

## FROM THE GODS TO THE GOD WITHIN

### FROM HOMERIC ANTHROPOMORPHISM to the PERSONAL DAIMONION OF SOCRATES

In 399 BCE, Socrates was put on trial in Athens, the first trial in our Western history in which a man was indicted, convicted, and condemned to death for his impiety. In Plato's *Apology* Socrates states that the indictment brought against him was based on two charges: first, that he was worshipping new gods (*daimonia*, in Greek); and second, that he was corrupting the young. Socrates defends himself against both charges, but in the course of his defense he explains that he has a *daimonion*, which seems to be something like his personal god, a being that would not instruct him to follow any particular course of action, but would intervene to inform Socrates when Socrates was pursuing some action that was in some way immoral.

In this seminar, Professor Norman Austin will trace the development of religious thought in ancient Greece from the anthropomorphism of the Homeric gods to the inner voice, that personal *daimon*, which acts as Socrates' moral guide. This presentation would be given in five sessions, with the focus primarily on the two authors, Homer and Plato.

#### REQUIRED TEXTS:

Plato, *Dialogues*, trans. Benjamin Jowett. ISBN: 9798683781057

Plato, *Symposium*, trans. Alexander Nehamas, Hackett Classics ISBN-13: 978-0872200760 or ISBN-10: 0872200760

#### SUGGESTED TEXTS:

Homer, *Iliad*, trans. Richmond Lattimore

Homer, *Odyssey*, trans. Albert Cook

Hesiod, *Theogony*, trans. Caldwell

*The Homeric Hymns*

Plato, *Apology*

Plato, *Euthyphro*

Plato, *Phaedrus*

Plato, *Phaedo*

All texts will be in English translation.

## SYLLABUS

For Greek texts and English translations of classical authors:

<https://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/>

WEEK	TOPIC	READINGS
WEEK 1 07/27/2021	Introduction to Greek theology and philosophy. Overview of Greek History from Homer (the Trojan War) to the death of Socrates	Homer, <i>Odyssey</i>
WEEK 2 08/03/2021	Homeric Anthropomorphism: The principal deities: Aphrodite, Athena, Hera, Artemis, Poseidon, Zeus, Hermes	Homer, <i>Iliad &amp; Odyssey</i> Selected passages, showing relationships between Aphrodite and Helen; Achilles and Thetis; Athena and Telemachus; Athena and Odysseus; Hesiod, the <i>Theogony</i>
WEEK 3 8/10/2021	Greek Anthropomorphism, cont. Establishing of world order; the battles of the gods; final supremacy of Zeus and the Olympians. Review of Greek theological thought from Homer to Plato (Heraclitus, Parmenides, Empedocles, Democritus, Epicurus)	Hesiod, <i>Theogony</i> , cont. <i>The Homeric Hymns (Hymn to Apollo, Hymn to Demeter, Hymn to Hermes</i>
WEEK 4 08/17/2021	Socrates and Dialectic. Socrates and his influence on the young men of Athens. Alcibiades' account of Socrates as a Silenus, not handsome but with a world of treasures inside.	Plato's <i>Apology</i> ; selections from Plato's <i>Symposium</i>
WEEK 5 08/24/2021	The trial of Socrates on the charge of worshipping "new gods." Socrates and his daimonion: the inner voice. Influence of this "new religion" on later Christianity	Plato's <i>Apology</i> ; <i>Symposium</i> (speech made by Alcibiades on Socrates)