



## The Trial and Execution of Socrates: Sources and Controversies

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# The Trial and Execution of Socrates: Sources and Controversies

## The Trial and Execution of Socrates: Sources and Controversies

Socrates is one of the most important yet enigmatic philosophers of all time; his fame has endured for centuries despite the fact that he never actually wrote anything. In 399 B.C.E., he was tried on the charge of impiety by the citizens of Athens, convicted by a jury, and sentenced to death (ordered to drink poison derived from hemlock). About these facts there is no disagreement. However, as the sources collected in this book and the scholarly essays that follow them show, several of even the most basic facts about these events were controversial in antiquity, and the questions persist today: How and why was Socrates brought to trial? Why did the jurors, members of the world's first democracy, find him guilty? When he was given an opportunity to escape execution, why did he refuse to do so and instead accept the punishment that he and his friends agreed was unjustly assigned to him? How exactly did Socrates die? Differences of opinion on these and other issues continue to arouse our curiosity and to challenge new generations of students and scholars.

*The Trial and Execution of Socrates: Sources and Controversies* is the first work to collect in one place all of the major ancient sources on Socrates' death--those of both his critics and his defenders--as well as recent scholarly views. Part I includes new translations of Plato's *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, *Crito*, and the death scene from *Phaedo*, as well as other ancient sources that shed light on Socrates' trial and execution. Part II features some of the most influential recent scholarship on this historically momentous event with work by M. F. Burnyeat, Robert Parker, Mark L. McPherran, Thomas C. Brickhouse and Nicholas D. Smith, Richard Kraut, Christopher Gill, and Enid Bloch (whose essay is published here for the first time). Ideal for undergraduate surveys of ancient Greek philosophy and upper-level courses on Socrates and Socratic philosophy, this unique collection provides an unprecedented look into the many perplexing questions surrounding the trial and execution of this remarkable man.

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