



The Great Conversation: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy

Norman Melchert

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Ideal for courses in introductory or ancient and medieval philosophy, *The Great Conversation: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy, Volume I: Pre-Socratics through Descartes* covers the same material as the first half (chapters 1-13) of author Norman Melchert's longer volume, *The Great Conversation*. Now in its fifth edition, this historically organized introductory text treats philosophy as a dramatic and continuous story--a conversation about humankind's deepest and most persistent concerns. Tracing the exchange of ideas between history's key philosophers, the book demonstrates that while constructing an argument or making a claim, one philosopher almost always has others in mind. It addresses the fundamental questions of human life: Who are we? What can we know? How should we live? and What sort of reality do we inhabit? The fifth edition retains the distinctive feature of previous editions: Melchert provides a generous selection of excerpts from major philosophical works and makes them more easily understandable to students with his lucid and engaging explanations. Ranging from the Pre-Socratics to Descartes, the selections are organized historically and include four complete works: Plato's *Euthyphro*, *Apology*, and *Crito*, and Descartes' *Meditations on First Philosophy*. The author's commentary offers a rich intellectual and cultural context for the philosophical ideas conveyed in the excerpts. Extensive cross-referencing shows students how philosophers respond appreciatively or critically to the thoughts of other philosophers. The text is enhanced by two types of exercises--"Basic Questions" and "For Further Thought"--and more than thirty-five illustrations.

New to the Fifth Edition:

- * New profiles of Muslim and Jewish thinkers, including Avicenna (Ibn Sina), Averroës (Ibn Rushd), and Maimonides (Moses ben Maimon)
- * Improved translations of several of Plato's works, including *Protagoras*, *Gorgias*, *Phaedo*, *Symposium*, *Meno*, and the *Republic*
- * Review questions that are now dispersed throughout the chapters (instead of at chapter ends) to follow relevant passages and facilitate classroom discussion
- * Eight new images, including explanatory cartoons that help students understand key concepts
- * A revised Instructor's Manual and Test Bank containing essential points, teaching suggestions, and multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay exam questions

Also available to suit your course needs: *The Great Conversation: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy*, Fifth Edition (combined volume covering the Pre-Socratics through Derrida and Quine) and *The Great Conversation: Volume II: Descartes through Derrida and Quine*, Fifth Edition (includes chapters 12-26 of the combined volume).

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