

# Crito – college essay



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In the Trial and Death of Socrates, Crito informs Socrates that the ship has been delayed and will not return until the following day. No execution could take place while the ship was absent and this gave Socrates one more day of life. This opportunity allowed Crito to try one last attempt at persuading Socrates into exile. It is the account of Plato that allows this dialog between Socrates and his old friend Crito to occur. The first notable event of this dialog is the dream that Socrates has when Crito first contacts Socrates in his cell.

Socrates envisions a beautiful woman that wished for his fate to be in fertile Phthia on the third day. Phthia was Socrates hometown and he interpreted this dream to mean that he would find death and his soul will arrive on the third day. However, Socrates was a seventy year old man, and it is my interpretation that this dream also symbolizes that Socrates was ready for death. It is this emotion that explains one of the reasons why Socrates would conform to the verdict of the assembly. Crito was not pleased with this dream and he indicated he was worried that people throughout the community would bring shame upon him for not paying for Socrates' freedom. It is apparent that Crito was willing and ready to pay for that freedom, however Socrates felt different about this idea.

Socrates was disappointed with Crito because he wanted to commit an unjust act and he did not understand why he placed such great importance on the opinion of the majority. Socrates suggested that it is not the opinion of the majority we should be concerned about, but the opinion of who understands justice and truth we should value. Crito claimed that the democratic leadership could be bought for very little trouble and money,

however Socrates was not very fond of the democratic leadership because he thought they were role players. Crito believed that Socrates was doing his children harm by not escaping into exile and throwing his life away, however Socrates looked at this situation much differently.

Socrates was a very smart and outstanding type of individual who believed it was important to value principles, such as pride, in the face of death. He possessed values that allowed him to pursue the truth and guide his decision for Crito not to pay off the guards. He believed it would be unjust and wrong to buy or give gratitude to those that could lead him to freedom. Socrates supported the interpretation that someone in the pursuit of truth and justice cannot be living a life that is unjust. This is perhaps one of the reasons why he chose not to pay off the guards and accept the verdict of assembly. In addition, Socrates did not have any concern about what his enemies thought in terms of his refusal to escape into exile. His enemies believed that it was cowardly for Socrates not to escape when it was clearly possible. In addition to his beliefs concerning truth and justice, Socrates also possessed the notion that one must reject the logic of retribution even when one has wronged another.

Socrates was a man that lived in poor conditions and was honest in all his affairs because his beliefs centrally revolved around justice. It is apparent that Socrates felt it was harmful when one was acting in a dishonest manner. He also believed in the notion that not under any circumstances was it just to bring harm or violence upon another person. He made it very clear that you harm yourself by harming others and that it is crucial to not retaliate even when someone has done you an injustice. Socrates felt that the Athenian

assembly was doing him an injustice by prosecuting him for something he was completely innocent of. He felt that it was his duty to honor the Athenian assembly even though the methodology behind their prosecution was unjust. Perhaps his rejection of retribution even in the face of an unjust situation can explain why he chose to honor the Athenian assembly's verdict. Socrates only associated with people who also followed this belief because it was apparent to him that individuals who did not possess this notion could not hold a conversation effectively. Many associate Socrates rejection of the logic of retribution to the "turn the other cheek" analogy in the bible. However, Socrates also possessed beliefs that most certainly affected his acceptance of the verdict by the Athenian assembly.

Socrates is a wartime citizen of Athens and was once a warrior who killed many individuals in the name of the government. In fact, he participated in the Peloponnesian war and was a warrior who fought with pride and confidence. He has always been very critical of Athens, but he has always maintained the belief that you should never question government. In fact, some consider Socrates to be very patriotic and it is his belief that your country should be honored in the same manner as one's mother or father (Plato, 51). He believes that it is his duty to follow the orders of Athens because he owes his respect to his country. His belief of dying in the name of Athens revolves around the thought that it would be impious to bring violence against your mother or father. Many also speculate that he would not retaliate or escape into exile because he had too much respect and patriotism towards his country. In any event, it is apparent that Socrates had many beliefs that influenced his actions towards the verdict of assembly and

it will continue to influence his Socratic way of teaching as well. He will always have his actions governed by principles that many considered to be absent in the Athenian society. Socrates will forever be remembered as an individual that will not conform to the opinions of the majority and who will always be in pursuit of the truth even in the face of an unjust situation.