

Socrates

Socrates, as known by Renault, was a beautiful creature. Not physically beautiful, but internally and fundamentally beautiful. It was he who said: When you assume the show of any virtue, you open a credit account, which one day you will have to meet or go broke (pp. 398). According to Renault, Socrates taught children free of charge. He often walked and talked with children and young men in the market. They discussed, or more accurately argued in a calm manner, various issues ranging from the sciences to religion. Socrates, however, usually avoided the subject of government whenever possible. Socrates believed his role in life was to teach a new understanding of virtues, it was these virtues that revolved around much of the controversies. The citizens thought that Socrates poisoned the minds of children. Causing them to lose respect for parents and elders. It was said that he did not believe in conventional gods either. This is shown by Strymon on pp. 181 and 182, "I imagine the in your own circle of friends, what we have heard is nothing out of the way. Where the teacher (Socrates) does not even worship the immortal gods, but sets the aside for his new divinities, one can hardly expect in the pupil much reverence for age and kinship in mere men." Parents blamed the lack of respect for elders on Socrates. In truth Renault says that he was only giving them guidance so that they may guide themselves and be free of petty problems. This guidance and advice caused these young men to re-think their attitudes. Indeed Alexias, Xenophon, and especially Plato were all changed by Socrates. They loved Socrates like a mother or father: pp. 392, "In a word," said Xenophon, "We love him." This love for Socrates was often misinterpreted as love being lost for family, through argument. Parents were so afraid of losing children to him they made laws. One law stated that Socrates could not speak to anyone under thirty years of age. Socrates defied this law, and was not punished. However after a while all his defiance's and warnings caught up with him. He was given the choice of banishment or death. He chose death. Many of his students wanted to free him, but Socrates made the choice against it. In the end Socrates is holding the glass of Hemlock saying farewell with his students, and friends.

According to The Encyclopedia, Socrates was born around 470 BC and died around 399 BC. He greatly impacted Western Philosophy through his influence on Plato. Socrates was born in Athens the son of a sculptor. He received an education in literature, music, and gymnastics. Later he familiarized himself with the ideas of the Sophists. However, like in the book, Socrates was not to be associated with the Sophists. Following in his fathers foot steps Socrates became a sculptor. During several wars: The Potidaea, the Delium, and the Peloponnesian, Socrates served as an infantry man. After the wars ended Socrates spent the greater part of his mature life engaging in dialogue, in Athenian Markets, with anyone who would listen. In agreement with Renault, Socrates was unattractive, and short of stature. He was said to have received social popularity because of his wit and sense of humor. Socrates was obedient to Athenian Law. He usually steered clear of politics. He believed he had received a call to pursue philosophy, and could best serve his country by teaching. He wanted the Athenians to engage in self-examination and by doing so attend to their souls. Socrates wrote no books, he did however introduce understandings of love, justice, and virtue. Through Plato, and then Aristotle, Socrates set off a chain reaction of thinkers. This affected the entire subsequent course of Western speculative thought. In 399 BC Socrates was charged with the same violations mentioned above. Socrates' friends wanted to plan an escape from prison, but he preferred to comply with the law and die for his cause. He killed himself with a poisonous drink of hemlock in the company of his friends.

