

(Ebook pdf) Socrates

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A. E. ; Robert S. Brumbaugh, Foreword Socrates Taylor
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A. E. ; Robert S. Brumbaugh, Foreword Socrates Taylor : Socrates before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Socrates:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. Good BackgroundBy JWali00Not exactly fun to read. It provided lots of background, but left me feeling I didn't know any more about Socrates than I did before I read it. That isn't really the author's fault, since there is very little good information about him in the first place.0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy rblkGreat price and great condition.15 of 15 people found the following review helpful. Saving Athens' soul in spite of itself.By EpopsAlfred Edward Taylor was the son of a Methodist minister, who was educated at Oxford and taught moral philosophy. He spent his last years teaching at Edinburgh, where he died in 1945. He was a leading authority on Plato.This brief popular study of Socrates was first published in Britain in 1933. It is divided into four sections.In the first section, on Socrates' early life, Taylor creates a very full picture of Socrates in his younger years, much more specific than most modern experts believe is justified. But he marshals the circumstantial evidence supporting his case well, and it is interesting to read.In the next section, covering Socrates' trial and death, Taylor does a good job of elucidating the political and legal issues of the trial. He thinks that Socrates' accusers truly believed that Socrates was a threat to the Athenian state, and were not acting merely out of personal spite, although they probably intended to force Socrates into exile rather than execute him. He believes the jury was taken by surprise by Socrates' refusal to go peacefully, that he forced the issue in a direction they did not anticipate, and finally succeeded in angering enough of them that a majority condemned him to death. Even then, the door was left open for exile via a secret escape from prison, which any normal person would have taken. They had not anticipated how unlike most men Socrates was.In the final section, Taylor elaborates on Socrates' thinking, attributing

to him ideas, such as the doctrine of the Forms and his conception of the Soul, that modern authorities would consider Plato's. Taylor presents a point of view of the study of Plato (and of Plato's teacher, Socrates) that was once widely held. The Ancient Graeco-Roman world comes down to us only in fragile and very incomplete form, so that in some ways it acts as a sort of "cultural Rorschach test", by which the values of the interpreter and his times are projected back onto the Classical world, with results that are often impossible either to fully verify or completely disprove. Many thinkers have shared Taylor's vision of Socrates as a spiritual figure, a sort of pagan Jesus Christ, and there is no doubt that the Western intellectual tradition begins with Socrates. This alone makes Taylor's book well worth reading.

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