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PHIL 200

9 September 2019

Grammata #2

Aristophanes in *Clouds* implies the charge of Socrates accepting payment in exchange for his “teachings.” Strepsaides “swear[s] by all the gods” to pay Socrates “[w]hat [his] fee” is, “in cash” (246). Socrates does not deny payment. Instead, he replies, “[i]n the first place, gods aren’t legal tender here,” thus implying that other forms of payment are accepted (248). In *Apology*, Socrates defends himself against the charge of accepting payments by claiming that he does not “undertake to teach people and charge a fee for it” (19d5). Furthermore, Socrates justifies this claim by stating that his accusers “have not been able... to bring forward a witness to say that [he had] ever received a fee or ever asked for one” (31b9). This argument is effective because the presence of a witness is a strong argument in the court of law. However, Socrates’s accusers fail to produce one.

In *Clouds*, not only does Aristophanes imply the charge of Socrates accepting payments, but in turn, corrupting the youth. The “corruption of the youth” is blatantly implied through Pheidippides who says to Strepsaides, with Worse Argument, he could justify “mother-beating as a law” (1445). Worse Argument is the “corruptive teaching” of Socrates. In *Apology*, Socrates uses the logic that he can’t be the only one in Athens corrupting the youth while everyone else is “mak[ing] the young into fine good men” (25a7). This argument implies difficulty, but not impossibility of corruption. Therefore, a weaker response.