

A dialogue is a prose work providing an account of a conversation (or conversations) represented - either in whole or in a large part - in direct speech. It is a genre associated above all with Plato, although it has been used by numerous authors not only in antiquity, but also in subsequent periods (Erasmus, Gelli, Machiavelli, Berkeley, Schlegel, Stanislaw Lem). The purpose of the project is to examine transformations of the genre of dialogue in antiquity, in the period after Plato and Xenophon (whose roughly contemporary dialogues are the oldest preserved specimens of the genre) down to the end of the third century CE by means of, first, careful collection and reexamination of available evidence concerning the genre's existence and development in the Hellenistic period and, second, by analysis of dialogic compositions, their forms and contents, of the first three centuries of the imperial period.