# BYRON KALDIS

**PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY
THE NATIONAL TECHNICAL
UNIVERSITY OF ATHENS
DEPARTMENT OF HUMANITIES,
ATHENS,
GREECE**

**DISTINGUISHED XIAOXIANG
PROFESSOR OF PHILOSOPHY AND
ETHICS
MORAL CULTURE RESEARCH
INSTITUTE
HUNAN NORMAL UNIVERSITY
CHNGSHA, CHINA**

COURSE DESCRIPTION 1

*Course Title*: **INTRODUCTION TO ANCIENT GREEK PHILOSOPHY**

*Course Description*: This course aims at introducing undergraduate students to one of the main pillars of humanities throughout the ages: Ancient Greek Philosophy.

The objective will be to cover the essential ideas, theories, arguments as well as socio-economic settings behind the rise of Greek Philosophy from the earliest times to its final periods.

The course will consist of lectures mixed with seminars in which students will present short papers on set topics. Reading and in-depth studying of each lecture's topics on the part of the students is an essential aspect of the course.

*Course Language*: ENGLISH

*Level of students:* ALL (no prerequisites)

*Name of the instructor*: BYRON KALDIS

*Type of Class Arrangement (Time of the course)*: Type 8

*Course description including objectives*: The Course will cover the following periods and philosophers or philosophy schools of antiquity:

The Dawn of Philosophy (and scientific thinking): From Mythos to Logos
The Earlier Times: The Presocratics, the Sophists, the earliest scientists, medicine and drama
The Classical Period: SOCRATES, PLATO, ARISTOTLE
The Hellenistic Schools: EICUREANS, STOICS, SCEPTICS
The Late Greek/Roman Philosophy: PLOTINUS

*Topic or topics for each session*: in each lecture/seminar we will be covering the philosophical thinking of each of the philosophers/schools mentioned above tracing historically their philosophical development while at the same time focusing on specific topics for in-depth presentation and discussion along the following lines:

- *Metaphysics*
- *Epistemology*
- *Ethics*
- *Social and Political Thought*
- *Logic*

These topics will be covered recurrently in each of the lectures devoted to a specific philosopher while paying attention to more specific or individual characteristic pertaining to some cases rather than others: e.g. underlining the study of friendship in Aristotle or his economic thought, while paying less attention to ethics in the case of the sceptics and more on their theory of knowledge

Finally: the course will highlight the overall importance of Ancient Greek Philosophy for the rise of western civilization and humanities, tracing influences and connections with the modern times. At the same time, the course will play special attention to parallels or differences between traditional Chinese philosophical thinking and ancient Greek thought.

*Teaching methods*: Lectures containing seminars devoted to special topics (e.g. metaphysics or ethics) where students present short papers

*Assessment*: FINAL ESSAY PAPER (80%) + Class Participation, Paper Presentation (in seminars) & Attendance (20%)

*Required and/or recommended readings*: The Course will recommend the following bibliographical aids as introductory texts but will also stress the importance of reading original texts as much as possible throughout the course of lectures.

Selected readings and excerpts from the following books:

*The Presocratics (*Kerferd ed. Et al)
Plato, *The Republic*
Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics* & *Politics*
Epicurus, *Principal Doctrines*
Stoic *Philosophy Readings*
Plotinus, *Enneads* (excerpts)

Student Guides:

D. Sedley (ed.) *Companion to Greek and Roman Philosphy*, Cambridge 2004

C. Shields (ed.), *The Blackwell Guide to Ancient Philosophy,* Oxford 2003

Principal Course Text:

C. Shields, *Ancient Philosophy: a contemporary introduction*, Routledge, 2012

*2<sup>nd</sup> COURSE OFFERED*

*Course Title*: **PHILOSOPHICAL, ETHICAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES OF MODERN TECHNOLOGY**

*Course Description*: Modern advanced technology is ever changing at a racing pace affecting all our life. It is therefore one of the most important element permeating and even shaping our lives.

This Course will present all the different theoretical approaches, interpretations as well as criticism of modern technology while covering some of its historical development. In particular the Course will concentrate on the philosophical, ethical as well as socio-economic and political issues that modern advanced technology raises. These issues are not all the same when approached across the whole spectrum of different technologies so the Course will inevitably stress peculiarities of some of these types of technologies not found in others (the widespread recent use of social robotics as opposed to stem-cell manipulation in genetics). It will also explain the contemporary phenomenon of converging technologies where different types of advanced technoscience are fused into a single mega-technology.

The Course will cover the ethical, philosophical, social and political aspects of advanced technologies and introduce the new field of STS (Social Studies of Science and Technology)

*Course Language*: ENGLISH

*Level of students:* ALL (no prerequisites)

*Name of the instructor*: Byron KALDIS

*Type of Class Arrangement (Time of the course)*: Type 8

*Course description including objectives:* The objectives of the Course is to familiarize the students with various critical aspects of modern technology and how it profoundly affects our lives.

With the completion of the Course, students will have mastered a variety of recent views on modern technology from different points of view, including philosophical, ethical, political and social aspects of new technologies and of STS (Social Studies of Science and Technology) and how they permeate our everyday lives

*Topic or topics for each session:*

- The Technological Phenomenon
- Technocracy
- The Rule of Experts in Society
- Converging Technologies: Nano-technology-Info-Bio.
- Technoscience
- STS: sociology of science and technology
- Biotechnology and Medical Technology

- Genetics and Genetic Engineering
- Engineering & Design Ethics
- Environmental Technology
- ICT: Information Technology, Communication and Computers
- Social Robotics
- Artificial Intelligence and ethical issues
- Food and agricultural technology
- The Politics of Technology
- Marxist Theories of Technology

*Teaching methods*: Lectures mostly with some seminars devoted to special topics (e.g. recent criticisms of technology, dangers of ICT, Chinese responses to ethical challenges of the technological phenomenon, political issues of technology, Marxist theories of technology) where students present short papers

*Assessment*: FINAL ESSAY PAPER (80%) + Class Participation, Paper Presentation (in seminars) & Attendance (20%)

*Required and/or recommended readings*:

I. Van de Poel et al *Ethics, Technology and Engineering: an introduction*, Wiley, 2011

R. Scharff & Val Dusek (eds.), *Philosophy of Technology*: *an anthology,* Wiley , 2014

Val Dusek*, Philosophy of Technology: an introduction*, Blackwell, 2006

H. Petroski, *The Pencil*, Knopf, 2010

P-P Verbeek, *Moralizing Technology*, Chicago, 2011

L. Winner, *The Whale and the Reactor*, Chicago, 1986

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