OUTLINE OF THE COURSES AND RECOMMENDED READINGS

Thomas Robinson (The University of Toronto)

Still relevant? Three Greek philosophers on the nature of the cosmos

1. Parmenides and Democritus

This lecture will discuss the closed-system model of the cosmos espoused by Parmenides and the open-system model espoused by the atomists, and the remarkable ‘extrapolative imaginativeness’ underlying both systems. It will also touch on the innocent-looking but (in terms of its possible theological implications) critical question of whether the universe can be said to be itself a physical object on an ontological par with the physical objects composing it.

2. Plato

This lecture will discuss the closed-system model of the universe adopted by Plato, and the specific relevance of his view that Space moves to a major feature of contemporary Big Bang theory. It will also talk about his own commitment to the view that the universe is a physical object, and the theological conclusions he thinks can be inferred from this.

Primary reading material

- Lecture one
  Parmenides frs. 2, 3, 6, 8 DK
  Melissus frs. 2-5 DK
  Leucippus fr. 2 DK, with testimonia DK 67 A 1; 24; DK 68 A 40
  Democritus frs. 164, 167 DK, with testimonia DK 68 A 40; Diogenes Laertius 9. 45

- Lecture two
Some literature

Algra, Keimpe, *Concepts of Space in Greek Thought* (Leiden: Brill, 1995)
Cormford, Francis MacDonald, *Plato’s Cosmology* (London 1937)

Dominic O’Meara (Fribourg University)

**Cosmology and Politics in Plato’s later Works**

[N.B.: the passages given below will also sometimes be used in sessions following the session where they are first listed]

1. **Seminar session 1: The Literary background of Plato’s *Timaeus*.**
   In this session we will examine the literary genre and organization of the *Timaeus*, the relation between Timaeus’ speech about the making of the world-order and the speeches described as coming before (Socrates) and after it (Critias and Hermocrates), and the figure of the ‘demiurge’, the world-maker, in Timaeus’ speech.
   Read: *Timaeus* 17b, 20b-21a, 28a-30d, 90d

   **Seminar session 2: The Model of the World.**
   This session will deal with the model which the demiurge uses in making the *cosmos*: What is this model? What does it contain? How does it function as a model imitated by the demiurge in making world-order?
   Read: *Timaeus* 30b-c, 40a

2. **Public Lecture: “The Beauty of the World in Plato’s *Timaeus*”**
   In this lecture I will discuss what it is that makes this world the most beautiful of worlds, according to Plato’s *Timaeus*. The relation between goodness and beauty will be examined, as well as the way in which a most perfect model of the world is realized in the world.
   Read: *Philebus* 64b-e, 66a-b; *Timaeus* 31c-32a, 87c-d
3. Public Lecture: “Political Science as Weaving in Plato’s Statesman”
   Plato compares political science to weaving a fabric in one of his last works, the Statesman. In this lecture I would like to examine this comparison: why does Plato compare political science to weaving? What does this comparison say about what he thinks political science is, its relation to philosophy and to other sciences?
   Read: Statesman 279a-281c, 309b-311c

4. Seminar session 3: The order of the good city-state in Plato’s Laws
   In this session we will look at the organization of the good city-state proposed by Plato in his Laws. We will try in particular to relate this order to that of the world as described in the Timaeus.
   Read: Laws 628c, 739c-e, 741a-b, 745e-746d, 757a-d, 962a-b

Reading session
   A selection of passages from the Timaeus will be examined as a way of exploring further ideas encountered above in sessions 1 & 2 and in the lecture.

Michael Chase (Paris, CRNS)

Studies in Philosophical Consolation

1. Einstein and the Plotiniana Arabica
   Recently, I've become interested in ancient parallels to the current debate in the philosophy of time, between advocates of the so-called block universe view, otherwise known as eternalists, and those, known as presentists, who defend the reality of the passage of time and of its division into past, present and future. I sketch the origin of this idea in the theories of Albert Einstein, then compare it with a manifestation of a similar idea, first in Plotinus and then in the Medieval Arabic adaptation of the Enneads that circulated under the title of the Theology of Aristotle.

2. Boethius on time, eternity, and philosophy as a way of life
   I argue that Boethius' Consolation is an excellent example of the ancient conception of philosophy as therapy for the soul: as such, it uses both rhetorical techniques and rational arguments in a way that echoes the progressive nature of the Neoplatonic philosophical curriculum. In the second part of this paper, I'll discuss the three arguments Boethius uses to try to resolve the apparent conflict between divine prescience and human free will, paying particular attention to the way he mobilizes Neoplatonic definitions of time and eternity.

Further reading:

On Plotinus:
Stephen MacKenna’s translation of Plotinus’ Enneads is available at [http://classics.mit.edu/Browse/browse-Plotinus.html](http://classics.mit.edu/Browse/browse-Plotinus.html).


See also Andrew Smith, “Eternity and Time” in Gerson, ed., The Cambridge Companion to Plotinus, Cambridge 196, p. 196-216

On time in contemporary philosophy of science:

On Boethius:
Boethius’s Latin with commentary by Jim O'Donnell and an old English translation is available online at [http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/jod/](http://www9.georgetown.edu/faculty/jod/); the Loeb translation of the Consolation can be found at [http://archive.org/details/theologicaltract00boetuoft](http://archive.org/details/theologicaltract00boetuoft).

Secondary literature:

Teun Tieleman (Utrecht University)

**Sextus and the Skeptical Tradition**

The skeptical tradition is found at the heart of ancient epistemology. The key texts are Cicero’s *Academic Books*, Sextus Empiricus’ *Outlines of Pyrrhonism* and *Against the Mathematicians*, as well as Augustine’s *Against the Academicians*. Key questions include: What was the exact nature and motivation of ancient Skepticism? What constitutes the difference between its two ancient varieties, Academic Skepticism and (Neo-)Pyrrhonism? And what characterizes ancient
Skepticism as compared to modern varieties since Descartes? What was the relation between Skepticism and other philosophical schools and between Skepticism and common morality and religion? Although I will deal to a greater or lesser extent with most of these questions, my main focus will be on Pyrrhonist Scepticism as represented by Sextus. I will further illustrate his position by examining the attack he launched against the concept central to our programme—art (têchnê).

The titles of classes:
1. Sextus Empiricus and Pyrrhonism.
2. TEXNH Contested: Sextus Empiricus on the Arts.

Primary sources:
**Sextus Empiricus, Adversus Mathematicos (M) Pyrrhoniae hypotyposes (PH)**


Readings

Liliane Karali-Giannakopoullou (The University of Athens)

**Genesis of Art in South Eastern Mediterranean:**
**Cultural achievements, Technology, Symbolism**

- Genesis of arts. The theoretical background. The dawn of art as it appears in the four major Geographical areas:
• Western Europe, Middle East and the Balkan Peninsula

• Stone Age: The Paleolithic period; The Neolithic period

• From the beginnings to the end of Bronze Age. The dawn of western art as it appears in four Greek civilizations:
  • Cycladic, Minoan
  • Helladic and Mycenaean

• Genesis of arts: The theoretical background; Stone Age

  This session begins with the definition of the meanings of the term "ART" as conceived and documented by the first archaeologists of the 18th century to its variations and transformations of nowadays. The genesis of art will be briefly presented and discussed from the point of view of archaeologists and art historians, in specific geographic areas and chronological periods, beginning with the earliest examples dating from the Lower Paleolithic period to the end of the Mesolithic in the following geographical areas: Western Europe, Middle East and the Balkan Peninsula.

  In this session will be displayed and discussed some of the major archaeological findings and achievements of the Neolithic Period in the Middle East, the Balkan Peninsula and Western Europe. The presentation will close with a comparative study and general remarks on the concepts and the meaning of the Stone Age Art.

3) Bronze Age: The case of prehistoric Greece; Cycladic and Minoan civilizations.

  Session 3 deals with the art developed during Bronze Age in the broader Aegean area, produced by the inhabitants of the Cyclades in the Early Bronze Age and the Minoan civilization that arose in the island of Crete and flourished during the Middle-Late Bronze Age.

4) Late Bronze Age: Helladic and Mycenaean civilization.

  In the last session the Bronze Age civilizations of mainland Greece will be displayed and discussed with emphasis on the appearance and establishment of the Mycenaean civilization during the Late Bronze Age period. The presentation will close with a comparative study and general remarks on the innovations, traditions, concepts and the meaning of Art in Prehistory, as well as their continuities and discontinuities in the historical periods.
Selected Bibliography


Shorter presentations

Olga Kyrillova (Kiev)
Teaching Techne. Heidegger and Lacan on Truth and Knowledge

Dmitry Scheglov (Saint Petersburg)
Ptolemaeus’ Geography and the “map” by Marcus Vipsanius Agrippa

Svetlana Mesyats (Moscow)
Proclus on the *Timaeus* (esp. In Tim. I, 171 – 176, 30)
Novosibirsk State University. Novosibirskij Gosudarstvennyj Universitet ul. Pirogova 2 Novosibirsk. Novosibirsk State University is one of the top public universities in Novosibirsk, Russia. It is ranked #=228 in QS Global World Rankings 2021. QS World University Ranking. This institution accepts IELTS! Find your nearest test centre and test dates. Please check the specific English language requirements for your chosen course with the university. Follow University. Latest Feeds. 2007-2010 — participation in the international program ReSET (Regional Seminar for Excellence in Teaching) Teaching Classics: Fundamental Values in the Changing World. (Open Society Institute, Budapest; Institute of Philosophy and Law of Russian Academy of Sciences (Siberian Branch); The Centre for Ancient Philosophy and the Classical Tradition at Philosophy Department of Novosibirsk State University); 2010-2013 participation in the international program ReSET (Regional Seminar for Excellence in Teaching) Universities: Theoretical Foundations of Arts, Sciences and Technologies in the Greco- Eastern and Far Eastern Federal University consistently improves its positions and has been ranked Top 3 in Medical Science by Round University Ranking (RUR) in Russian. International has moved up in the QS World University Rankings to the 493 band. The Centre works on the basis of the Department for Ancient and Mediaeval Philosophy and Science. The Centre works in cooperation with scholars from various academic and educational institutions of Moscow, St.Petersburg, Novosibirsk, Tula, Paris, Toronto. Contacts: Centre for Ancient and Mediaeval Philosophy and Science. Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences. Room 516, Volkhonka 14, Moscow 119991, RUSSIA.