

Chapter 3 Handout/Homework—The Pre-Socratics and Sophists

Overview of Classical Themes (p. 17). What are the two crucial principles that are still disputed by philosophers today.

(In Chapter 3) Describe the difference between the Presocratic sophos and a Sophist.

What is the principle of sufficient reason (found in the glossary of the text) and why do you think this principle is important in philosophy?

Define these three “theories of reality” (found in the glossary of the text): monism, pluralism and dualism and relate them back to the two crucial principles of the first question on this handout.

Heraclitus claims that everything is changing all the time because of Logos. What is Logos and what does it have to do with cosmology?

Parmenides claims change cannot occur because of Being. Explain the reasoning of Parmenides arguing that “change cannot occur” and what does it have to do with ontology?

What is atomism and how does the theory work in explaining things?

What did the Sophists think everyone was after and why?

Explain the difference between cultural and individual relativism and what is moral realism and the doctrine of the superior individual? How do these views reflect the teachings of pragmatism?

Do you think relativists believe in knowledge? What are the strengths and weaknesses of relativism?

Chapter 4 Handout/Homework—Socrates

What is the Socratic problem and why is it a problem?

According to Socrates, what is the psyche and what ought it tell us about ourselves?

What is techne? What is virtue? How do these two terms relate to excellence of function?

What is irony and how is the Socratic statement of “I know that I know nothing” an example of irony?

What is the Socratic method (dialectic) and why does Socrates use it?

According to Socrates, what is intellectualism (give at least two definitions for it)? What does intellectualism tell us about why people do 'evil'?

Everything in this chapter relates to two statements Socrates made: "Know Thyself," and "the unexamined life is not worth living." How are these statements a reaction to the relativism of the Sophists? How can these two statements be related to the psyche, techne, virtue, and intellectualism?