



The Sacrifice of Socrates: Athens, Plato, Girard (Studies in Violence, Mimesis, & Culture)

Wm. Blake Tyrrell

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When Athenians suffered the shame of having lost a war from their own greed and foolishness, around 404 BCE the public's blame was directed at Socrates, a man whose unique appearance and behavior, as well as his disapproval of the democracy, made him a ready target. Socrates was subsequently put on trial and sentenced to death. However, as René Girard has pointed out, no individual can be held responsible for a communal crisis. Plato's *Apology* depicts Socrates as both the bane and the cure of Greek society, while his *Crito* shows a sacrificial Socrates, what some might consider a *pharmakos* figure, the human drug through whom Plato can dispense his philosophical remedies. With tremendous insight and satisfying complexity, this book analyzes classical texts through the lens of Girard's mimetic mechanism.

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