



# The Great Conversation: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy

*Norman Melchert*

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## **The Great Conversation: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy** Norman Melchert

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 Great Conversation: A Historical Introduction to Philosophy*, Fifth Edition, demonstrates that while constructing an argument or making a claim, one philosopher almost always has others in mind. The book 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: author Norman 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 Derrida and Quine, 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 sixty illustrations.

### **New to the Fifth Edition:**

- \* A new chapter (25) on Simone de Beauvoir and her contributions to philosophy
- \* New material on Buddhist, Muslim, and Jewish thinkers, including profiles of the Buddha, Avicenna (Ibn Sina), Averroës (Ibn Rushd), and Maimonides (Moses ben Maimon)
- \* A new profile of Jean-Jacques Rousseau
- \* 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
- \* Thirteen new images, including seven explanatory cartoons that help students understand key concepts
- \* A revised Instructor's Manual and Test Bank--available both on CD and in a printed version--containing essential points, teaching suggestions, and multiple-choice, short-answer, and essay exam questions

*The Great Conversation*, Fifth Edition, is also available in two paperback volumes to suit your course needs. *Volume I: Pre-Socratics through Descartes* includes chapters 1-13 of the combined volume, while *Volume II: Descartes through Derrida and Quine* includes chapters 12-26.



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