

Abstract: *Socrates' Philosophy and Athenian Democracy*

Socrates opens his defense in the Athenian Court by rebutting his accusers' allegations that he is guilty of capital crimes of "corrupting youth" and seditious atheism. His rebuttal introduces the Socratic epistemic concept that distinguishes Socrates from any sophist and serves to characterize Socratic inquiry. The two-part argument of Socrates' defense sustains his rebuttal; first, by recounting Socrates' solution to the Delphic Oracle's riddle that interprets the oracle's endorsement as divine commendation of Socrates' human wisdom. Second, the *Apology's* report of the Court's verdict confirms the divine endorsement by demonstrating that Socrates' jurors share the epistemic capacity the oracle endorsed as Socrates' human wisdom. The outcome also reconciles the success of his defense with the Athenian Court's death sentence and specifies the dependence of Socrates' philosophy on Athenian democracy. Among further applications of the *Apology's* epistemic contributions, this study notes the currently overlooked solution Socratic inquiry provides that rivals the announced, revisionary Platonic solution to Meno's familiar dilemma for inquiry.