

Notes on Quiz #6: History, Tragedy, and Comedy

1. In *Clouds*, the character “Socrates” enters for the first time
 - a. through a golden door
 - b. lowered in a gondola or basket
 - c. covered in tomato sauce
 - d. as a ghost, because he’s already dead

“Socrates” appears descending from above, much like gods at the end of a tragedy descending to dispense wisdom and justice (“*deus ex machina*”), only “Socrates” talks not about the wisdom of the gods but the “natural functions” and physical processes of the temporal heavens.

2. The breakdown of the Thirty Years Peace after only fifteen years involved all of the following EXCEPT:
 - a. A crisis caused by a Corinthian colony (Corcyra) allying with Corinth’s enemy, Athens
 - b. A crisis caused by an Athenian ally (Potidaea) refusing to break its ties to Corinth
 - c. A crisis caused by Athens issuing trading bans and other decrees against its neighbor, Megara
 - d. A crisis caused by an Athenian noble seducing and abducting the beautiful wife of a Spartan king

Short-term sparks included the crises in Corcyra, Potidaea, and Megara. Long-term causes include: (a) Diverging ideas about what it means to be Greek (warrior Sparta, cosmopolitan Athens, etc.); (b) Trade rivalries between Athens and Corinth; (c) Class tensions between the few (aristoi) and the many (demos) throughout the Aegean world, exacerbated by the emergence of democracy in Athens; (d) A trend toward domination by both Athens and Sparta over their allies, weakening the autonomy of the polis.

3. The historian Thucydides wrote about
 - a. The Peloponnesian War, which he fought in as a general
 - b. The Persian Wars, which he researched from past writings
 - c. The Trojan War, for which he mastered generations of folklore
 - d. The dawn of time, which he saw in dreams

Both Herodotos and Thucydides were early historians living in fifth-century Greece who pioneered the writing of history. Herodotus wrote about the Persian wars; Thucydides wrote about the Peloponnesian wars. — Herodotus tends to explore human nature and behavior through anecdotes of the customs of various peoples, apparently partly derived from travel in various lands. Thucydides practices something closer to the modern historical method, advancing meticulously researched primary source evidence in support of arguments explaining historical events, so that future generations can understand why those events occurred. Thucydides also tends to focus on Athenians’ motivations, whereas Herodotus looks to contrast the natures of Greeks and other peoples.

4. All of the following describe classical theories about the natural world EXCEPT:
 - a. Anaxagoras said that material objects are made of particles held together by a force he called *nous* (intellect)
 - b. Democritus said that matter was made up of indivisible atoms that collide in a void
 - c. Hippocrates said that disease was caused by mundane factors that can be understood through careful observation
 - d. Gynecos argued that the womb and the liver are in fact the same organ

Explorations in natural philosophy involved the work of Anaxagoras, Democritus, Hippocrates.

5. The most famous tragedy of antiquity is probably the Sophocles play

- a. *Oedipus Tyrannos*
- b. *Oedipus Returns*
- c. *Oedipus 3D*
- d. *Oedipus Oedipus*

Aeschylus pioneered tragedy, most famously with plays about the house of Agamemnon. Sophocles explored fate and judgment in tragedies, including a trilogy about the house of Oedipus. Euripides challenged traditions about heroes, reason, and passion, especially with the murdering heroine Medea. Generally, tragedies served to reinforce collective wisdom regarding an individual's responsibility to society. This included the importance of justice for the greater good of the community, the burden for which shifted somewhat in Euripides's plays from the gods more toward humanity.

Optional Extra Credit

EC. In *Clouds*, why does the main character, Strepsiades, go to the Thinkery? What's his end goal?

Strepsiades goes to the Thinkery to learn how to argue away the debts his son piled up. There, he seeks to learn to argue falsely (sophistry).