



The Berkeley Plato:
c. 125 AD Herm after a
c. 360 BC original

HISTORY OF ANCIENT PHILOSOPHY

PHILOSOPHY 157
Fall 2011 MWF 4-4:50 pm
Center Hall 222

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SSH 7058 office hours: W 2-4 pm

Description

What is knowledge? How do we know that those who profess to have knowledge actually do have it? How can one inquire into anything one does not know? Is knowledge the same as the arts and sciences? How does knowledge relate to perception, belief, and truth? What kinds of account can we expect from someone who has knowledge? Is there any formal way to represent and criticize scientific reasoning and explanations? How do general principles of scientific knowledge relate to specific sciences, such as mathematics, psychology, and biology? We will examine these fundamental epistemological issues as they arise for the first time in the writings of Plato and Aristotle. We will begin by reading three aporetic dialogues of Plato concerned with knowledge: *Euthyphro*, *Meno*, and *Theaetetus*. We will then read selections from Aristotle's so-called *Instrument of knowledge (Organon)*, followed by methodological books of his physics, psychology, and biology.

Objectives

- Learn to interpret and criticize, both in discussion and in writing, English translations of primary works of Greek philosophy.
- Understand the techniques used to scrutinize ancient sources and reconstruct the insights and arguments of historical philosophers.
- Survey major topics and problems of ancient science, epistemology and logic, and the range of philosophical approaches to exploring and resolving them.
- Encounter active professional research in the field of Greek philosophy.
- Devise and execute an original research project on ancient philosophy using primary and secondary sources.

Required Texts (available at UCSD bookstore)

- *The Complete Works of Plato*, edited by J. Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1997).
- *The Basic Works of Aristotle*, edited by R. McKeon (New York: Modern Library, 2001) ISBN-10: 0375757996. Available at UCSD Bookstore.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS, DEADLINES, EXAMINATIONS AND HOLIDAYS

2011 SEPTEMBER 23 Greetings, Course Description, Evaluation Scheme.

ix 26 Plato, *Euthyphro*

ix 28 Plato, *Euthyphro*

ix 30 Plato, *Meno*

2010 OCTOBER x 3 Plato, *Meno*

x 5 Plato, *Meno*

x 7 Plato, *Meno*; **Research paper proposal due.**

x 10 Plato, *Theaetetus* 142-151d

x 12 Plato, *Theaetetus* 151d-186e

x 14 Plato, *Theaetetus* 151d-186e

x 17 Plato, *Theaetetus* 151d-186e

x 19 Plato, *Theaetetus* 187a-201c

x 21 Plato, *Theaetetus* 201c-205; **Research paper outline due.**

x 24 Aristotle, *Protrepticus*

x 26 Aristotle, *Protrepticus*

x 28 **Midterm Examination: open-book, essay exam.**

x 31 Aristotle, *Categories*

2011 NOVEMBER 2 Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*

xi 4 Aristotle, *Posterior Analytics*. **Exchange of rough drafts.**

xi 7 Aristotle, *Physics* II

xi 9 Aristotle, *Physics* II. **Return of rough drafts.**

xi 11 *VETERAN'S DAY HOLIDAY (NO CLASS).*

xi 14 Aristotle, *Physics* II;

xi 16 Aristotle, *De Anima* II

xi 18 Aristotle, *De Anima* II. **Research paper draft due.**

xi 21 Aristotle, *De Anima* III

xi 23 Aristotle, *De Anima* III

xi 25 *THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY (NO CLASS).*

xi 28 Aristotle, *Parts of Animals* I

xi 30 Aristotle, *Parts of Animals* I

2011 DECEMBER 2 **Review Session; Research paper due.**

xii 6 (3-6pm) **Final Exam: open-book, cumulative essay exam.**

Evaluation Scheme (summary)

A = 900-1000; B = 800-900; C = 700-800; D = 600-700; F = <600.

1. Participation (100 points): The class is discussion-based, and regular attendance, preparation, and contribution in person in the classroom is required. Participation credit may also be earned by posting to the Discussion section of the online course system, in which you have been automatically enrolled.

2. Research Paper (400 points total): This assignment has six components, each with its own due dates. Failure to meet any deadline will automatically result in the loss of all possible points on that component (see handout entitled “Research Paper” for further details):

a. 200-300 word Proposal (25 points), due Oct. 7. The proposal must have a provisional title, a description of the paper’s problem or thesis; and a bibliography consisting of at least two primary sources (passages of Plato or Aristotle), and two secondary sources (articles or books by other scholars).

b. 300-1000 word Analytical Outline (50 points), due Oct. 21. The outline must contain a thesis, an outline of the arguments, a conclusion, and an enhanced bibliography.

c. 1500 word Rough Draft, due Nov. 4, at which point it will be exchanged with a random colleague’s paper, on which you are expected to comment. There will be a -50 point penalty for not having a hard copy of your paper in class on Nov. 4.

d. Handwritten Comments on a colleague’s research paper (25 points), due Nov. 9. You should help correct spelling, grammatical, logical, interpretive, and philosophical problems in your colleague’s paper. Point out things you do not understand, that you think should be expanded or condensed, and specific places where you disagree about interpretations. Keep a photocopy or scan of your comments.

e. 2000 word Second Draft (100 points), due Nov. 14. This should be a complete draft of your paper, including areas where you have dealt with your colleague’s comments (which you should attach to the paper).

f. 3000 word Final Draft (200 points), Dec. 2, worth up to 200 points.

3. Scribe Assignment (100 points): A group project involving speaking before the class and publishing a report on the class discussion (see separate handout for further details).

4. Midterm Exam (100 points): In-class, open-book, essay examination, Oct. 22. The midterm exam cannot be rescheduled.

5. Final Exam (300 points): Cumulative, open-book, essay examination, Dec. 9. 11:30am-2:30pm. Note: there is no possibility of re-scheduling the final exam. You must firmly enter the appointed time into your diary. Failure to show up for the final exam will automatically result in a final grade of F.

Textual Citations and Use of Secondary Literature

I. Ancient Sources

References to Plato and Aristotle in all written and oral work will refer to the standard pagination used by scholars (known as the “Stephanus numbers” for Plato, because of the renaissance edition of Stephanus; and “Bekker numbers” for Aristotle, because of the nineteenth century edition of Bekker).

A complete reference to Plato has four elements: work, book, page, column, and line. Since we are working in translation, we will give the name of the translator, but not use line numbers; and since we are not reading any multi-book works, we will not use book numbers. Thus a complete reference for our purpose will look like the following quotation from the Crito:

Socrates says that “the only valid consideration, as we were saying just now, is whether we should be acting rightly in giving money and gratitude to those who will lead me out of here, and ourselves helping with the escape, or whether in truth we shall do wrong in doing all of this” (*Crito* 48cd, tr. Grube).

The same citation would be employed in a paraphrase, as follows, but without reference to the translator:

Socrates says that money, reputation, and even the safety of his children are irrelevant, because the only thing that matters is whether escape from prison would be morally right or wrong (*Crito* 48cd).

So the work is cited along with the page and column. Since the quotation is contained in two columns, c and d, we write “cd”. Were the quote to continue to the next page, we would write 48c-49a, in order to indicate that we are quoting from 48c to 49a.

Aristotle must also be cited by reference to the Bekker numbers (the standard scholarly edition). See the separate handout on citing Aristotle.

II. Modern Sources

All other sources must be cited by name of author, date, title of article (or book), title of journal (for an article), place of publication (for a book), or URL (for internet resources), and date of publication, and page numbers. You may use a shortened form (such as name and date, or name an abbreviated title for subsequent references). Include a complete bibliography of all works consulted with each submission (including proposals, outlines, and drafts).

Cornford, F. M. (1935). *Plato's Theory of Knowledge*. London and New York.

Frede, D. (2009; accessed September 20, 2011). “Plato’s Ethics”. *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/plato-ethics/>

Sedley, D. (1998). “Platonic Causes”. *Phronesis* 43, 114-132.

SCRIBE ASSIGNMENT (Professor Monte Ransome Johnson, UCSD)

1. The scribe assignment is a group project in which students will collaborate to produce a complete set of “minutes” of our meetings published on the course’s homepage.
2. Three “scribes” will volunteer or be assigned to take notes for each class. The rest of the class is encouraged not to take notes, but rather to concentrate on the lecture, ask questions, and participate in the discussion.
3. The students assigned to take notes will meet sometime after the class as a group and compose a special set of “minutes” of the class. **They should do this together, in person, and not by dividing up the lecture and separately composing different sections of the minutes.** You must be prepared to meet in person several times with the other scribe(s).
4. The minutes should not be a verbatim version of the lecture. Rather, the scribes should write out, in **complete English sentences** (not note form, and without using mathematical symbols in lieu of words), a narrative of the lecture and discussion. They should fill in any references to texts, providing complete citations.
5. The minutes should be edited down so that they can be read aloud by the scribes, taking turns, from 5-8 minutes. The scribes should **practice and rehearse** their performance to make sure it fits in this time and sounds good.
6. **Each scribe should also compose at least one original question** about the lecture for further clarification or reflection.
7. An electronic copy of the minutes must be sent to monte@ucsd.edu by **noon before the next class meeting**. The minutes will then be read out at the beginning of the same class by the scribes. A short discussion of one or more of the scribes’ original questions may follow.
8. I will then return to the scribes a hand-edited copy of the minutes. The scribes will then meet again as a group to input the corrections into the electronic file. Finally they must submit that electronic file to me **not later than one week from the original lecture, one hour before class**.
9. Scribal assignments will be made by me. The assignment is worth 100 total points of your final grade. You must notify me of any day on which you are not capable of attending. You may trade dates, but it will not be possible to “make up” an assignment if it is missed. If you fail to contact your group on the day of the lecture that you are responsible to be a scribe for, you will receive 0/100 points for the assignment.
10. The final electronic version will also be posted to the course website for the benefit of all the students in the class, and will be made publically available.

9. Sample Production Schedule:

1. Take scribe notes in class (e.g. on September 26); meet with other scribes and compose minutes. Email a copy to monte@ucsd.edu.
2. Read minutes aloud in next class (e.g. on September 28).
4. Revise minutes based on Professor's comments; send electronic copy to professor by following class (e.g. September 30)
5. Electronic copy posted to Web Site (e.g. on October 3)

10. Format: The font should be Times New Roman 12 point. No extra spaces between paragraphs. Do not right justify (aligning the text). Underline all foreign expressions and titles. Put scribe names in alphabetical order. The heading should be centered in the body following this example:

UCSD Fall 2011
Philosophy 110: History of Philosophy- Ancient
Professor Monte Johnson
Scribes: Phillip Beabout, Matt Uhlhorn, and Adam Yakira

Lecture on 2011 September 26
Plato, *Euthyphro*

Plato's dialogue *Euthyphro* portrays Socrates questioning Euthyphro about piety...

11. Please send the file as a .doc file (not .docx, .pdf, etc.)

12. Name the file according to the following example: 2011iii29 Hellenistic.doc. Replace the Roman numeral and following Arabic number by the appropriate date of the lecture on which the minutes are based; e.g. 2011ix26 = 2011 September 26; 2011x5 = 2011 October 5; 2011xi4 = 2011 November 4, etc. (see schedule for exact details).

13. The final electronic version will then be graded on the following criteria: (1) correct formatting; (2) accuracy; (2) completeness; (3) concision (circa 1000 words); (4) grammatical and typographical correctness, especially with reference to textual citations; (5) elegance; and (6) insight and import of the original questions.

14. Common deductions include: Too short or long **-10 points**; Wrong font, right-justified, improper format or filename **-10 points**; Misspellings or reference and citation problems **-25 points**; lack of original questions **-10 points / missing question**; Late **-20 points / day**.

Research Paper on Ancient Greek and Modern Science

Identify an area of scientific speculation discussed by Plato or Aristotle (or both). Research the primary texts in which they identify a phenomenon and discuss the way they frame problems related to that phenomenon and discuss their explanation(s) or account(s). Look into secondary sources in which scholars discuss these texts, and modern scientific accounts of the phenomenon. Take into consideration the background assumptions, competing theories, and the impact of limitations of technology on their theories. Briefly summarize and compare the ancient account and the modern scientific approach to these problems.

The assignment consists of six parts, each of which must be completed by the deadline in order to earn credit for that part. (400 total possible points)

(a) Proposal (minimum 750 word), due Oct. 7, worth up to 50 points. The proposal must have a provisional title, a description of the paper's problem or thesis; and a bibliography consisting of at least two primary sources (passages of Plato or Aristotle), and two secondary sources (articles or books by other scholars).

Example 1. Aristotle's explanation of the rainbow. How did Aristotle understand the phenomenon of the rainbow, and related phenomena of meteorological optics such as halos? Did he improve on his predecessor's theories? Did his view influence the modern scientific understanding of this phenomena? How has contemporary meteorological optics improved on Aristotle's explanation?

Primary sources: Aristotle, *Meteorology*; Seneca, *Natural Questions*.

Secondary sources: C. Boyer, *The Rainbow: from myth to mathematics* (Princeton 1959); L. Taub, *Ancient Meteorology* (London 2003).

Example 2. Plato and Aristotle on self-control (*sophrosune*).

How did Plato and Aristotle conceive of moderation, temperance, and self-control? How did their views relate to their contemporaries' and our culture's conventional notions of self-control. Does modern scientific research on self-control support or undermine their conceptions of it as a moral virtue?

Primary sources: Plato, *Alciabiades*; *Gorgias* 491-493; Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* III.10-12.

Secondary sources: H. Rachlin, *The Science of Self-control* (Harvard 1994); K. Dover, *Greek Popular Morality* (Oxford 1974).

Example 3: Aristotle's conception of economics as a practical science of household management. Did Aristotle understand economics to be a science, and if so, what kind of science? How did the economic and technological reality of ancient Greece affect his understanding of economics. What are the most significant ways in which his conception of economics differs from those of modern economics?

Primary sources: Aristotle, *Politics* I.8-9, and V; Pseudo-Aristotle, *Economics*.

Secondary sources: S. Meikle, *Aristotle's Economic Thought* (Oxford 1995); G. E. M. de Ste. Croix, *The Class Struggle in the Ancient Greek World* (Ithaca 1981).

(b) an analytical outline, consisting of (1) an overall thesis; (2) arguments to support your thesis; (3) a conclusion. The outline must have complete words, sentences and paragraphs. (minimum 1000 word), due Oct. 21, worth up to 50 points; enhanced bibliography (details on editions and line numbers; at least one additional secondary source)

Example 1. The Aristotelian Explanation of the lunar Halo

Thesis: Aristotle's explanation of the meteorological halo was superior to that of his predecessors and has directly influenced the modern understanding of this phenomenon.

I. The modern understanding of the halo is that it is an optical illusion caused by ice crystals in the atmosphere between an observer and a luminescent body, such as the sun or moon. The ice crystals, which are relatively uniform (being hexagons), act as tiny prisms and refract light back to the eye of the observer at a consistent angle (such as 22 degrees). A related phenomenon is diffraction that of diffraction haloes.

II. Aristotle's predecessors (and even many successors), such as Xenophanes of Colophon, thought the halo to be some kind of cloud that somehow happened to be formed in a perfect circle around the luminescent body.

III. Aristotle did not distinguish between reflection and refraction, but he understood that the halo was not a cloud but instead an optical illusion caused by light being deflected at a constant angle due to the particles making up the cloud between the observer and the luminescent body.

IV. Aristotle offered a geometrical diagram to accompany his explanation—this is the oldest lettered geometrical diagram in the history of science. Modern textbooks of meteorological optics use a modified version of this same diagram to explain the phenomenon.

Conclusion: Aristotle's explanation of the halo is not just an explanation of a meteorological phenomenon, but a model of scientific explanation itself. Although it was further refined during the early modern scientific revolution (by, e.g. Descartes, in his *Discourse on Method, Geometry, Optics, and Meteorology*), essentially the same explanation is used even in the most recent textbooks and websites.

Primary sources: Aristotle, *Meteorology* III.2-3; Seneca, *Natural Questions* I.2.

Secondary sources: C. Boyer, *The Rainbow: from myth to mathematics* (Princeton 1959); L. Taub, *Ancient Meteorology* (London 2003). M. R. Johnson, The Aristotelian Explanation of the Halo. *APeiron: a journal for ancient philosophy and science* 2009, 325-357.

(c) a (maximum 2000 word) draft, due Nov. 14, worth up to 100 points; and

(d) a (maximum 4000 word) final version, Dec. 2, worth up to 200 points.