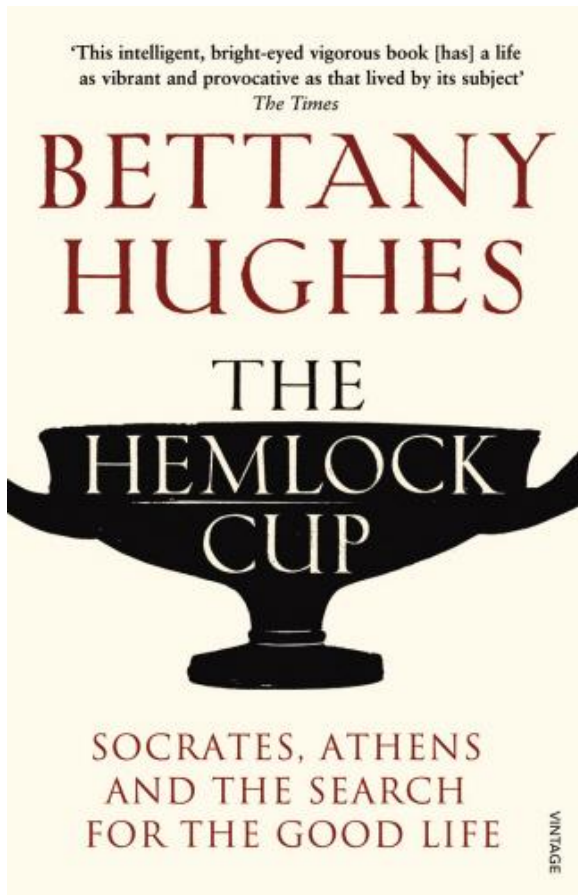


'Riveting, passionate and learned, *The Hemlock Cup* is a biography of Socrates, and a lot more than that...as lively and learned an introduction to Classical Athens as you could want' *Telegraph*



THE HEMLOCK CUP

SOCRATES, ATHENS AND THE
SEARCH FOR THE GOOD LIFE

BETTANY HUGHES

Published in Vintage Paperback / ebook
1st September 2011, £9.99

'Her enormous energy and enthusiasm are infectious...No-one before Bettany Hughes, a highly accomplished communicator, has thought to weave Socrates' examined life into so rich and dense a tapestry' *The Independent*

'The Hemlock Cup is another vibrant and atmospheric work from this well-known promoter of the ancient world...this is an exciting book that puts the reader into the footsteps of Athenians of the 5th century BC' *BBC History Today Magazine*

A riveting, lively and brilliantly researched new biography of Socrates by the author of the acclaimed bestseller *Helen of Troy*...

We think the way we do because Socrates thought the way he did. His aphorism 'The unexamined life is not worth living' may have originated twenty-five centuries ago, but it is a founding principle of modern life. Socrates was born and raised in a city that nurtured key ingredients of contemporary civilisation – democracy, liberty, science, drama, rational thought – yet, as he wrote nothing in his lifetime, he himself is an enigmatic figure.

The Hemlock Cup gives Socrates the biography he deserves, setting him in the context of the Eastern Mediterranean that was his home, and dealing with him as he himself dealt with the world. Socrates was a soldier, a lover, a man of the people. He philosophised neither in grand educational establishments nor the courts of kings but in the squares and public arenas of Golden Age Athens. He lived through an age of extraordinary materialism, in which a democratic culture turned to the glorification of its own city; when war was declared under the banner of democracy; and when tolerance turned into intimidation on streets populated by the likes of Euripides, Sophocles and Pericles. For seventy years the philosopher was a vigorous citizen of one of the greatest capitals on earth, but then his beloved Athens turned on him, condemning him to death by poison. Socrates' pursuit of personal liberty is a vibrant story that Athens did not want us to hear, but which must be told.

Bettany Hughes has painstakingly pieced together Socrates' life, following in his footsteps across Greece and Asia Minor, and examining the new archaeological discoveries that shed light on his world. In *The Hemlock Cup* she reveals the human heart of the man, and relates a story that is as relevant now as it has ever been.

'Hughes's prose is the literary equivalent of CGI, re-creating for the reader a sense of the clamour and dazzle of the classical city that has rarely been bettered. Not only that, she is expert in knowing when to alter and vary her focus. Sometimes we are led by her through the streets of modern Athens, sometimes across an archaeological site, and sometimes down into the basement of a provincial museum, where rare treasures lie hidden. She spares no effort in bringing the world of Socrates alive. Hers is an ancient Greece that is authentically cutting-edge.' *Observer*

'Bettany Hughes has done it again; she brings to life not only Socrates himself but the whole of Periclean Athens. Here is a work of dazzling erudition which remains hugely readable - what more can one ask' **John Julius Norwich**

'No physical aspect of life as experienced by an Athenian man is left out...Hughes's expert attempts to make him flesh and blood, to fill in the gaps...teach us about the value of the real as well as the philosophical.' *The Scotsman*

The Hemlock Cup was Book of The Year in *The Times*, *The Telegraph*, *The Sunday Telegraph*, *The Independent*, *The Independent on Sunday* and *BBC History Magazine* and was Book of the Week on BBC Radio 4 and "a literary highlight of 2010" - BBC Review Show. It is a *New York Times* bestseller.



Bettany Hughes is a historian, author and broadcaster who has devoted much of the last twenty years to the vibrant communication of the past. She is a Research Fellow of King's College, London and has been awarded an Honorary Fellowship of Cardiff University and the Historical Association for her contribution to the excellence of Historical Study in the UK and internationally. In 2011 she was Chair of the Orange Prize for Fiction. Hughes was President of JACT and is a founding patron of Classics For All, the charity that aims to bring Classical Study back into all state schools in the UK. She has been given a special award by the Greek government for her contribution to Hellenic Culture and Heritage and is an advisor to The Foundation for Science technology and Civilisation which aims to promote understanding between East and West.

Her first book, *Helen of Troy: Goddess, Princess, Whore* was published to great critical acclaim and has now been translated into ten languages. Bettany has made a number of factual films for the BBC, Channel 4, PBS, Discovery, The History Channel and National Geographic. These have now been seen by over 100 million worldwide.

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