

CRITO

General Introduction to the dialogue

The format is somewhat unusual; it is a simple conversation between two friends, Socrates and Crito. Crito was no philosopher, but had stuck with Socrates in all the ups and downs of his life. He considered Socrates' sentence as unjust; and he was willing to risk his own wealth and his civil rights as an Athenian citizen to prevent the sentence being carried out. But Socrates himself stood in his way by his refusal to escape from prison. For Socrates was, in spite of his treatment, and his opposition to many aspects of Athenian democracy, a loyal citizen who submitted to Athenian laws without reservation and urged others to do likewise. For Socrates, obedience to the law of the city was the prime duty of the citizen.

This then is the main thrust of the dialogue, which is dramatic in structure, reminiscent of the structure of Greek tragedy:

1. There is an opening scene where the attitudes and states of mind of the two "actors" - the protagonists - are established; the scene is set, the characters are introduced, the calm of Socrates and the anxiety of Crito are revealed. Such a "prologue" is typical of Greek tragedy.

2. The two protagonists make speeches, more or less without any real interruption, in the manner of tragic characters:

first Crito urges Socrates to escape, and sets out the arguments why it is logical for him to take that course, referring to the reactions of the public, his friends and his enemies.

then Socrates, after some recapitulation of philosophic arguments about justice, sets out his reasons for making justice (ie. doing what is right) his first priority, referring to duty, and the importance of not permitting anything to warp the idea of duty, and the fact that running away from prison is wrong, and doing wrong even in retaliation is itself wrong.

3. The conclusion of the whole matter - a bit like a dramatic messenger's speech or a "deus ex machina" (the appearance of a divinity to solve the problem was a frequent device in late C5 Greek tragedy) - is put into the mouths of the "Laws". It is worth noting that as Socrates approaches death, he is more "open" to the voice of prophecy (via his dream in the prologue and the utterances of the Laws); this again is something associated with tragic plot structure.

The Laws sum up the arguments and present a statement of belief to explain their attitude to events. Plato in fact comes close to making a statement of credal rule that "Injustice is always wrong; it is wrong to retaliate against injustice by offering further injustice" ie. two wrongs do not make a right.

The Laws demand that Socrates must submit to their ruling and accept death. For he owes his happiness and freedom in life to them; he has promised to obey them as they require; and disobedience will achieve nothing for him.

4. In a final "epilogue" Socrates is reminded that there are laws in Hades, the kingdom of the dead, which those who have disobeyed the laws on earth cannot escape.

NOTE:

- 1. Personification of the Laws underlines personal obligation of Socrates to them
- 2. The Laws of the city and Socrates' example show what true patriotism is.
- 3. The conversational and rhetorical nature of the "Crito" means there is little or no Socratic irony (ie where Socrates pretends ignorance) or Socratic elenchus (ie. eliciting statements and/or opinions from his protagonist)

SUMMARY (with some comments) of the "Crito"

(all page/section references are to the "Crito" in Penguin "The Last Days of Socrates")

Section a (p.76 - 77)

This is the prologue - the introduction, where the scene is set, the characters introduced.

NOTE:

- 1. the time, the setting, the calm of Socrates.
- 2. the significance of Crito's news about the arrival of the boat from Delos - this has the effect of concentrating everyone's minds on the imminence of Socrates' death.
- 3. the dream of Socrates which he regards as telling him perfectly clearly that he will reach "home" on the third day.

Section B (p.77 -80)

Here we have Crito's arguments in favour of escape:

- (i) If Socrates does not escape, it will look as if Crito let him down, not to mention his other friends - ie. their reputation will be ruined

Crito is asking Socrates to think of his friends' reputation, but his response reveals that he has no opinion of public opinion (see end of 46d)

- (ii) If Socrates decides to escape, he need not worry about:
 - (a) risk to his friends - note comment on "informers" in 44e
 - (b) cost to his friends - note that Socrates had wealthy supporters.
 - (c) the place to go to - note the "net of contacts" - outside Athens as well
ie Crito is saying practical difficulties are minimal
- (iii) Socrates is acting wrongly (ie unjustly) by his acceptance of death penalty:
 - (a) by assisting enemies' efforts to get rid of him
 - (b) by not acting responsibly towards his children
ie Crito is making some reference to philosophic angle on wrong action
- (iv) Socrates is being cowardly by offering no resistance:
 - (a) he need not have come to court
 - (b) he need not have produced the defence he did
 - (c) he's starting to make those trying to help him look cowardly too
ie Crito is starting to make the link with his final argument
- (v) Socrates' failure to do anything to save himself reflects on his friends;
ie. it is bringing ruin on their reputations.

Thus Crito has brought his argument back to square one in true rhetorical style.

Section C (p.80 -85)

This is first part of Socrates' reply; he starts by saying he wants to discuss the issue; and he is ready to obey the principle which seems best. So this part of his reply is based on his familiar way of thinking and discussing about matters of principle.

- (i) (a) he asks: should we pay attention to some opinions and not others?
typically he invokes examples - the gymnast and his trainer
the sick man and the physician
- (b) he concludes: only the opinion of the expert should be valued, not that of public opinion
ie a refutation of Crito in 44d

NOTE: he forms general rule in 47 c/d
his comment on repressive democracy in 46c

- (ii) (a) he asks (following on from above): is life worth living for man with diseased soul?
If it's a matter of what is right and honourable, should the masses be heeded then?
- (b) he concludes: opinion of expert is even more important where soul is concerned, since this is the part of us that is concerned with justice and injustice, ie. doing right or doing wrong

NOTE: comment on popular authority to put people to death - ie. mob-rule?

- (c) he argues: no-one should ever do an unjust, ie. wrong, ie. illegal, action.

Here he is preparing to deal with Crito's point (iii)

NOTE: he dismisses in single sentence practical issue of Crito's point (ii) as "the concerns of the ordinary public" in 48c - with a further jibe at fickleness of democratic decision-making

- (iii) (a) he asks (as consequence of above): is it right/just to escape ie. to leave prison without Athenians' consent?

- (b) he argues: i. whatever the circumstances, an unjust act is bad for the one who does it.
ii. retaliation - an injustice for an injustice - is wrong whatever the provocation
iii. agreements which are just must be fulfilled.

NOTE:

1. All this leads to claims of the Laws - the system is a contract justly made; thus it is not right to escape.

2. Socrates argues that if to do wrong is never right, then to return evil for evil is wrong, and one must never return evil for evil. He points out that it is crucial to have agreement on this basic principle, which is one few hold. But we should note that there will be no common ground for debate here, since some would consider the principle foolish, and others consider it immoral.

Section D (p.85 -92)

This is second part of Socrates' reply to Crito; he puts it into the words of the Laws of Athens - a personification intended to show how important he regards them as guiding principles in life (as opposed to knowledge perhaps?)

Section D1: the Laws make some general points:

- (i) if Socrates escapes, ie. leaves prison without consent, he is destroying the code of Laws - for he is a private individual challenging the justice of all by challenging one verdict.

- (ii) citizens are bound by agreement to abide by the laws; to accept one law is to accept all.
 - (iii) city and laws are one - demanding greater loyalty than parents, obedience to point of death in war.
- NOTE: by using analogy of upbringing and family training, Laws imply link of filial bond between citizen (Socrates here) and city, which has developed from upbringing given him by the Laws.

Section D2 : the Laws speak more directly about Socrates' own situation.

They point out that those who wish to leave Athens if they object to the laws are free to do so - BUT Socrates has never left the city - except on state duties; he has lived his whole life there, brought up his family there, chose not to go to Sparta (where there was a type of government he more approved of), even chose not to opt for banishment and exile at his trial - therefore his actions prove his obligations to obey the Laws.

[N.B. Choosing to stay, to raise a family, in any place does not imply automatic approval of the laws or even the political system!]

Section D3: the Laws point out consequences of escape:

By escaping :

- (i) he would make a mockery of his moral claims
- (ii) he would set a bad example to young - so verdict would be right after all
- (iii) he would cut away the moral basis of his "conversations"
- (iv) he would adopt a lawless society if he went to Thessaly; and a well-ordered city would not welcome him
- (v) a new environment would not help his sons; friends would care for them if he were dead, though.

Finally Laws remind him of laws of Hades:

- (i) He must get priorities right - heed the Laws' advice, respect and honour what is right, so that he can give a better account of his life to the judges in Hades.
- (ii) he is victim of a wrong done by fellow-men, not by the Laws: therefore he should not "return injustice for injustice" by attacking the Laws of Athens.
 - ie. he owes it to himself and his fellow citizens, and to his city as a patriot and a moralist, to obey the Laws.

So Socrates is left with the words of the Laws ringing in his ears; he offers Crito the chance to speak, but he can find nothing to say.

SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT OR DISCUSS

How convincing do you find Socrates' arguments here:

- (i) as an attempt to show that a perverse VERDICT should stand?
 - NOTE: his attitude to mass opinion; to retaliatory action; to supremacy of code of law.
- (ii) as an attempt to show that two wrongs do not make a right
 - NOTE: for Socrates justice was not so much an abstract idea as following a right course of action, ie. DOING what was right.
- (iii) as an attempt to refute Crito's arguments in favour of escape
 - CONSIDER the arguments: from patriotism
 - that laws stand on their own account, not on their human origin
 - that justice stands on obligation to code of laws, not just to individuals
 - that retaliation is wrong, whatever the provocation or circumstances
 - from Socrates' own character and moral outlook

Collecting evidence:

The "Crito" is one example of the way Socrates thought and presented philosophic argument (though how much Plato introduced his own ideas and methods is open to debate).

It is also, like other dialogues, a valuable source of evidence for Socrates' life and lifestyle, the times in which he lived and contemporary attitudes. You will find it useful to collect such evidence.

Here are a few examples to start you off:

- his lifestyle, and reluctance to leave city - p89 52b
- contemporary issues: fickleness of democratic decision-making p83 48c
 - use of informers p79 45a
 - dangers of people power p81 46c
 - attitudes in other cities p90 53d

THE APOLOGY

The literal meaning of the Greek word "apologia" is "speech for the defence". Plato makes Socrates appear to follow the usual rhetorical pattern of such speeches:

1. The introduction: with its modest disclaiming of any rhetorical experience; "unaccustomed as I am to public speaking"
2. The statement of the charges and his response to them:
 - (a) a refutation of the general attacks on him
 - (b) a refutation of the specific charges brought against him.
3. The cross-examination of the prosecutor: here of Meletus, where Socrates (or Plato who is ofcourse the true writer of the "Apology") is in his element.
4. The personal defence: a chance for the defendant to impress the jury; Socrates is made to speak of :
his obedience to the divine voice
the benefits he brought his fellow citizens
his general lack of interest in public affairs
(this part of the speech is in a chatty rather than rhetorical style,perhaps deliberately to demonstare Socrates' way of "instructing " the public)
5. The conclusion: here the usual custom is not followed; there are no appeals to the jury for pity.
6. The suggestion of an alternative sentence: this is blatantly provocative.

The general impression given by the speech is that the verdict is assumed to be a foregone conclusion, so, although the speech making rules are kept, Socrates/Plato takes the opportunity to mock the system. There is no parody of a typical defence speech; instead there is an arrogant frivolity on the lips of Socrates which is disarming - or irritating - depending on how you look at it. Is Socrates revealed as displaying the "stubborn perversity" and "impudence " of which he was often accused? It is interesting to compare the way he addresses the jurors before he is sentenced to death to his mannerafterwards. In the final section of the "Apology" - which is not part of the speech proper, but a kind of "last public words" postscript - the jurors are addressed more sternly and Socrates' own beliefs are expressed more positively.

SUMMARY OF THE APOLOGY

note: there are three elements to this summary:

1. a synopsis of the speech
2. pointers to examples illustrating Socraes' life, outlook, etc.
3. indications of evidence supporting the examples and ideas formed about Socrates.

There is considerable detail in order to demonstrate the use of the text as a source for material about Socrates, his life and thinking.

note: all section and page references are to the Penguin translation of the "Apology" in "The Last Days of Socrates"

note: where the word "wisdom " is used, it means knowledge - knowledge in all its aspects, from practical know-how (provided it is validated by real skill) to moral judgments (provided they are validated by real evidence); and only what is true is real.

INTRODUCTION (p.37 -38)

1. opens with admiration for accusers' arguments - and condemnation of their lack of truth.

Example: of Socratic irony, sarcasm?

2. continues with dismissal of Socrates' skill as a speaker - unless speaking the truth is regarded as a skill.

Example: of rhetorical skill by its use of contrast and making transition to next point.

3. declares intention of speaking the truth - but not in clever language - that's not the Socratic style - spontaneity will mark what he says

Example: of constant claim of Socrates that he is not clever - an inverted boast.

4. declares intention of using usual market- place methods,since though 70 years old Socrates has not been in court before.

Example: of his methods

Evidence: of his age, and lack of previous prosecution. (so why prosecute him now one wonders)

5. asks jurors to ignore manner and method of speech, and simply consider the justice of the case.

All the above = typical rhetorical preparation for the defence case.

REFUTATION OF CHARGES (p. 38-45)

Section A

Note: there is an oblique beginning; the main charges are not dealt with immediately. They are recorded incidentally, in the history of Diogenes Laertius as follows:

"The affidavit in the case was as follows (it is still preserved . . .): "This is the indictment and affidavit made by Meletus the son of Meletus of Pitthus against Socrates the son of Sophroniscus of Alopece: Socrates is guilty of not recognising the gods recognised by the state but of introducing other new divinities; he is also guilty of corrupting the youth. The penalty claimed is death."

1. starts by saying he must separate those who have previously laid false charges against him (out of court obviously!) from Anytus and his colleagues who have laid the present charges.

Evidence: for previous hostility; for Anytus as prime mover of present charges.

2. deals with accusations of earlier accusers:

(a) of having scientific theories

Evidence: for Socrates being thought to be typically Pre-Socratic in his interests.

(b) of making weaker argument defeat the stronger

Evidence: for Socrates being considered a typical Sophist.

3. declares such accusations are dangerous since they assume he is an atheist.

Implication: he is not an atheist because the above groups (from which he is disassociating himself) often challenged traditional beliefs in the Olympic Pantheon.

4. declares accusation are also dangerous because they are many, persistent, anonymous (with one important exception) spiteful and "parroted"; defence is difficult against invisible opponents.

Example: of comic playwright Aristophanes who pokes fun at Socrates in the "Clouds", presenting him as a futile scientific theorist and pseudo-sophist. (poking fun in this way, to my mind, proves no more than that Socrates was a well-known figure and that Sophists were fair game for all kinds of jokes)

5 recapitulates point 1 of this section; in coming full circle, now introduces defence proper and admits its difficulty.

Note: reference to will of god (ie the divine will); and to obedience to the law.

6. finally presents in formal language actual charges laid against him (version slightly different from Diogenes')

Evidence: dismissal of way Aristophanes depicts him in the "Clouds".

sarcastic reference to the "frontman" for the charges - Meletus.

7. ends this section by declaring no disrespect for scientific knowledge, but only lack of interest in it; moreover could call witnesses to prove he has never been heard discussing such matters.

Evidence: of his open-minded attitude; non-involvement in things where he has no expertise; careful avoidance of public pronouncements on them.

But note: elsewhere there is evidence that in his youth he had been interested in new scientific theories.

Section B.

1. refutes charge that he teaches for money ie. that he is professional educator.

Example: of professional teachers who were sophists with specialist knowledge.

2. anecdote about Callias and his spending on Sophists for his sons' education.

Evidence: definition of sophistic education - to provide training in community life for men.

Example: of style and cost of Sophist teaching (Socrates states it is not his style!)

Section C.

1. begins by using technique of answering imaginary question - how has he been so misrepresented?; assures jurors that he will answer truthfully.

Example: of typical rhetorical ploy.

2. speaks of his reputation for wisdom; explains his need to declare the kind of wisdom (ie knowledge) he possesses

3. calls as witness the "god at Delphi"

Note: request to jurors not to interrupt suggests oracles were regarded with derision by Socrates' time.

4. illustrates point by story of Chaerophon and his consultation of oracle about Socrates and wisdom.

Note: introduction of famous name; role of Chaerophon in the city and the Socrates connection.

5. describes own reaction to oracle's reply - failure to understand it as he has no claim to wisdom;

hence his decision to check truth of oracle's reply.

Evidence: for Socrates' mock modesty; desire for knowledge, cussedness.

6. makes investigations:

(i) cross-examines a politician; finds him self-opinionated, convinced of own wisdom, and resentful of Socrates' efforts to prove otherwise.

Note: though politician is eminent man, he is not named - Plato being cautious?

(ii) enquiries continue with further interviews, with similar result - resentment and unpopularity. General impression for Socrates as he pursues "the god's business" that those with greatest reputation for wisdom were the least wise, and vice versa.

Evidence: for belief in some deity, but one who is not named.

(iii) declares he is undertaking cycle of labours - compares himself to Hercules in his self-imposed task.

Evidence: for sense of humour - or arrogance?

(iv) consequently enlarges field of interrogation -

(a) questions poets on their work: finds them clueless about explaining their meaning. Concludes they write by instinct/inspiration like prophets, but think that because they are poets they know about other matters too; whereas Socrates at least recognises his deficiencies

Evidence: for humility, or arrogance?

(b) questions skilled craftsmen - an area where Socrates has no knowledge at all; finds they know their own business, but also claim understanding of other matters on strength of this - thus spoiling their real knowledge about their particular skills.

(v) concludes it is better to be as he is, aware of his limitations

Evidence: of his common-sense?

Section D

Socrates deals with some of the consequences of his cross-questioning

(i) there is hostility and jeers about his "wisdom"

By proving others' lack of wisdom, he was assumed by bystanders to be himself an expert.

Evidence: of his public interrogations of almost anyone.

[Note: most people dislike and resent public humiliation]

But he disclaims real wisdom, which is "the property of the god"; concludes the oracle is the god's way of saying human wisdom is of little value; this Socrates has recognised, hence his efforts to "assist the god".

Evidence: for Socrates' view of god, again unnamed, and of wisdom..

(ii) assisting the god has brought poverty.

Evidence: for Socrates' poverty, lack of political involvement, neglect of own affairs (including family?) and his sense of mission.

(iii) his self-imposed task attracts young men who enjoy cross-questioning and discomforting their elders, and who imitate his methods and thus irritate their victims.

consequently Socrates is held responsible and blamed for filling young heads with "wrong ideas"

however when asked what he actually does, his accusers cannot bring specific charges; so fall back on the old Pre-Socratic charges, - scientific enquiry and atheism (the two being linked in traditionalist minds); and on the anti-Sophist charge, - casuistry. They bring these counter-charges because they refuse to admit lack of knowledge and resent the lack being exposed.

Evidence: for length of time verbal campaign was waged against Socrates' inquiry methods.

Section E

Concluding this part of the defence speech

1. asserts these were general reasons for his three accusers' present attack

Note: Anytus is the important one, though he stays in the background: his political background, connections with Socrates and prejudice against Sophists are the keys to his hostility. The other two should be noted as the "front men".

2. would have liked more time to deal with misconceptions about himself.

Evidence: for the limited time-allowance for law-court speeches

3. concludes by blaming his habit of plain-speaking for his unpopularity: this proves the truth of his statements and the slanderous nature of his opponents' charges.

Evidence: for his manner of conducting discussions (he says!)

CROSS -EXAMINATION OF MELETUS (p.45 -50)

Section F: part 1 of the cross-examination

1. introduces his defence against Meletus - with sneer at his patriotism
2. outlines actual charge: corrupting minds of young, and believing in supernatural things of his own invention instead of in gods recognised by the state.

Evidence: for actual charges

3. deals with charge point by point - with his own interrogative method -
 - (i) asserts Meletus is behaving frivolously and without conviction in bringing the charge.
Note: he belittles Meletus
 - (ii) asks Meletus if he thinks young should be exposed to the best influences.
Note: when Meletus agrees, gives him no time to answer the next question, but browbeats him.
 - (iii) asks Meletus what influences the young for good.
Note: when Meletus replies "the laws", shifts his position, saying he means not what but who influences the young.
 - (iv) gradually induces Meletus to say whole population of Athens could influence the young for good (except Socrates) by moving from those "who know the laws" to those "who have an improving influence".

Note: the way Socrates shifts the goalposts.

- (v) builds up analogy of horse-training ability so that non-ability to train horses implies ability to harm them, as well as showing that only one person would fall into that category if Meletus' argument were applied.

Note: follows this doubtful piece of reasoning with non-sequitur - Meletus is not interested in welfare of young anyway.

- (vi) had tried to show, embedded in attacks on Meletus, that he could not have been the only one to corrupt the young if Meletus' statements are true.

4. Now turns to another point:

- (i) with another sneer at Meletus, gets him to agree that a good community is beneficial, and members of community prefer to enjoy benefits to being harmed.

(ii) then asks him if he thinks Socrates acted intentionally when committing the alleged charges.

(iii) when Meletus agrees, then argues that, since the good have a good effect on others and the bad a bad effect, no-one will deliberately choose to do something that will have a bad effect, since the action will rebound upon him. So no-one, least of all Socrates, will do wrong intentionally.

(iv) ends with a rebuke (to hide weakness of argument?), suggesting that if he had done wrong intentionally, the proper course would have been instruction (ie enlightenment) not a court case.

Evidence: for Socrates' belief in debate and discussion as way of moral enlightenment.

Section G: part 2 of the cross-examination

1. turns to charge of impiety, suggesting the charge is that he corrupts the young by teaching them to believe in "new deities".

2. offers Meletus choice of theological options to clarify matters: does Meletus say:

"Socrates believes in some divinities, but not the establishment ones"

or "Socrates believes in no gods at all"

3. Meletus says the latter, thus contradicting the original charge: Socrates has trapped him - disbelief in some gods is not the same as atheism, but Meletus has been gulled into thinking it is!

4. Socrates now pursues question of his alleged atheism:

(i) with leading question about sun and moon (which are not gods in Greek anthropomorphic religion) and trapping Meletus into confusing Socrates with Anaxagoras

Evidence: for theories of early free-thinker philosopher Anaxagoras; for availability of "books" explaining his theories (which offered physical explanations of things thought to be divine or god)

(ii) making fun of Meletus for his supposed admission

Note: words used suggest jurors were getting restive; if speech is transcript of what Socrates said, or the gist of it, it implies they were irritated by his verbal trickery

(iii) continuing to use his usual methods - questions and analogies:

(a) suggests belief in human beings implies belief in human affairs too

Note: use of further analogy of horses and music (ie visual and aural imagery) is typical of his way of illustrating the abstract by the "real" or sensible (ie recognised by the senses)

(b) then suggests belief in supernatural matters and supernatural beings match up too.

(c) when Meletus agrees to this proposition, Socrates argues the claim of the charge that he

believes in supernatural things presupposes that he also believes in supernatural beings (he uses term "daimon" a word which almost means divine, and which can be applied to all sorts of non-physical things eg. fate, Socrates' conscience)

(d) thus belief that there is connection between supernatural beings and the gods (analogy of parent of parent/child relationship used here) means we cannot have the one without the other (analogy of young of animals and animals themselves used here)

(e) concludes by reinforcing this argument (which is based on assumption that supernatural and divine are in fact linked in existence and meaning) with rhetorical final sentence - designed to conceal weak argument?

SOCRATES' PERSONAL DEFENCE (p.51 -58)

Section H: part 1

1. claims he has cleared self of the charges.

2. still has to face real problem - public slanders and jealousy. Such have proved fatal to other innocent men - ie. death sentence is a reality.

3. asserts his lack of fear of consequences of sticking to his principles - he is bound to act justly ie. to do what is right insofar as he can.

Note: literary comparison with Achilles, the ideal hero from Homer's Iliad, the literary "source book" of Greek education.

4. states view that man must stick by what he believes in or by his committed obedience - regardless of other considerations.

Evidence: for his opinion that he should be considered a hero too; for his determination to stick to his principles.

5. compares his obedience to officers in battle with his obedience to "god's appointment" to study of philosophy - to him the examination of the living life, his own and others'

Evidence: for past experience as soldier; for belief in some divine "mission"

6. discusses fear of death - as example of his way of thinking: fear of death is a kind of non-wisdom since it assumes knowledge one does not have. His own wisdom (ie knowledge) about death is simply this: he is conscious that he does not possess knowledge.

Evidence: for his definition of wisdom/knowledge

Section H: part 2

Address to jurors here is more conversational - perhaps another aspect of the way he approached philosophical discussion.

1. hypothesises acquittal on condition he stops philosophic activities.

2. response to such a condition would be gratitude - but he owes "greater obedience to god"

3. so would continue to point out the Athenians false aims - money and reputation; and to show them what true aim should be - truth, understanding, welfare of the soul; to do this he would examine, question and reprove all he met (especially Athenians)

Evidence: for his methods of enquiry, of teaching and getting his message across.

4. claims his service to the god is best thing that has happened to Athens, because he teaches that goodness should be the chief aim of men. This is his message to young - nonsense to say otherwise. And he will not change his behaviour, however many times he dies!

Section I

After appeal for quiet and declaration of intent to say some startling things:

1. declares accusers cannot harm him; he can suffer no worse calamity than will befall them for trying to condemn a man unjustly; if they condemn him, they and the city will be the ones harmed.

2. he has been sent as "gift of god" to Athens - to act as stimulant.

Evidence: for famous analogy of horse and gadfly to describe his role in city's welfare.

3. meets doubts of those who cannot believe Socrates to be such a "gift of god" by pointing out:

(i) his neglect of family for sake of soul-searching mission to individuals

(ii) his poverty - he never charges for his teaching

Evidence: for his background; for his basic difference from Sophist teachers.

Section J

1. explains lack of participation in public affairs - the "sort of voice" which dissuades him

Note: this is the "supernatural sign" that rules and guides his life away from wrong decisions. It has stopped him from entering political life. This had proved a good thing since opponents or organised

democratic systems and their illegalities suffer fatally. If he is to survive, the champion of justice (ie doing what is right in the absolute sense) must stay out of politics.

Evidence: for Socrates' view of democracy.

2. then offers proof of this outlook:

- (i) experience as member of democratic Council -using vote to resist illegal action
- (ii) experience under oligarchy - refusing to carry out illegal order.

Evidence: for his apolitical stance; for his determination to stick to his principles

Section K

1. points out consistency of behaviour - in upholding cause of right, in public duties, in personal relationships, including with so-called pupils.

eg. (i) never claimed to be a teacher, but always willing to discuss.

(ii) does not charge fees for such discussions

(iii) as ready to answer as to ask questions

(iv) makes no distinction between rich and poor

(v) cannot be held responsible for changes (good or bad) in hearers - never promises such teaching

(vi) what he has to say is open to all willing to listen - he is not exclusive

Evidence: for his methods, intentions, and differences from Sophist teachers.

2. explains why so many enjoy his company - his cross-examination of those who "think they are wise" provides amusement.

Evidence: for his popularity in some quarters (though not perhaps for Socrates' preferred reasons)

[Does this suggestion of his imply a glimmer of humour on his part?]

3. returns to point that he is acting out of duty imposed by obedience to the god's commands

Evidence: for his acceptance of external signs of religious belief - oracles and dreams.

4. points out that there are present in court young men whom he has supposedly been corrupting, together with their families.

Note: most of men named here reappear in other Platonic dialogues; they were obviously genuine "disciples" of Socrates, as was Plato.

5. comments that none of them, nor their fathers, has come forward or been called as witness for the prosecution. He is so confident of their support that he will allow Meletus a concession, so that he can have a belated chance to produce such witnesses.

Evidence: for conduct of trials in Athens

6. personally confident of help, not only from the young (his supposed victims) but also from their older relations (who are not his victims); hence concludes they know he is speaking the truth and Meletus is lying.

Evidence: for considerable support for Socrates, irritating as he was to many.

CONCLUSION OF SOCRATES' DEFENCE (p.59-60)

Section L.

1. refusal to make emotional appeals to jurors' pity.

Evidence: for usual conduct of court cases.

2. to prevent irritation because of this break from custom (as if he had not already caused enough irritation!), gives reasons for this refusal:

(i) not because he has no relatives (note the references to Homer again), nor out of perversity, nor from contempt for jurors, nor from personal courage

(ii) but because such action would not be honourable for man of his reputation; no man of reputation should, from fear of death, descend to such depths, as some Athenian leaders had; and jurors should not encourage such behaviour.

Evidence: for emotion rather than judgement playing major role in reaching verdicts.

(iii) and because it would not be just to appeal to jurors in this way. Facts and argument should decide issue; jurors' task is to "return a just and lawful verdict", not go by personal preference and opinion.

Evidence: for jurors' oath; for Socrates' attachment to both justice and the laws.

(iv) and because of danger of perjury ie. breaking the oath - thus committing a crime against the gods

3. finally sums up line of reasoning here: wishes to avoid behaviour that is "neither reputable nor just nor consistent with religious duty" - this last point is specially important in view of Meletus' charge. So Socrates' conclusion is that he has sincere religious beliefs; verdict now in hands of jurors and the god.

Evidence: Socrates is no atheist: believes in binding nature of oath; does not despise religion.

THE VERDICT IS GUILTY

SUGGESTIONS FOR ALTERNATIVE PENALTY (p.61-63)

Section M

1. accepts verdict with some surprise and mathematical joke at Meletus' expense.
Evidence: for voting system in Athenian courts; for fines to prevent frivolous charges.
 2. then faces up to demand for death penalty by suggesting alternative punishment.
Evidence: for sentencing system in Athens.
 3. starts by asking what penalty he deserves:
 - (i) (a) after describing his activities in life (eg. absence of public appointments; his methods and purpose of using persuasion to influence people - plus comment that he was "too fair-minded" to survive public life), argues he is public benefactor who needs leisure for his moral task.
Evidence: for his life, attitude and philosophy ie. moral well-being, not expediency, is his aim.
(b) thus suggests penalty should be free dining-rights in the Prytaneum (like Olympic winners)
(c) but unlike them, made rich by their victories, he needs maintainance
(d) hence final suggestion here - penalty should be free maintainance by the state.
 - (ii) follows up this outrageous/impertinent suggestion by claiming he is not being stubborn and perverse in asking for it; for he has never intentionally wronged anyone (and it is lack of time that had stopped him from convincing the jurors) So he can't be expected to suggest a penalty harmful to himself; this means he cannot suggest:
 - prison - that would be equal to subjection
 - fine - he couldn't pay, so it would mean prison anyway
 - exile - no good; it would not stop him talking; the "Athenian effect" would be repeated elsewhere!Evidence: for Athenian trial system
- Note: Socrates' repetition that he cannot disobey the god; he must follow calling to examine life's qualities - goodness and all that goes with it.
- (iii) all this being so, even if he can't convince jurors, he does not think he deserves punishment. However, would pay fine if he could - that would do him no harm;
so suggests fine of 100 drachmas ("peanuts" in our terms) a fifth of his assets according to Xenophon.
- Postscript: friends offer an increased fine on their own security of 3000 drachmas.

THE PENALTY IS DEATH

(the consequence of his flippancy? or because of political pressure, once guilty verdict was passed?)

SOCRATES' ADDRESS TO JURORS AFTER ANNOUNCEMENT OF DEATH PENALTY (p63 -67)

Section N

1. comments that they will get blame for death of the "wise man"; charges unnecessary anyway since he is near end of his life.
Evidence: for wondering why trial was brought at that particular time so late in his life.
2. suggests reasons why verdict was guilty - eg his lack of effrontery in addressing them(!)
Evidence: for his deliberate provocativeness; refusal to follow usual court customs if it did not suit him; for usual practices of defendants.
3. adopts more serious language - uses analogy of battle (about which he was knowledgeable) to suggest ways unscrupulous might avoid death.
4. continues by pointing out avoidance of death not the real issue here; it is a question of avoiding wickedness; ie. he has been condemned to death by the court, but his accusers have been convicted of injustice by the Truth.
Evidence: for sincerity of beliefs; for unfairness of trial (accepted with resignation and dignity)
5. now, addresses jurors personally:
 - (i) those who condemned him:
 - since prophecy was believed to be the gift of those about to die, he can declare that:
Vengeance will come; they will not escape criticism of the way they live, by killing him; freed from his unrecognised restraining influence, the next generation of critic will be harsher.
The only escape from condemnation is by "good behaviour"Evidence: for Socrates' awareness of Athenian political situation; for dangers of the contemporary democracy (of necessity expressed in veiled language)

- (ii) those who wished to acquit him
- ie. he provides a few "last words" for friends

Evidence: for his "divine sign and its function.

Introductory words lead to reflections on death and his own hopes:

ie. death is either annihilation or a change:

- (i) if there is no consciousness, it must be like a dreamless sleep, and so a gain
- (ii) if it is removal to another place, it is a blessing because of all the people to be met there, now "immortal for the rest of time, if what we are told is true".

Hence death can be faced with confidence, since nothing can harm a good man, and the gods do care about his fate.

Evidence: for his own beliefs about death, goodness and the gods.

6. in conclusion:

- (i) he says he holds no grudges
- (ii) he asks them to do him the favour of educating his sons as he had done, so that they value goodness above all things.
- (iii) he departs, acknowledging the knowledge that future happiness is with the god alone