the laws under which a city is to be governed.
- νόμος (*nomos*), law: political judgment of many people, not limited to a certain time.
- ὑπόθεσις (*hypothesis*), hypothesis: indemonstrable first principle;
- summary of the principal points in a discourse.
- ψήφισμα (*psēphisma*), decree: political judgment limited to a certain time.
- c πολιτικός (*politikos*), statesman: one who knows how to organize a city.
- πόλις (*polis*), city-state: the place of residence of a number of men who follow decisions made in common; a number of men being under the same law.
- πόλεως ἀρετή (*poleōs aretē*), virtue of a city: the establishment of a good constitution.
- πολεμική (*polemikē*), military skill: having experience of war.
- συμμαχία (*summachia*), military alliance: community of warring parties.
- σωτηρία (*sōtēria*), preservation: keeping safe and sound.
- τύραννος (*turannos*), dictator: an officer of a city who rules according to his own ideas.
- σοφιστής (*sophistēs*), sophist: paid hunter of rich and distinguished young men.
- d πλοῦτος (*ploutos*), wealth: having sufficient possessions to live happily; an abundance of property which conduces to happiness.
- παρακαταθήκη (*parakatathēkē*), deposit: something given on trust.
- κάθαρσις (*katharsis*), purification: the separation of the worse from the better.
- νικᾶν (*nikan*), being victorious: prevailing in a conflict.
- ἀγαθὸς ἄνθρωπος (*agathos anthrōpos*), good person: the sort of person who can achieve what is good for a human being.

12. Accepting the emendation *ousias empsuchou aïdios monē* in a8.

σώφρων (*sōphrōn*), self-controlled:
person having moderate desires.

ἐγκρατής (*enkratēs*), self-restrained:
one who overpowers the parts
of the soul when they are con-
trary to right reason.

σπουδαῖος (*spoudaios*), excellent: he
who is completely good; he who
has the virtue proper to human
beings.

σύννοια (*sunnoia*), worry: an irra-
tional and disturbing thought.

δυσμαθία (*dusmathia*), stupidity:
slowness in learning.

δεσποτεία (*despoteia*), rule over
slaves: just authority which is
accountable to nobody.

ἀφιλοσοφία (*aphilosophia*), lack of
philosophy: the state whose pos-
sessor is a hater of argument.

φόβος (*phobos*), fear: consternation
of the soul in expectation of
something bad.

θυμός (*thumos*), passion: forceful
impulse of the non-rational part
of the soul, without being
ordered by reasoning and
thought.¹³

ἐκπληξίς (*ekplēxis*), consternation:
fear in the expectation of some-
thing bad.

κολακεία (*kolakeia*), flattery: keep-
ing company for the sake of
pleasure, without considering
what is best; the state of socializ-
ing for pleasure in excess of
what is moderate.

ὀργή (*orgē*), anger: the urging of
the passionate part of the soul
for vengeance.

ὑβρις (*hubris*), assault: injustice
driving one to dishonor
someone.

ἀκρασία (*akrasia*), lack of self-
restraint: the violent state,

without correct reasoning,
which is oriented towards what
seems to be pleasant.

ὄκνος (*oknos*), laziness: running
away from labor; cowardice
which paralyzes impulses.

ἀρχή (*archē*), origin: first cause of
being.

διαβολή (*diabolē*), slander: the
alienation of friends by speech.

καιρός (*kairos*), opportunity: the
time it is appropriate to do each
thing or undergo it.

ἀδικία (*adikia*), injustice: the state
of despising the laws.

ἐνδεια (*endeia*), poverty: being
short of goods.

αἰσχύνη (*aischunē*), shame: fear in
expectation of bad reputation.

ἀλαζονεία (*alazoneia*), pretentious-
ness: the state which makes
those who lack a good or goods
pretend to have it or them.

ἁμαρτία (*hamartia*), error: an action
against correct reasoning.

φθόνος (*phthonos*), envy: being dis-
tressed by the goods of one's
friends, either present or past.

ἀναισχυντία (*anaischuntia*), shame-
lessness: the state of the soul
which endures dishonor for the
sake of profit.

θρασύτης (*thrasutēs*), temerity: ex-
cessive boldness in face of dan-
gers which one should not face.

φιλοτιμία (*philotimia*), vanity: the
state of the soul which is lavish
with every expense without
thinking.

κακοφύια (*kakophuia*), bad nature:
badness in nature and an error
of what is natural; disease of
what is natural.

ἐλπίς (*elpis*), hope: the expectation
of good.

13. Emending *nous taxeōs* to *kai nou taxeōs* in e6.

- 416 μανία (*mania*), madness: the state which is destructive of true conception.
- λαλιά (*lalia*), talkativeness: irrational lack of self-restraint in speech.
- ἐναντιότης (*enantiotēs*), contrariety: the greatest distance between objects of the same genus which fall under some difference.
- ἀκούσιον (*akousion*), involuntary: what is accomplished without thinking.
- παιδεία (*paideia*), education: the ability that is of service to the soul.
- παιδεύσις (*paideusis*), educating: bestowing education.
- νομοθετική (*nomothetikē*), legislative skill: knowledge of how to produce a good city.
- νουθέτησις (*nouthetēsis*), admonition: speech which blames with judgment; speech for the sake of keeping someone from a mistake.
- βοήθεια (*boētheia*), help: the prevention of something bad, either present or about to happen.
- κόλασις (*kolasis*), chastisement: treatment given to a soul concerning a past mistake.
- δύναμις (*dunamis*), ability: superiority in word or deed; the state which makes its possessor be able; natural strength.
- σώζειν (*sōizein*), save: to keep safe and sound.