"Of all errors thus far," writes Nietzsche in his preface to *Beyond Good and Evil*, "the most grievous, protracted, and dangerous has been a dogmatist's error: Plato's invention of pure spirit and transcendental goodness." The battle line between these two philosophers could not be more clearly drawn. On one hand, the two most important doctrines of Plato's philosophy are the immortality of the soul and the immaterial Forms, especially that of the Good. On the other hand, Nietzsche calls these same two doctrines the most dangerous errors of all time. We will begin our course, therefore, by surveying this battle and considering who has the upper hand. What are immaterial Forms, what is an immortal soul, and why does Plato think they must exist? What does Nietzsche find so dangerous about these doctrines, and why does he think they are erroneous? Who between them is right about this?

Each philosopher brings most of his available legions to this battle because victory in it requires reinforcements from afar. Thus, what begins as a quarrel over questions of ontology and eschatology soon extends into questions of epistemology and psychology, ethics and aesthetics. We shall assess the state of this battle by pairing Platonic dialogues with excerpts from Nietzsche, moving across all of these fields, sometimes occupying several of them at once. So, for example, Plato's *Phaedo* will be read first and most carefully—for its discussion of knowledge and reality, life and death—alongside excerpts from not only *Beyond Good and Evil* but also several of Nietzsche's other books (*Twilight of the Idols, The Genealogy of Morality, Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, and *Gay Science*). For in these books Nietzsche contests many of the premises upon which Plato's reasoning draws. Indeed, he goes so far as to contest the practice of reasoning itself—a posture Socrates in *Phaedo* calls misology (the hatred of reason) and deems the greatest evil.

This will be merely our first set of questions and texts. About a dozen others (texts and questions) will be addressed by the end of the semester: self-knowing and self-creating; convention and individuality; consciousness and unconsciousness; weak love and strong love; masters and slaves; justice and genealogy; asceticism and the will-to-power; reincarnation and eternal return; Socrates—philosopher of the future or monster? And so on. In the midst of their stark disagreements on these and many other matters, there are also remarkable agreements. Most evidently, both are master-stylists, arguably without equals in the history of philosophy, although they have characteristically different views of style's relationship to content. Mark Anderson has just published a book on this question: *Plato and Nietzsche: their philosophical art*. This will be our main secondary source throughout the semester, exposing students to a work that brings these philosophers into sustained contact for the first time. Additionally, Professor Anderson will visit our class in its final week, discussing with us his understanding of this peculiar relationship. His visit will also give us a chance to discuss with him the understanding that we, for our part, have managed to develop through this course.