

PHIL 260/4 B
Before and After Socrates
Winter 2006

General Information

Location: LS-430
Days: M-W
Hours: 13:15-14:30

Instructor: Andrea Falcon
Office Hours: J 16:00-18:00 or by appointment
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Course Description

This course is as an introduction to ancient philosophy from the beginning to Plato, with a concentration on the impact that Socrates had on philosophy. We shall try to understand what ancient philosophy was before as well as after Socrates, with a focus on the complexity of the so-called Socratic problem. We shall read Plato, *Apology, Crito, Phaedo, Symposium*; Aristophanes, *Clouds*; Xenophon, *Memoirs of Socrates; Symposium*.

Course Materials

Required:

A Presocratic Reader. Selected Fragments and Testimonia, edited with Introduction by Patricia Curd; translated by Richard D. McKirahan Jr. (Hackett 1996).
Aristophanes, *Clouds*. Translated with notes by Peter Meineck; Introduction by Ian C. Storey (Hackett 2000).
Plato, *Five Dialogues (Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo)*, translated by G.M.A. Grube (Hackett 2002).
Plato, *Symposium*, translated by Paul Woodruff and Alexander Nehamas (Hackett 1989).
Xenophon, *Conversations of Socrates*, translated by Hugh Tredennick (Penguin 1990).

Optional:

Thomas C. Brickhouse and Nicholas D. Smith, *The Trial and Execution of Socrates. Sources and Controversies* (Oxford University Press 2002) -- on reserve in the library.

Schedule

First day of Class: *Introduction*

Weeks 1, 2 and 3: *Philosophy before Socrates*. Philosophy emerged out of the need to have a certain kind of answer to certain questions; for instance question as to the origin of the world as we know it. From the very beginning, philosophers were extraordinarily curious and totally engaged investigators whose ultimate concern was to arrive at a coherent and comprehensive interpretation of the world we live in.

Week 1: Material monism (Thales and Diogenes of Apollonia)

Required Reading: *A Presocratic Reader. Selected Fragments and Testimonia.*

Week 2: Material pluralism (Empedocles and Anaxagoras)

Required Reading: *A Presocratic Reader. Selected Fragments and Testimonia.*

Week 3: Material pluralism continued (Atomism)

Required Reading: *A Presocratic Reader. Selected Fragments and Testimonia.*

Weeks 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10: *The Socratic Enigma.* Socrates is the most important yet enigmatic philosophers of all times; his fame endured for centuries despite the fact that he never actually wrote anything. We have three major extant sources of information about Socrates: Aristophanes, Plato, and Xenophon.

Week 4: Socrates in the clouds

Required Reading: Aristophanes, *Clouds*, translated with notes by Peter Meineck; Introduction by Ian C. Storey

Week 5: Socrates at a dinner-party

Required Reading: Plato, *Symposium*, translated by Paul Woodruff and Alexander Nehamas (Hackett 1989).

Weeks 6-7: Socrates in court

Required Reading: *Apology* in Plato, *Five Dialogues (Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo)*, translated by G.M.A. Grube (Hackett 2002).

In-class Exam: Wednesday, February, 15

Mid-Term Break: February, 20-26 (no classes)

Week 8: Socrates in jail

Required Reading: Plato, *Crito* in Plato, *Five Dialogues (Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo)*, translated by G.M.A. Grube (Hackett 2002).

Week 9: The last hours of Socrates

Required Reading: Plato, *Phaedo* in Plato, *Five Dialogues (Euthyphro, Apology, Crito, Meno, Phaedo)*, translated by G.M.A. Grube (Hackett 2002).

Week 10: More on Socrates in court

Required Reading: Xenophon, *Socrates' Defence* in *Conversations of Socrates*, translated by Hugh Tredennick (Penguin 1990).

Weeks 11, 12 and 13: *Philosophy after Socrates.* Socrates was arguably the most influential philosopher of antiquity. He inspired a number of philosophical positions, each claiming to expound the authentic version of his teaching. We often use the label "Minor Socratics" ("Demi-Socratiques") to refer to an heterogeneous group of philosophers who considered themselves followers of Socrates.

Week 11: Antisthenes as a Socratic Philosopher

Required Reading: *The Dinner Party* in *Conversations of Socrates*, translated by Hugh Tredennick (Penguin 1990).

Week 12: Aristippus as a Socratic philosopher

Required Reading: *Memoirs of Socrates* 2.1 in Xenophon, *Conversations of Socrates*, translated by Hugh Tredennick (Penguin 1990).

Week 13: Socrates gone mad: Diogenes the Dog
Required Reading: the relevant texts will be provided in class.

Last Day of Class (April 10): *Review*

NB *This schedule is tentative and may be subject to change. All changes will be made in class with ample time for adjustments.*

Assignments and Grading

The final grade for the course is determined by 2 exams, each counting 50% of the final grade. Each exam will consist of short-answer questions as well as questions that require a paragraph. It will be designed to test the extent to which you have absorbed the basic points of the readings that we discuss in class. Both exams must be completed in order to pass the class. *Participation can raise the grade.*

Mid-Term Exam: Wednesday, February, 15.

Final Exam: to be scheduled by the University

If you have special needs please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation

Course policies

Regular attendance is required.

Papers must be handed in on time. Late papers will be downgraded in proportion to their lateness.

Be careful to cite all sources used. Plagiarism is a serious violation of academic integrity, and will result in a failing grade in the course.

Participation is expected and your final grade will benefit from the extent to which this expectation is fulfilled.

Your rights

You have the right to hear and to understand all of the material. If there is anything unclear, you have the right to ask about it. If you do not want to ask during class, you have the right to visit your instructor during office hours. If you cannot make office hours, you have the right to schedule an appointment. You have the right to have your papers returned promptly.

Your obligations

If you make an appointment and cannot meet it, you should notify the instructor. You are obligated to attend all the lectures. You are obligated to allow others to hear and understand the lectures. You should, therefore, refrain from chatting, reading newspapers or in any way disturbing others during lecture.