

## The Death of Socrates by Plato



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## The Story

-Socrates is tried and sentenced to death for youth corruption and belief in non state (Athens) approved gods.  
 \*In reality Socrates association with former students who were part of the exiled oligarchic regime is a threatening concern for the ruling Democratic Athenian regime.



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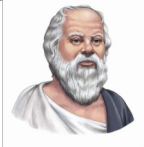
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## The Story

-Socrates, makes the very valid point that the real reason for his execution is because he does not throw himself at the feet of the state begging for mercy.

-If Socrates had done this it makes the state seem "right" and Socrates seem "wrong".



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## The Story

- Socrates also predicts that his accusers will themselves face accusers far younger, more temperamental and bigger in number in the not too distant future.
- Socrates then asks before ingesting poison for other to continuously challenge his sons in every way so that they can become stronger, better and wiser people.
- Socrates takes the poison (Hemlock) walks around and then lies down to die.
- His prison guards were more upset than Socrates himself was by the whole affair. Socrates looks forward to possibly meeting and conversing with the gods in the afterlife.



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## The Meaning

- Socrates is a man who believes in his convictions and refuses to concede to the state or the state's beliefs.
- The ultimate core of this story revolve around two things:
- A battle between ethical right and ethical wrong.
- This is intertwined with the state (Athens) vs the truth



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## The Meaning

- The Athenian state knew of Socrates prestige and perhaps felt he would help revive and bring back the oligarch regime one day.
- Hence, breaking Socrates in a public display and forcing him to concede to the superior view of the ruling Athenian regime becomes tantamount for the Athenian state.



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## The Meaning

The Athenian state was not the first and certainly not the last political body to take draconian actions against people(s) in the interests of preventing a tyrannical government from rising.

-How effective do those actions work?

-Historically it has been a stark mixed bag of results with harsh aftermaths usually.



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## The Meaning

The end result of killing Socrates for the Athenian state produces the reverse result unbeknownst to them.

-Socrates becomes a sympathetic figure despite some real reasons for concern by the Athenian state on who Socrates kept company with.



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## The Meaning

-Athens in essence commits a tyrannical act in the interests of preventing the return of tyrannical rule to Athens (illogical).  
-The effect is that it discredits the legitimacy of the Athenian ruling regime and strangely gives indirect credibility to the ousted, tyrannical oligarchy regime of Athens.

-It also leaves three lingering, dangerous questions (from the Athenian state's viewpoint) open to the citizens and us over 2,300 years later:

-Why was Socrates really killed?

-Was Socrates death necessary?

-Was Socrates execution just?



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