

Midterm Exam
Ancient Philosophy (56)
March 4th, 2004

Section I (10 minutes)

Define and report the most important philosophical contexts (texts or arguments or both) of three Greek philosophical terms. Choose them from the following two lists according to the instructions:

Choose one of:

τετρακτύς
φάρμακον

Choose two of:

ἀνάμνησις
ἔργον
τυραννικός

Section II (65 minutes)

Write essays that answer the following questions:

1. Present three of Zeno's arguments: one which argues that plurality is impossible, a second that motion is impossible; and a third that the senses are unreliable. Evaluate these arguments in turn, and then evaluate their consistency with one another. Does Zeno mount a coherent defense of Parmenides?
2. Explain why the Athenians put Socrates to death. First, provide a historical and psychological explanation; next, provide an ontological and epistemological explanation; finally, adjudicate between them. Here are some tips. First, your historical and psychological explanation should draw from your knowledge of: (i) the major historical events of Socrates' lifetime, (ii) the intellectual background of the *phusikoi*, *philosophoi*, and *sophistai* whose teachings were known to the Athenians when they sentenced him to death, (iii) the portrait of Socrates in Aristophanes' *Clouds*, and (iv) the account of this trial that we have in Plato's *Apology*. Second, your ontological and epistemological explanation should draw from your knowledge of the *Republic*'s Allegory of the Cave. For in this allegory Plato imagines an enlightened philosopher returning into the depths of the cave after he has witnessed the glory of the Form of the Good. Recount his ascent, and then how he is received by the cave-dwellers. Finally, you should decide whether these two types of explanation are compatible. If so, how? If not, which of them explains why the Athenians *really* put Socrates to death?
3. In Book 3 of the *Republic* Socrates developed several criteria for censoring art. What were these criteria, and what was the reasoning behind them? Among them, of course, he criticized all imitative art: what was his argument against imitation? Evaluate this ethical critique. In Book 10, Socrates returns to the subject of art and criticizes it once again for being imitative. What is his critique of imitation this time around? Evaluate this ontological critique. How do these ethical and ontological critiques fit with one another?