

# PHIL 102 Ancient Philosophy

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FA114C



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# Course Particulars

## Course details

This class will meet for one hour on Mondays 9.40 and two hours on Wednesday 10.40 and 11.40. The fourth hour on Monday 8.40 will be used for make up classes, in case I have to miss a class during the semester.

During the two hour class, we will work on texts by Plato (first half of the semester) and Aristotle (second half of the semester). During the one hour class, we will work on the Presocratic philosophers (first half of the semester) and the Hellenistic philosophers (second half of the semester). All of these topics will be assessed, therefore it is crucial that you come to all scheduled classes.

Before coming to class, you will need to read the texts specified on the weekly syllabus, and attempt to answer the questions provided for that text in the weekly homework. This will count towards your participation grade and ensure you get the most out of the classes.

I will be available for consultation regarding any aspect of the course during office hours Mondays at 10.40 and 11.40. If you have classes during these hours, please email me your question at [berges@bilkent.edu.tr](mailto:berges@bilkent.edu.tr) or ask for an appointment at another time.

## Course objectives

This course will introduce the arguments of a wide ranging selection of ancient Greek and Roman philosophers, with particular attention to Plato and Aristotle.

We will focus on reading and understanding the texts, and working through a series of arguments that have been influential in the development of philosophy.

# Readings

You must read and bring the relevant text for each class (as specified on the schedule). Failure to do so will result in points being taken off your participation grade. The books are available in Meteksan.

## Texts:

*Readings in Ancient Greek Philosophy, from Thales to Aristotle.*

S.Marc Cohen, Patricia Curd, C.D.C. Reeve

Hackett

*Hellenistic Philosophy, Introductory Readings.*

Brad Inwood & Lloyd P. Gerson

Hackett

## Other relevant material:

Peter Adamson's History of Philosophy Podcasts (free).

Podcasts are available on itunes and also linked to on the following webpage.

<http://historyofphilosophy.net/>

# Assessment

You will be assessed on the following:

Test	Due date	Specifications	%
Essay 1	Week 7	1500 words long	25
Essay 2	Week 13	2000 words long	25
Final exam		To be announced	25
Participation		Includes evidence of reading, homework, and attendance	25

## Submission policy:

All material submitted must be typed and word-processed.

With each term paper you must submit an [outline](#) and a progress report (templates for both are included in this pack) . I will not grade papers which do not include them.

You must submit a copy of your work electronically on Turnitin via Moodle, as well as a hard copy.

## Plagiarism

For the university's plagiarism policy see:

<http://www.provost.bilkent.edu.tr/procedures/AcademicHonesty.htm>

These will be strictly observed.

## Grading criteria

I will make an overall judgment of the quality of your work, but in forming my judgment I will pay particular attention to the following criteria:

Content: Knowledge and understanding of the relevant texts, facts, philosophical concepts and theories.

Argument: Quantity and quality of reasoning used in support of, or criticism of the positions discussed; consistency and coherence; depth of analysis.

Clarity: Clarity of essay structure and verbal expression; succinctness; use of language; and quality of presentation.

Independence: The extent to which you think for yourself, rather than regurgitating what you have read or heard; imaginative use of examples.

Relevance: Have you answered the question as set? Is everything you have written relevant to the conclusion you wish to establish (whether in support of it, or as an objection to be answered)?

## Weekly syllabus

date	Monday class (text and homework)	date	Wednesday class (text and homework)
4/02	Introduction	6/2	Introduction
11/2	The Milesians <b>RAGP</b> 10-17 <b>CP</b> 12, <b>PC</b> 1	13/2	<i>Euthyphro</i> <b>RAGP</b> 135-52 <b>CP</b> 14 <b>PC</b> 16
18/2	Heraclitus <b>RAGP</b> 29-40 <b>CP</b> 15, <b>PC</b> 5	20/2	<i>Crito</i> <b>RAGP</b> 179-91, <b>CP</b> 16
25/2	Protagoras <b>RAGP</b> 104-7,196-200, <b>CP</b> 17 <b>PC</b> 14	27/2	<i>Meno</i> <b>RAGP</b> 241-66, <b>CP</b> 18, <b>PC</b> 21
4/3	Gorgias <b>RAGP</b> 107-11, <b>CP</b> 19, <b>PC</b> 20	6/3	<i>Republic</i> 1&2 <b>RAGP</b> 369-423, <b>CP</b> 20
11/3	Epicureans <b>HP</b> 5-28,64-5, <b>CP</b> 21 <b>PC</b> 55	13/3	<i>Republic</i> 4&9 <b>RAGP</b> 456-82, 594-615, <b>CP</b> 22, <b>PC</b> 25
18/3	Epicureans <b>HP</b> 28-31, 57-63, 101, <b>CP</b> 23 <b>PC</b> 56-7	20/3	<i>Republic</i> 6 &7 <b>RAGP</b> 515-67, <b>CP</b> 24, <b>PC</b> 26
25/3	The Stoics <b>HP</b> 174-8, 197-9,257-60, <b>PC</b> 62, 64, <b>CP</b> 25	27/3	<i>On the Soul</i> <b>RAGP</b> 847-69 <b>CP</b> 26 <b>PC</b> 42
1/4	The Stoics <b>HP</b> 191-9, 233-48, 254-5, <b>PC</b> 63-68, <b>CP</b> 27	3/4	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> <b>RAGP</b> 870-900, <b>CP</b> 28 <b>PC</b> 44
8/4	The Skeptics <b>HP</b> 285-96 <b>CP</b> 29 <b>PC</b> 69	10/4	<i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> <b>RAGP</b> 913-919, <b>CP</b> 30 <b>PC</b> 45
15/4	The Skeptics <b>HP</b> 302-25, <b>CP</b> 31 <b>PC</b> 73	17/4	<i>The Politics</i> <b>RAGP</b> 930-60 <b>CP</b> 32 <b>PC</b> 48
22/4	Holiday	24/4	Cont.
29/4	No classes – Erasmus Exchange	1/5	
6/5	Revisions	8/5	Revisions

**RAGP**= Readings in Ancient Philosophy,  
**HP**= Hellenistic Philosophy,  
**PC**= History of Philosophy podcasts,  
**CP**= Coursepack.

# How to interpret a philosophical text

When you present a piece of philosophical work, you will need to *evaluate* the material you have been reading. However, you can only evaluate something if you understand it.

In order to understand a philosophical text, you need to be able to answer two questions:

1. What is the author saying, i.e. what does he/she want you to believe?
2. How is the author defending his/her view? What reasons does he/she give you to believe that this view is right?

To answer question 1 you need to identify the author's **thesis** (there might be more than one in the text, but always work on one at a time).

A thesis is a statement of what the author wants the reader to believe is the case.

e.g. "There is no such thing as a just war"

"Plato's claim that the soul has three parts is not defensible because it is psychologically unsound".

When you state a thesis, whether your own or your interpretation of someone else's, must always be stated clearly and succinctly, i.e. one sentence long rather than one paragraph. Try to distinguish the actual thesis statement from contextual information the author gives.

e.g.: "Much has been argued in favour of a distinction between just and unjust wars", "One of the most interesting arguments in Plato's Republic is that for the division of the soul". These remarks are **not** part of the thesis.

You should also try to find a quotation from the text in which the author states the thesis. However, this may be difficult if the author does not write in a clear and succinct manner. The thesis may be broken down and spread over several sentences. In this case you may quote parts from each of the sentences and link them this way:

"part 1 [...] part 2 [...] part 3 [...]."

The thesis statement may also be ambiguous. This means that the sentence which expresses the thesis may have several distinct meanings. The author may only intend to mean one thing, or he/she may intend to mean more.



For example Plato says in the Republic that it is always in one's interest to be just. However, if one reads the entire text, it appears that being just means either of two things. The first is the conventional meaning, i.e. to treat others fairly. The second is a Platonic meaning, i.e. achieving harmony of the soul. One could argue that it is possible to achieve harmony without treating others fairly. By disambiguating Plato's thesis, we find that there is a need for further argument. Is Plato right to believe that conventional justice and psychic harmony always go together? If so does he give reasons?

This is how you can end up 'doing philosophy' by identifying a thesis.

When you state the thesis in your own words (which you must always do), you must do so clearly even if the author doesn't

To answer question 2 you need to identify the author's **argument**.

An **argument**, in the critical thinking sense, is a set of statements which together provide good reasons for believing something. The reasons are called **premises**, and what you give reasons for is called the **conclusion**.

Hence, when asked to identify an argument in a text, you should identify a set of statements some of which you will call premises and one of which you will call the conclusion.

Your answer to the question 'what is the argument presented?' should look like this:

Premise 1: .....  
Premise 2: .....  
(Premise 3, 4, etc:.....)  
Conclusion:....

Each statement, premise or conclusion, should be **no longer than one short sentence**.

There are ways to recognise which part of a text constitutes premises and which part is a conclusion: look for **argument indicating expressions**.

There are two kinds:

**Conclusion Indicating Expressions - CIE**

**Premise Indicating Expressions - PIE**

When you see a CIE, it probably means that a premise comes before it, and a conclusion follows:

**Premise 1 (and 2 and 3) CIE Conclusion**

When you see a PIE, it probably means that a conclusion comes before it, and a premise follows:

Conclusion PIE Premise 1 (and 2 and 3).

Here are some CIE:

Premise	CIE	Conclusion
The little cat is dead	Therefore Hence So Thus It follows that	I am sad

Here are some PIE:

Conclusion	PIE	Premise
I am sad	Because As Since For Follows from	The little cat is dead

**Note:**

Not all written or spoken arguments contain argument indicating expressions. Sometimes you just need to look at the meaning and context of a set of statements to realise that it is an argument.

The expressions listed above do not always indicate arguments.

E.g. the word 'so' in the sentence 'this is so boring' does not indicate an argument.

Again, you need to look at the meaning, context, and **use your common sense**.

## **Weekly Homework**

The following pages give you the weekly reading and homework.

You should read the notes and attempt to answer the questions in the space provided and bring them to class with you each week.

Your answers should be in note form. You will be asked to discuss them in class in small groups and in short, individual presentations.

Before attempting to answer the questions, you should read the texts specified and listen to the podcast for that week.

Not doing the homework will lower your participation grade significantly.

See the weekly syllabus to find the page number of each week's homework.

## The Milesians

Reading: RAGP pp.10-17, HoP PC 1

### 1. *The beginnings of western philosophy.*

5<sup>th</sup> Century BC – one century before Plato, time of Sappho, two or three centuries after Homer,

Ionia, Miletus, Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes.

The Seven sages (inc. Thales, Solon of Athens)

Transmission of texts: manuscripts, medieval copies, fragments, testimonia.

Philosophy in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC:

- speculation
- attempting to give reasons based on arguments and evidence.
- observing nature for evidence and explanation (philosophy as science)
- appealing to older texts, i.e. Homer, for theological explanations.

### 2. *Thales:*

Anecdotes and supposed achievements:

- is said to have predicted the 585bc solar eclipse
- is said to have predicted a particularly good olive crop and cornered the market in olive presses in anticipation.
- is said to have fallen in a well while he was walking because he was looking at the sky.
- is said to have diverted a river into two branches to enable the army to cross it.
- is said to have written a book on navigation.

Philosophical theses:

- Everything comes from/is made of water.
- Magnets have souls.
- Everything is full of god.

### 3. *Water*

Read Aristotle's Testimonia (5) on p.12

Aristotle is guessing the reasons Thales may have had for saying that everything is made of water/ comes from water.

What specific claim does Aristotle attribute to Thales in that passage?  
(i.e. what does he think Thales actually said).

What educated guess does Aristotle make as to what Thales reasons for saying the above may have been, what argument does he propose on his behalf? Give the premises and conclusion of the argument.

What else could Thales have meant?

#### 4. *Gods*

Read testimonia 7 and 8 on p.12.

Thales is said to have made two claims:

- a) everything is full of god.
- b) magnets (lodestones) have souls because they attract iron.

Aristotle believed that

- c) all soul is motion.

How can you put together a, b and c to construct an argument which may explain what Thales meant by a and b?

What are the limitations of such a reconstruction?

## **Euthythro**

Text: *Euthythro* in RAGP 135-52. HoP PC16

- 1) Where are Euthythro and Socrates meeting? What are they both doing there?
  
- 2) Does Socrates think that what Euthythro is about to do is right?
  
- 3) If you were Euthythro, would you prosecute your own father? Are there any circumstances in which you think it is morally acceptable for someone to prosecute their parent?
  
- 4) Socrates is asking Euthythro to define piety. Why?
  
- 5) Choose one of Euthythro's attempt at defining piety. Why does Socrates reject it? Do you think Socrates is right?
  
- 6) How would you define piety? How would Socrates object to your definition?

## **Heraclitus**

Text: RAGP pp.29-40, HoP PC 5

### 1. *Heraclitus the obscure.*

Ephesus. Unpopularity. Death by dogs.

One book "On Nature" - on everything: the cosmos, politics, gods.

Fragments, one liners. "You can't step into the same river twice"

### 2. *Logos.*

cf. fragment 1

Nobody understand the 'logos' even though it is omnipresent and explains everything.

Logos: the principle that binds together all things so that they are one.

Logos: Heraclitus's account of everything.

Either way, he believes in unity, or monism.

### 3. *The River*

Change, is an illusion.

Cf 39, 40 and 41 and 72,74, 79, 80, 81, 82: things seem to be changing constantly, but they in fact remain the same. (Plato's flux interpretation is wrong).

### 4. *Exercise:*

In pairs, choose one fragment and attempt to explain it.

## **Crito: Caring for one's soul**

Read Crito **RAGP**179-91.

1) Crito wants to persuade Socrates to escape from prison. What arguments does he use? Do you think any of them are good arguments?

2) Does Socrates think we should listen what the majority of people say? What are his reasons?

3) Socrates says we should obey just agreements. Consider the three cases below. In each case, should you honour the agreement? Justify your answer.

a. You have been kidnapped. You get sick and persuade your kidnappers that you need medical attention. They agree to get you a doctor if you promise you will not try to get help from the doctor when s/he gets here. Should you honour this agreement?

b. You accept a grant from the government to study abroad, on the condition that when you get back you will teach in whichever university the government needs you for ten years. But during your studies, you marry someone from your host country. Your new wife/husband does not want to come back to your country and you are offered a very well paid job abroad. Should you come back to honour your agreement?

c. The fairy tale princess promises Rumpelstiltskin to give him her first born child if he helps her out of a predicament. When the baby is born, should she give him/her to Rumpelstiltskin? (write your answer on the back of this page).



## Protagoras

Text RAGP 104-7, 196-200, PC14

### 1) *New directions: Politics, Ethics, Society.*

Who were the Sophists: professional teachers, rhetoricians, politicians.

What they professed to teach: the virtues needed to be a successful citizen of a polis.

Plato and Socrates' attitude to the sophists: mostly negative, doubting their claims to knowledge, and their decision to charge a fee for their teaching.

### 2) *Making the weaker argument stronger.*

Read testimonia 9, 10, 11, 12, 13.

What is meant by the claim that Protagoras is making the weaker argument stronger? Do you think there is any (philosophical) value in doing this? If so what?

### 3) *Relativism*

Testimonia 8: Man is the measure of all things.

What that means: if there are no absolute truths to be found, then all we have is persuasion.

This means that sophists are powerful. e.g. Protagoras assisted his brother, a surgeon, in persuading patients to undergo necessary but painful surgery. But he could also have assisted him in more dishonest pursuits – persuading people to part with large sums of money for unnecessary procedures.

(For 103 students: Compare to the passage we studied last semester in Plato's Theaetetus. What does this passage mean? What does Plato take it to mean? What does Plato say about it?)

Looking ahead to the *Republic*: Thrasymachus is a sophist. He thinks there are no absolute moral truths, and therefore, that he does not have to behave according to justice, but can do as he likes. He recommends that the stronger (those who are better at persuading?) take what they want, without worrying about the welfare of the weaker.

### 4) *On teaching.*

Read testimonia 1,2,3,4 and pp.196-200.

Socrates asks Protagoras: what makes you think you can teach your students how to be good citizens? Protagoras gives two answers, one about the nature of political knowledge, and one about the nature of moral education. Do you agree with any part of his answer?

## **Meno: Definition and Method**

text: **RAGP** 241-66, **PC21**

1) Why won't Socrates tell Meno whether virtue can be taught?

2) What is wrong with Meno's definition of virtue? Why does Socrates object to it? Illustrate your answer by giving an example of a bad and a good definition of either

-water

-fish

-mathematics

What does your answer show?

3) Meno counters Socrates with a paradox: what's the point of looking for what we don't know, he says, as we won't recognise it if we come across it?  
Do you think this is a good point?

4) How does Socrates answer Meno's paradox? What do you think of his answer?

## **Gorgias**

Text: **RAGP** 107-11, **PC20**

### 1) *What is rhetoric?*

The power to persuade anyone of anything through clever speaking.

Plato's question: if rhetoric can persuade people to believe what is bad for them, can it be good? But the only way to be happy is to be virtuous, so unless rhetoric teaches virtue, it has no value.

What rhetoric does: a person who masters rhetoric can go into a court of law, or in the agora, and persuade a jury, or a political audience, to believe anything.

### 2) *Rhetoric is magic.*

Read the fragment on Helen (14) and explain what Gorgias is saying.

### 3) *Plato's Dialogue.*

Gorgias, in Plato's dialogue of that name, is embarrassed to admit that he cannot teach a student virtue. His friends, Polus and Callicles take over the debate and argue against Socrates that virtue has no value. It is likely that they follow Protagoras's view that everything is relative, hence there are no moral truths.

Read Plato's Gorgias pp.226-229. What is Socrates' and Polus' disagreement about?

Do you find Socrates's defense of virtue convincing?

## **Defining Justice in the *Republic*, Books 1 and 2.**

text: **RAGP369-423**

1) An arms dealer has signed a contract with a head of state. Later she finds out that this state is using the weapons they are buying from her to oppress, murder and torture the population. Should she still honour her contract?

Compare this to the answers you gave to a similar question on the *Crito*. Is your answer similar?

2) What is Thrasymachus trying to argue? How does his view draw on sophistic arguments? How does Socrates reply to him?

3) Does the story of Gyges' ring succeed in showing that, provided one doesn't get caught, one would be better off being unjust? In other words, do you think Gyges is happy? Argue for your answer.

# **The Epicureans, 1**

Text **HP5-28, 64-65 PC55**

Hellenistic Philosophy  
Epicurus and Epicureanism  
Texts

The Precepts:

- Atomism
- Empiricism
- Philosophy as Therapy
- Pleasure as the good
- Futility of fearing death.

1) What are the implications of atomism for religion?

2) How like our own is Epicurus's approach to science?

3) What would an Epicurean theory of mind look like?

## The City and the Soul in the *Republic* Books 2, 4 and 9

text: **RAGP**456-82, 594-615, **PC**25

### 1) *City and Soul*

Read 368c-369b What point is Plato trying to make in this passage?

What reasons do we have to believe that justice in the soul and justice in the city are the same?

### 2) *Justice in the City*

How does Plato define justice in the city at 434a – d? Do you agree with his definition?

### 3) *The divided soul*

Plato wants to show that the soul, like the city, has three parts. In order to do so he appeals to this principle (437a): the same thing cannot undergo opposites, at the same time, in the same respect, and in relation to the same thing. So if the soul appears to be pulling in opposite directions at the same time, that will be evidence that there is more than one part. Plato then uses two examples to show that there are at least three parts in the soul. What are they?

## **The Epicureans, 2**

Text: **HP**28-31, 57-63, 101 **PC**56-57

1) What is the criterion for determining what the good life is according to Epicurus?  
(How does his view differ from the cyrenaic view?)

2) What sort of life would a good Epicurean live?

3) What is ataraxia?

4) What is the Epicurean argument against fear of death? Do you think it's a good argument?

5) In what sense can philosophy be therapeutic?

## **The Sun, the line, the cave in the *Republic*, books 6 and 7**

Text: . RAGP515-67, PC26

1) What do you think Plato is trying to show with the analogy of the cave at the beginning of book 7?

Can you think of examples in literature or film that make use of a similar idea? Compare them to Plato's cave analogy.

2) Go back to the end of Book 6, from 510a. Does the cave analogy help you understand the analogy of the line? Why does Plato want to distinguish between things we can have knowledge about and things we can merely have opinions about? Do you think it makes sense to divide the world in this way?

3) What sort of things does Plato think belong to the realm of the visible (things that can be believed but not known) and what sort of things belong to the realm of the intelligible (things that can be known)? Does this fit with your intuitions, in particular of the difference between scientific and ethical beliefs?



## **The Stoics, 1**

Text: **HP**174-8, 197-9,257-60, **PC**62, 64.

- 1) Who were the Stoics, Greek and Roman, early and late?
- 2) What is the soul, according to the Stoics, what is its relationship to the world, and to the gods?
- 3) What is the relationship between the soul, reason and the passions?

## **On the Soul – *De Anima*.**

Text: **RAGP847-69 PC42**

1) *Ancient psychology – anima, psyche.*

Plato on the soul: *Phaedo*, and the immortality of the soul, *Republic*, and three parts of the soul.

Aristotle is offering a systematic discussion of the nature of the soul.

How does the soul relate to the body?

What is the function of the soul?

Soul explains life. Everything that has life has a soul: plants, animals, humans.

2) What are the different kinds of souls according to Aristotle?

What does the soul of a flower do?

What does the soul of an animal do?

What does the soul of a human being do?

Soul and motion.

Nutrition, reproduction, walking, crawling, and perception are all forms of motion.

3) *What is distinctive about Aristotle's account.*

Aristotle vs atomism: for the atomists the soul is a bunch of atoms floating inside the body. But what keeps it from moving outside of the body?

Aristotle vs Plato's *Phaedo*: the soul is not separate from the body, as it is motion.

Actuality vs Potentiality:

being able to learn how to do x, knowing how to do x, doing x.

Souls are potentialities: having a soul is about having a number of capacities, i.e., growing, running, thinking.

4) *Aristotle's philosophy of mind.*

Does Aristotle's theory of the soul relate to any contemporary theories of mind? Which? How?

## **The Stoics 2**

Text: **HP**191-9, 233-48, 254-5, **PC**63-68

1) What is a good Stoic like? How different is he or she from an Epicurean?

2) How is Stoic ethics related to human nature? What is the point of all the references to animal life?

3) What would a Stoic politics be like, focussing on the discussions of law and cosmopolitanism?

## **Happiness and Virtue: Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* books 1 and 2**

Text: **RAGP**870-900, **PC**44

1) How does Aristotle go about defining happiness?

2) In Book 1, chapter 7, Aristotle argues that happiness and virtue are defined according to the function of human life. Does his argument differ from Plato's argument in the last few pages of Book 1 of the Republic?

3) At the beginning of book 2, Aristotle says that we can only become virtuous through habituation. What does he mean?

4) What is the doctrine of the mean discussed in Book 2? Why does Peter Adamson call it the 'Goldilocks Theory'?

5) Do you think there are vices which do not have corresponding virtues?

## **The Skeptics 1**

Text **HP285-96 CP30 PC69**

1) 'Clear truth no man knows nor will ever know'. 'no more this, than that', 'we determine nothing'.

How can the skeptics hold any of these defining statements to be true?

2) Are the skeptics relativists, i.e. do they hold that there are no absolute truths and that every belief is as good as any other?

## **How not to live: Vice, Bestiality, Incontinence in Nicomachean Ethics, Book VII.**

Text **RAGP**913-919.

### 1) *Bestiality and divinity.*

Is a 'bestial' individual vicious and a 'god-like' individual virtuous, according to Aristotle?

What does this tell us about Aristotle's conception of virtue?

### 2) *Incontinence is weakness of will:*

You know that something is bad, because it is bad you do not want to do it, but you do it anyway (so in some sense, you do want to do it!).

This is a puzzle for philosophers.

To do something willingly is to decide you want to do, because you think that, all things considered, it is the best thing to do. To be weak willed is to decide you want to do something, and then willingly not do it.

(so, being compelled by addiction, for instance, is not weakness of will).

E.g. I decide that I am going to work tonight, because it is the best use of my time, but I end up watching tv. I didn't want to watch tv, I regret immediately, but I chose to do it nonetheless. How is that even possible?

Find other examples of weakness of will.

### 3) *Socrates' solution: no one does wrong willingly.*

If you choose to watch tv, it is because you did not really believe that working would be the best thing to do, or you did not understand that watching tv would prevent you from working.

Vice is always a form of ignorance.

Do you think it is correct? Can you give an account of the examples you chose in terms of ignorance?

### 4) *Knowing and not knowing.*

What is Aristotle's solution to the paradox? How is it possible to know and not to know at the same time? Could Plato, in the Republic, also give a similar answer (hint: think of the different parts of the soul)?

## **The Skeptics 2**

Text: **HP** 302-25, **CP**32 **PC**73

- 1) In what way is skepticism good for us, i.e. how can it lead to ataraxia?
  
- 2) Is there a Skeptic theory, and if so, what is it?
  
- 3) The skeptics regard themselves as Socrates's true heirs – why, and are they right?
  
- 4) What is the relationship between ancient Skepticism and Descartes's skepticism? (for 103 students)

## **Political Animal: Aristotle's Politics.**

Text **RAGP930-60, PC48**

### 1) *The Priority of the City.*

Aristotle considers the Polis to be the most natural political arrangement for human beings. Why?

### 2) *How many constitutions?*

Aristotle distinguishes between different kinds of constitutions according to two principles:

- Who is in charge?
- Whose benefit do they pursue?

What are the different sorts of constitutions Aristotle distinguishes? Can you find examples for them?

### 3) *The mixed state.*

What is the best constitution according to Aristotle and why? Do you agree with him?



# Outlines

- 1) Read the question carefully.
  - 2) Do the reading specified in the question you have chosen. You will read the text by yourself first, and discuss it in class after you have completed your outline. Class discussion will contribute to your first draft, but the outline calls for independent work.
  - 3) Fill in the outline questions below. Your answer must contain the questions, or at least the question numbers. This is not a traditional outline, but one which will be more helpful to you in writing a philosophy term paper.
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## Outline questions

- 1) What does the question require you to do?

(Please do not paraphrase the question. This is your chance to show me that you have understood what is required of you).

- 2) Which parts of the text will you need to refer to in order to answer the question?

(Be specific, use page numbers, or paragraph numbers).

- 3) What is your thesis?

(State your thesis in one sentence if possible. This is your answer to the question, in which you say 'yes' or 'no'. You should be as clear as possible.

- 4) How many arguments do you need in order to defend your thesis? (e.g. the thesis has three parts which are..., I need to defend each part with a separate argument).

- 5) For each argument:

Set out the conclusion and the premises as follows. Each one of your arguments should have at least two premises and one conclusion. Please refer to the document on how to interpret a philosophical text at the beginning of this pack.

P1

P2

P3...

Conclusion:

6) How do each of the premises need to be defended? (Textual analysis further arguments, examples).

7) How could someone object to your argument? Please make an effort to find a convincing objection as reply to a weak objection will not strengthen your argument

8) What would your reply be? (This is your chance to show that your argument is strong, that it can defeat a good objection.)

9) Give a summary of your arguments and explain in a very short paragraph how they support your thesis. This will be useful for writing your conclusion.

# Progress Report.

This piece of work is compulsory. Its purpose is to see how you respond to feedback and criticism from teachers, students, and self at various stages of the development of your term paper. In order to write a good progress report, you therefore need to listen carefully to what people have to say about your work in class and in tutorials, and think carefully how you might respond to it. You will also need to develop self-criticism skills. A good progress report should mean that you have written, or will write a good final draft.

You must submit your progress report with your final draft. You may bring it to an optional tutorial with your philosophy teacher in order to discuss some of the problems highlighted on your report. You may write the report before or after your final draft. Either way, it should state clearly the changes you have made or are planning to make in response to criticisms on your outline/ presentation/ essay/ first draft.

## Questions for term paper progress report:

1) What is the most important comment/feedback you got on your Outline?

How will you deal with it?

2) What is the most important comment/feedback you got on your first draft? Summarize the ways you have responded to the comment.

**Note:** If you do not show your first draft to your philosophy teacher, then you must either show it to somebody else or read through it yourself.

3) According to you, what is the weakest point in your outline or first draft?

How will you deal with it?

4) In what way did you incorporate material discussed in class into your essay?

5) Which sources did you use to write your essay? Make sure you have referred to each of them carefully so as to avoid plagiarism.