

ПЛАТОН

PLATONIS

APOLOGIA

SOCRATIS

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Platonis Apologia Socratis

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Plato

Platonis Apologia Socratis

THE APOLOGY

Socrates' death took place in the month of May, 399 B.C., when he was more than 70 years of age (Apol. 17 D. Crito 52 E). The interval between the trial and his death was very long, – thirty days altogether. The indictment against Socrates was as follows: "Socrates is guilty of crime, first for not worshipping the gods whom the city worships, but introducing new divinities of his own; next, for corrupting the youth. The penalty due is death."

The accusers of Socr. were three: Meletus, Anytus, and Lyco: see espec. Apol. 23 E. Meletus is also mentioned by Plato in the Euthyphro 2 BC as ἀνὴρ νέος καὶ ἀγνώς, τετανόθριξ καὶ οὐ πάνυ εὐγένειος, ἐπίγρυπος δέ,¹ and in the Apology also Socr. speaks of him as an insignificant young man. Meletus, however, presented the indictment which was hung up in the portico before the office of the ἄρχων βασιλεύς (hence περὶ τὴν τοῦ βασιλέως στοάν Euth. 2 A).² According to the Schol. on Apol. 18, Meletus was τραγωδίας φαῦλος ποιητής,³ a statement also made by the Schol. on Aristoph. Frogs 1302: but it seems certain that we have here an error on the part of the Scholiasts who were led by Plato's words ὑπὲρ τῶν ποιητῶν ἀχθόμενος to identify the accuser of Socr. with the poet mentioned by Aristophanes l. c., where he says that Euripides borrowed a good deal of his poetry, – though this identification is absolutely impossible on account of the difference of time, as the Meletus mentioned by Aristoph. could not have been a young man in 399, even supposing that he was still alive. We know nothing more about Meletus, the accuser of Socr., from other sources, but it is possible that he was the son of the Meletus mentioned by Arist., in which case we should also gain an explanation of the motive which Plato assigns for his share in the indictment of Socr.

The most influential of the trio was Anytus, a rich βυρσοδέψης, i.e. a leather-seller, who is said to have been more especially incensed against Socr. by the presumption with which the philosopher had ventured to dissuade him from bringing up his son to his own trade, as the young man had manifested much interest in philosophical speculation and conversation. No doubt Anytus hated Socr. above all as a "corrupter of youth." Anytus was rich, but had been exiled under the Thirty, and, like so many other patriotic citizens, suffered great loss of property. He had then taken a prominent part in the expulsion of the Thirty, and was at the time of the trial of Socr. one of the leading men in Athens.⁴ Socrates' interference in his plans with respect to his son may have been all the more galling to him, as his previous losses must have made him anxious that his son also should contribute his share towards the restoration of the family fortunes. Anytus must have classed Socr. with the Sophists, and his opinion of them may be gathered from Plato, Meno 91 B, where Socr. says, οἷσθα δήπου καὶ σὺ ὅτι οὗτοι εἰσὶν οἷους οἱ ἄνθρωποι καλοῦσι σοφιστάς, and Anytus answers, Ἡράκλεις, εὐφήμει, ὦ Σώκратες· μηδένα τῶν συγγενῶν μήτε οἰκείων μήτε φίλων μήτε ἀσπῶν μήτε ξένων, τοιαύτη μανία λάβοι ὥστε παρὰ τούτους ἐλθόντα λωβηθῆναι, ἐπεὶ οὗτοί γε φανερά ἐστι λώβη τε καὶ διαφθορά τῶν συγγιγνομένων.⁵

¹ "SOCRATES: A young man who is little known, Euthyphro; and I hardly know him: his name is Meletus, and he is of the deme of Pitthis. Perhaps you may remember his appearance; he has a beak, and long straight hair, and a beard which is ill grown." (Project Gutenberg-text 1642)

² "EUTHYPHRO: Why have you left the Lyceum, Socrates? and what are you doing in the Porch of the King Archon? Surely you cannot be concerned in a suit before the King, like myself?" (Project Gutenberg-text 1642)

³ "a bad tragic poet".

⁴ See Frohberger's note on Lysias, Vol. I. p. 160.

⁵ Meno 91 B: "SOCRATES: You surely know, do you not, Anytus, that these are the people whom mankind call Sophists?"

But besides this personal motive, Anytus no doubt bore also a political grudge to Socr. Anytus was, it has been seen, a republican, and, as he had suffered for his cause, he was no doubt a radical. Now Socr. did not abstain from criticising the laws and government of Athens with the greatest candor, and even so far as to admire the Spartan and Cretan institutions: see esp. Crito 52 E. 53 B. It is quite certain that, to a great extent, Socr. was blamed by the democrats for the misdeeds of Critias, who (as they said) had been his pupil, and, at all events, had been much in the society of Socr. when a young man, – Xenophon says in order to acquire an argumentative facility which might be serviceable to his political ambition. But Critias had been the chief author of all the cruelties and spoliation perpetrated by the Thirty, and the fact is that Socr. shared the odium which attached to the name of Critias. In another of his "pupils" (I keep this appellation, though Socr. himself would reject it) Socr. had been singularly unfortunate, viz., in Alcibiades, whose rashness had done much to accomplish the great downfall which resulted to Athens from the Peloponnesian war.

Considering all these circumstances (which we can here only slightly touch upon, though they could scarcely be exhausted in a copious treatise) it is not surprising to learn from Xenophon (Mem. 1, 2, 9) that it was the general belief in Athens that Socr. "excited the young men to despise the established constitution, and to become lawless and violent in their conduct."

The displeasure which Meletus felt against Socr. in the interest of the poets may be easily accounted for when we read the corresponding passage in the Apology, and recollect the fact that Socr. is said to have been fond of citing the worst passages of great poets in confirmation of theories particularly disagreeable to the taste of an Athenian, e.g. inferring from some lines of the second book of the Iliad that Homer praised the application of stripes to poor men and the common people (Xen. Mem. 1, 2, 56–59).

As for Lyco, the third accuser of Socr., we know about him perhaps even less than about Meletus. Diogenes Laërt. (2, 38) says that he was a demagogue, and from Plato we learn that he was a ῥήτωρ⁶ – of what kind may be gathered from our note on Apol. 23 E.⁷ Socr. himself ascribes the success of the accusation to Anytus and Lyco (Apol. 36 A), and the latter must therefore have been of much service in conducting the trial.

The cause of Socr. was what was technically styled ἀγὼν τιμητός,⁸ i.e., after the defendant was pronounced guilty by the judges, the punishment for his offence was left to them to fix; but both the prosecutor and the defendant were called upon to propose such a punishment (τιμᾶσθαι) as they considered fit for the offence. The punishment proposed by Meletus was death; the one proposed by Socr. may be learned from the Apology.

The trial of Socr. was conducted before the ἡλιασταί:⁹ on their number see note on Apol. 36 A.¹⁰

As for the defence of Socr., the reader is advised to study the Apology and the logical analysis of it which we subjoin: in general it may be said that the Apology, if not an exact reproduction of the speech made by Socr. at his trial, is doubtless an imitation of it so far as Plato's memory and own individuality (though this appears here entirely merged in the person of the *historical* Socr., while in Plato's other writings we generally have an *ideal* Socr.) enabled him to put down the arguments and expressions used by his master on that memorable occasion. This, at least, is the view taken by Grote,

ANYTUS: By Heracles, Socrates, forbear! I only hope that no friend or kinsman or acquaintance of mine, whether citizen or stranger, will ever be so mad as to allow himself to be corrupted by them; for they are a manifest pest and corrupting influence to those who have to do with them." (Project Gutenberg-text 1643)

⁶ "a public speaker, pleader", Latin "orator" (Liddell and Scott, "An Intermediate Greek-English Lexikon. Oxford. Clarendon Press. 1889).

⁷ Wagner, p. 85: "Cf. also Gellius 3, 13, *Callistratus Athenis orator in re publica fuit quos illi δημαγωγούς appellant*. Lyco belonged no doubt to the same class as Callistratus."

⁸ "agôn timêtos": in such a case the law did not stipulate a specific penalty.

⁹ "a juryman of the court, a Heliast" (Liddell and Scott, 1889).

¹⁰ Wagner, p. 104: "Diogenes Laërtius 2, 41, agrees with our passage in stating that 281 judges pronounced Socr. guilty."

History of Greece, chap. lxviii., to which chapter on Socr. it seems desirable to direct the attention of the student after he has fully mastered the Apology, Crito, and Phaedo.

LOGICAL ANALYSIS OF THE APOLOGY

ΠΠΟΟΙΜΙΟΝ (*exordium*) 17–18 A: discarding all the usual rhetorical embellishments, Socr. is going to address the judges in simple, homely words, and say nothing but the truth; at the same time he begs a favorable attention to this unusual kind of speech.

ΠΠΟΘΕΣΙΣ (*propositio*) 18 B–19 A: Socr. has to refute a double kind of accusation, viz., besides the one brought against him by Meletus, the popular prejudices raised against him and kept up by the charges of his enemies.

ΠΠΣΤΙΣ (*confutatio*) 19 B–27 E in two parts, and first (–24 A) the misrepresentations mentioned in the second place are shown to be entirely without foundation, and the difference between Socr. and the Sophists is pointed out. The origin of these accusations is found in the annoyance created to many citizens by Socrates' habit of examining into their knowledge, and the zeal of his disciples who imitate this proceeding; but Socr. himself feels obliged to do so in consequence of an oracle of Apollo. To revenge themselves on Socr. these persons lay upon him the same blame as justly applies to the Sophists.

The second part (24 B–27 E) contains the actual refutation of the charge brought by Meletus, Anytus, and Lyco, and this charge being twofold, the defence also is subdivided into two parts.

(a) Socr. shows that Meletus knows nothing of the art of education. If Socr. corrupts the youth it is necessary that he should do so either intentionally or unintentionally: the first he certainly does not, as only a madman could act so, it being the interest of all to live in a state composed of good citizens rather than of bad ones; if the latter be the case, Meletus ought to have spoken to Socr. privately and not have treated his ignorance as a crime.

(b) As to the charge of introducing new divinities in the place of those worshipped by the city, Socr. shows that Meletus seems here to contradict himself, as the assumption of a daemonium implies also a belief in the existence of gods.

ΠΠΑΡΕΚΒΑΣΙΣ (*egressio* or *degressio*) 27 E–34 B. In spite of all these arguments Socr. feels nearly certain that he will be pronounced guilty, not so much on account of the charge now brought against him by Meletus, as in consequence of the general hatred against him. Yet he does not regret his previous doings, as his conscience assures him that he has been doing right, and accomplishing the mission entrusted to him by God. The fear of death shall not deter him from doing his duty, and if he were now released on the condition never to "teach" any more, he would refuse to accept life on these terms, as he knows he could not fulfil them. But should the Athenians sentence him to death, they will thereby deprive themselves of a monitor such as the gods will not again vouchsafe to their city. That Socr. was fulfilling a divine mission appears also from his poverty, which is caused by his postponing all domestic interests to his vocation of being a public monitor to the citizens. Socr. then adds a few words about his public life, and shows that there, too, he always intrepidly adhered to the principles of justice and honesty, even so as to brave the rage of a mob and the fury of the Thirty. Lastly, Socr. maintains that he is not responsible for the ill-deeds of some of those who used to be in his society and are called his pupils, as he himself never professed to teach them any thing. Nor (says he) has any one of the young men who were with him ever charged Socr. with corrupting him, nor have their parents or relatives done so; on the contrary many are now present at the trial, ready to help and support Socr. in any way they can.

ΕΠΙΛΟΓΟΣ (*peroratio*) 34 C–35 E. Contrary to the common habit of moving the judges to compassion in order to obtain a lenient verdict, Socr. says that he will do nothing of the kind as this would be equal to inducing the judges to violate their oath.

The *second* part of the Apology requires no rhetorical disposition. Socr. confesses not to be surprised at the result of the trial: as to the τίμησις¹¹ which he is now called upon to fix, he declares that he deserves the honor of dining in the prytaneum, if indeed he must justly estimate his own deserts. But he will yield to his friends so far as to offer to pay a fine which he is able to set down at 30 minae, his friends being ready to become securities for this sum, which would be above the means of Socr. himself.

The *third* part is first addressed to those of the judges who voted for death, and to them Socr. predicts that they will soon repent of their injustice. Then, turning to those who voted in favor of him, he joyfully proves to them that he neither expects death like a coward, nor looks upon it as an evil. A last request Socr. has to address to his judges, that, should his sons ever prefer riches to virtue and think themselves wise without being so, they may be corrected and put right in the same manner as Socr. himself used to act towards the Athenians.

¹¹ "an assessment of damage", Aeschin., etc. "a rating" or "assessment", Arist. (Liddell and Scott, 1889).

PARS I

EXORDIUM

Quomodo vos, Athenienses, affecerint accusatores mei, nescio: ego certe ipse quoque, illis dicentibus, paene mei sum oblitus; adeo persuasibilis eorum oratio erat. Quamquam veri quidem, prope dicam, nihil dixerunt. Sed ex plurimis rebus, quas mentiti sunt, maxime unam sum hanc miratus, quod monebant cavendum esse vobis, ne a me deciperemini, qui peritus essem dicendi. Quod enim eos non puduit, quia nunc statim a me refellentur reipsa, ubi patuerit me ne mediocriter quidem peritum esse dicendi, id mihi visum est ab iis impudentissime fieri: nisi forte dicendi peritum ipsi vocant eum, qui vera dicat. Si enim hoc volunt, fatebor equidem me, non ipsorum exemplo, esse oratorem. Isti igitur, ut ego aio, nihil veri dixerunt; vos autem ex me nihil nisi verum audietis. Non, hercle, Athenienses, pulchris contextam orationem, qualis ipsorum fuit, verbis et vocabulis, neque ornatam, sed audietis immediate dicta quotidianis vocabulis. Nam credo iusta esse quae dico: et ne quisquam vestrum exspectet aliter. Non enim deceat, opinor, cives, huic aetati, velut adolescentulo fingenti orationem, ad vos prodire. Et vero hoc etiam atque etiam, Athenienses, vos rogo et quaeso, si me eodem genere audiat pro me dicentem, quo loqui sum solitus et in foro apud mensas, ubi me vestrum plerique audierunt, et aliis in locis, ut nec miremini, neque ob illud tumultuemini. Nam ita se res habet. Nunc ego primum in suggestum iudicii adscendi, annos natus plus septuaginta. Mirifice ergo hospes sum in dictione hic usitata. Ut igitur, si revera hospes essem, veniam mihi, opinor, daretis, si et voce illa et modo illo loquerer, in quibus nutritus essem: ita etiam nunc a vobis peto, id quod iustum est mea sententia, ut mihi dicendi modum liberum sinatis – fortasse enim aliquantulum deterior erit, fortasse melior – ; idque solum consideretis, atque ad id animum advertatis, utrum iusta dicam nec ne. Nam iudicis haec laus est; oratoris autem, vera dicere.

PROPOSITIO

Primum igitur aequum est, Athenienses, me ad prima quae in me iacta sunt mendacia et primis accusatoribus respondere; deinde ad posteriora et posterioribus. Mihi enim apud vos multi exstiterunt accusatores, qui iam pridem multos per annos et nihil veri dixerunt; quos ego magis metuo quam Anytum eiusque socios, quamvis etiam hi sint graves. Verum illi sunt graviores, qui vestrum plerisque a pueritia acceptis persuadebant rem, quam crimini mihi darent, falsissimam: esse quendam Socratem, virum sapientem, qui et coelestia curet, et quae sub terra sint omnia perquisierit, causamque inferiorem efficiat superiorem. Hi quod eam famam sparserunt, Athenienses, graves illi sunt accusatores mei. Nam qui audiunt, putant eos, qui talia quaerant, ne deos quidem esse statuere. Deinde accusatores hi sunt numero multi, et longo iam tempore me accusarunt; tum etiam ea aetate vobis haec dicebant, qua maxime credere possetis, quum vos partim pueri essetis et adolescentuli, absentemque accusabant, prorsus nemine causam dicente. Sed quod omnium absurdissimum est, ne nomina quidem eorum licet scire aut dicere, praeterquam si quis poeta inter eos est comicus. Quicumque autem invidia moti et calumnia usi sollicitabant vos, et quod sibimet ipsis persuasum erat, aliis persuadebant, hi omnes longe difficillimi sunt. Neque enim huc producere licet eorum quemquam, nec redarguere; sed necesse est prorsus ut quasi cum larvis pugnem et dicendo et redarguendo, respondente nemine. Itaque etiam vos existimate, ut ego aio, duplices mihi accusatores exstitisse; alteros, qui modo accusarunt; alteros, qui iam pridem, quos dixi: ac putate mihi faciendum ut adversus illos veteres me primum defendam. Nam et vos illis prius accusantibus aures prae buistis, multoque magis quam his posterioribus. Age vero, respondendum nunc est, Athenienses, atque

enitendum, ut invidia, quam vos longo tempore conceptam habetis, ea vobis eximatur tam brevi tempore. Velim igitur hoc ita fieri, si quid expediat et vobis et mihi, et respondendo me quippiam proficere: sed arbitror id difficile esse, minimeque me latet, qualis sit rei conditio. Verum tamen hoc ita esto, uti deo placet; legi quidem parendum est et causa dicenda.

CONFUTATIO, i

Itaque repetamus a principio, quae illa accusatio sit, unde exorta est infamia mea; cui iam etiam fidem habens Melitus, hanc mihi actionem intendit. Age vero, quidnam, quod crimini mihi darent, dicebant criminales? Velut accusatorum enim nobis recitanda est iurata formula ipsorum: *Socrates iniuste curioseque facit, quod inquit quae sub terra sunt et quae in coelo, et causam inferiorem efficit superiorem, aliosque eadem docet.*

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