MIND AND SOUL IN THE PLATONIC TRADITION

- syllabus -

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In our course we will introduce the students to Plato's theory of soul and mind, and a selection of its discussions in the Platonic tradition. Our focus will be on Aristotle's criticism and adaptation of Plato's views on the one hand, and Plotinus' critical assessment of the two authorities on the other. In our final session, we are going to glimpse into two different perspectives on the topic: the views of Plotinus' older contemporary, the physician Galen, and of the 4th century Christian philosopher, Nemesius of Edessa.

Topics will include the relationship between life functions and mental functions (e.g. sensation, emotion, knowledge), the role of the body in these functions, and the parts of the soul, in particular the different notions of determination, connection, and separation between the parts of the soul, as well as the body and the soul itself.

The course is introductory, no prior knowledge of the authors will be pre-supposed.

READING LIST:

Oct. 19: Introduction

Oct. 26: Plato: dualism

- Primary: Plato: Phaedo: 57a-69c4, 77a7-84d
- Secondary:
  - 1. Solmsen, F. "Plato and the Concept of the Soul (Psyche): Some Historical Perspectives" Journal of the History of Ideas, Vol. 44, No. 3, pp. 355-367
  - 2. (optional) Lovibond, S. Plato's Philosophy of Mind. In S. Everson (Ed.) Companions to Ancient Thought: Psychology. Cambridge: CUP, 1991, pp. 35-55

Nov. 2: Plato: tripartition

- Primary
  - 1. Plato: Republic 434c-444e, 608c-612a
  - 2. Plato: Timaeus (34c-37c,) 41d-46e, 69b-72d, 77a-c
- Secondary:
  - 1. Lorenz (2006) The Argument for Tripartition (18-35)
  - 2. Johansen, T. "Body, soul and tripartition" (Ch.7). in: *Plato's Natural Philosophy*. Oxford University Press, Oxford. pp. 137-159

Nov. 9: Plato: epistemology

1. Primary:
   - 1. Plato, *Phaedo* 72e–77a: recollection theory
   - 2. Plato, *Theaetetus* 184-186*:* coming to knowledge by soul reasoning, unlike other soul faculties

2. Secondary:
    - 1. Franklin Lee, 2005, 'Recollection and Philosophical Reflection in Plato's "Phaedo"' in *Phronesis* 50 (4), 289-314
    - 2. John Cooper, 1970, 'Plato on Sense-Perception and Knowledge ("Theaetetus" 184-186)' in *Phronesis* 15 (2), 123-146

Nov. 16: **Aristotle: basic notions and the definition of soul**

- Primary: Aristotle: de Anima, book II 1-4: 412a1-416b32
- Secondary:
    - 1. Johansen (2012) Ch. Towards a Scientific Definition of the Soul: DA II.2 (34-46)
    - 2. Shields, C. "The priority of soul in Aristotle's De anima: Mistaking categories?" in Frede, D. and Reis, B. (eds.). Body and Soul in Ancient Philosophy. Berlin, Walter de Gruyter, pp. 267-290

Nov. 23: **Aristotle: the soul in biology**

- Primary: Aristotle: On the Parts of Animals (II. 1-4; III. 4)
- Secondary:
    - 1. Ebrey, D. Blood, matter, and necessity. In D. Ebrey (Ed.), *Theory and Practice in Aristotle's Natural Science*. Cambridge: CUP, 2015, pp. 61-76
    - 2. Frampton, M. "Aristotle's Cardiocentric Model of Animal Locomotion". *Journal of the History of Biology*, Vol. 24, No. 2, pp. 291-330

Nov. 30: **Aristotle: reproduction**

- Primary: Aristotle: de Generatione Animalium, II.1-6
- Secondary:
    - 1. Henry. D. "Understanding Aristotle's Reproductive Hylomorphism". *Apeiron*, Vol. 39, No. 3, pp. 257-287
    - 2. Bos. "Aristotle on Soul and Soul-'Parts' in Semen ("GA" 2.1, 735a4-22)". *Mnemosyne*, Fourth Series, Vol. 62, Fasc. 3 (2009), pp. 378-400
    - 3. (optional) Solmsen, F. "The Vital Heat, the Inborn Pneuma and the Aether". *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, Vol. 77, Part 1 (1957), pp. 119-123

7. Dec. 7: **Aristotle: mind**

- Primary: Aristotle, De Anima III.3 (427a17–b27), III.4–6
- Secondary:
    - 1. Caleb Cohoe, 2014, 'Nous in Aristotle's De Anima', *Philosophy Compass* 9 (9), 594-604.
    - 2. Fred J. Miller, 2013, 'Aristotle on the Separability of Mind' in *The Oxford Handbook of Aristotle*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 306–339.

Dec. 14: ***- no class -*** *deadline: abstract and outline*

8. Dec. 21: Plotinus: Plotinus on substance and the immortality of soul

- Primary: Plotinus, *Ennead* IV.1, IV.7 (Substance and immortality of soul)
- Secondary:
  - 1. E.K. Emilsson, 1991, 'Plotinus and soul-body dualism', in: S. Everson (ed.), *Companions to Ancient Thought*, Vol. 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 148-165.
  - 2. D. Caluori, 2015, 'The individual soul in the intelligible and in the sensible world', in: Plotinus on the Soul; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 91–110.

9. Jan. 11: Plotinus: Soul and the organism

- Primary: Plotinus, *Ennead* I.1
- Secondary:
  - 1. E. K. Emilsson, 2017, 'The human being I: The soul–body compound', in: *Plotinus*, Abingdon: Routledge, 228–268
  - 2. D. Caluori, 2015, 'The soul and the body', in: Plotinus on the Soul; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 180–197.

10. Jan. 18: Plotinus: Intellect, recollection, response to Aristotle

deadline: 50% + detailed outline

- Primary: Plotinus, *Ennead* V.3.1–11
- Secondary:
  - 1. Stephen Menn, 'Plotinus on the Identity of Knowledge With Its Object', in Apeiron 34 (3), 233–246.
  - 2. E.K. Emilsson, 2017, 'Intellect', in: Plotinus; London: Routledge, 104–143.

11. Jan. 25: Galen - TBA

12. Feb. 1: Nemesius of Edessa: Christian reception/transformation of Platonism and Aristotle

- Primary: Nemesius, On the Nature of Man, Sections 1–3 [excerpts will be marked in the PDF]
- Secondary:
  - 1. D. Dimitrov, 2014, 'Neoplatonism and Christianity in the East: philosophical and theological challenges for bishops', in: Pauliina Remes and Svetla Slaveva-Griffin (eds.), Routledge Handbook of Neoplatonism; London: Routledge, 525-540
  - 2. R.W. Sharples/P.J. van der Eijk, 2008, Introduction in Nemesius: On the Nature of Man; Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 1–32 [included in the reading PDF

13. Feb. 8: Conclusion *deadline: full draft*

REQUIREMENTS

1. *Core readings*: primary literature: for each class, compulsory; don't come if you haven't read.

Mixed requirements: "presentations + essay"

2. *Presentations*: regular mini-presentations on the secondary literature, taking turns: read one of the two texts for the class, summarise the content in one paragraph, and write another paragraph with your thoughts
3. *Essay*: 6-10 pages, 3 check-points:
    1. Abstract and outline
    2. Detailed outline and first half of the paper
    3. Full draft

    Final deadline: at the end of the term (i.e. the official hand-in date)

ESSAY QUESTIONS

1. Compare two different expositions of the same view:
    a. the fate of souls, transmigration in the Phaedo and the Phaedrus (also Timaeus if term paper)
    b. Recollection in (the Meno,) the Phaedo, and the Phaedrus
2. Plato's answer to Aristotle's criticism of transmigration in the de Anima (407b22 ff.) on the ground that any soul can't enter any body
3. Soul and body in the Republic and the Timaeus (similarities, differences)
4. Nature vs. nurture in the Republic (Rep. 411, 414, 424 etc.)
5. "(...) styles of music are never disturbed without affecting the most important political institutions (...)" (Rep. 424)

SECONDARY SOURCES

Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (for detailed analysis)
Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy (for orientation)

For further sources, please come and consult us.