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Chapter 1 : Ancient Greek Philosophy | Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy

Greek Thinkers. A History of Ancient Philosophy. The Medical Art of Body and That of Soul: On the Mutual Influences between Ancient Greek Medicine and Philosophy.

It should be noted, first and foremost, that philosophy in its traditional sense was science – philosophers like Aristotle used rationality to come to scientific knowledge of the world around us. It was not until relatively modern times that philosophy was considered to be separate from the physical sciences. It is said that liberalism proper, the belief in equal rights under the law, begins with Locke. Locke is the man responsible, through Jefferson primarily, for the absence of nobility in America. Although nobility and birthrights still exist in Europe, especially among the few kings and queens left, the practice has all but vanished. He was soundly criticized by a lot of Christian polemicists those who make war against all thought but Christian thought , especially during the Middle Ages, because he was thought to be an atheist, whose principles for a happy life were passed down to this famous set of statements: Such intangible things he considered preconceived notions, which can be manipulated. Stoicism is based on the idea that anything which causes us to suffer in life is actually an error in our judgment, and that we should always have absolute control over our emotions. Put another way, the world is what we make of it. Epicureanism is the usual school of thought considered the opposite of Stoicism, but today many people mistake one for the other or combine them. Epicureanism argues that displeasures do exist in life and must be avoided, in order to enter a state of perfect mental peace ataraxia, in Greek. Stoicism argues that mental peace must be acquired out of your own will not to let anything upset you. Death is a necessity, so why feel depressed when someone dies? Why get enraged over something? The rage will not result in anything good. Of importance is to shun desire: He lived in the Persian Empire from c. The Dark Ages were not so dark. His two most well known works today are The Book of Healing which has nothing to do with physical medicine and The Canon of Medicine, which was his compilation of all known medical knowledge at that time. Influenced primarily by 1, his Book of Healing deals with everything from logic, to math, to music, to science. He proposed in it that Venus is closer than the Sun to Earth. Imagine not knowing that for a fact. The Sun looks a lot closer than Venus, but he got it right. He rejected astrology as a true science, since everything in it is based on conjecture, not evidence. As a matter of fact, the petrification of the bodies of plants and animals is not more extraordinary than the transformation of waters. Petrification can occur in any organic material, and involves the material, most notably wood, being impregnated by silica deposits, gradually changing from its original materials into stone. Avicenna is the first to describe the five classical senses: It would take too long to explain them in this list, but they are all forms of syllogisms, and every philosopher and student of philosophy is familiar with them from the beginning of education in the subject. Thomas founded everything he postulated firmly in Christianity, and for this reason, he is not universally popular, today. Even Christians consider that, since he derived all his ethical teachings from the Bible, Thomas is not independently authoritative of any of those teachings. But his job, in teaching the common people around him, was to get them to understand ethics without all the abstract philosophy. He was able to reach the masses with this simple, four-part instruction. He made five famous arguments for the existence of God, which are still discussed hotly on both sides: He has essence and existence, and these two qualities cannot be separated. He espoused significant principles of ethics and politics, in a time when the Greeks were espousing the same things. This may sound obvious to us today, but he wrote it in the early s to late s BC. It is the same principle of democracy that the Greeks argued for and developed: The emperor must be honest and his subjects must respect him, but he must also deserve that respect. If he makes a mistake, his subjects must offer suggestions to correct him, and he must consider them. Any ruler who acted contrary to these principles was a tyrant, and thus a thief more than a ruler. Confucius also devised his own, independent version of the Golden Rule, which had existed for at least a century in Greece before him. His phrasing was almost identical, but then furthered the idea: The second statement is much more important, constituting an

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active desire to help others. The only other philosopher of antiquity to advocate the Golden Rule in the positive form is Jesus of Nazareth. Smart is the new sexy! Analytical geometry is the study of geometry using algebra and the Cartesian coordinate system. He discovered the laws of refraction and reflection. He also invented the superscript notation still used today to indicate the powers of exponents. He advocated dualism, which is very basically defined as the power of the mind over the body: He rejected perception as unreliable, and considered deduction the only reliable method for examining, proving and disproving anything. He also adhered to the Ontological Argument for the Existence of a Christian God, stating that, because God is benevolent, Descartes can have some faith in the account of reality his senses provide him, for God has provided him with a working mind and sensory system and does not desire to deceive him. From this supposition, however, Descartes finally establishes the possibility of acquiring knowledge about the world based on deduction and perception. In terms of the study of knowledge therefore, he can be said to have contributed such ideas as a rigorous conception of foundationalism basic beliefs and the possibility that reason is the only reliable method of attaining knowledge. Paul accomplished more with the few letters we have of his, to various churches in Asia Minor, Israel and Rome, than any other mortal person in the Bible, except Jesus himself. But without Paul, the religion would have died in a few hundred years at best, or remained too insular to invite the entire world into its faith, as Jesus wanted. Paul had more than one falling out with Peter, primarily among the other Disciples. Peter insisted that at least one or two of the Jewish traditions remain as requirements, along with faith in Jesus, for one to be counted as Christian. Paul insisted that faith in Jesus is all that is required, and neither circumcision, refusal of certain foods or any other Jewish custom was necessary, because the world was now, and forevermore, under a state of Grace in Jesus, not a state of Law according to Moses. He is especially impressive to have systematized these principles flawlessly, having never met Jesus in person, and in direct opposition to Peter and several other Disciples. Many theologians and experts on Christianity and its history even call Paul, and not Jesus, the founder of Christianity. That may be going a bit too far, but keep in mind that the Disciples intended to keep Christianity for themselves, as the proper form of Judaism, to which only Jews could convert. Anyone could symbolically become a Jew by circumcision and obedience of the Mosaic Laws every one of them, not just the Big Ten. Paul argued against this, stating that as Christ was the absolute greatest good that the world would ever see, and Almighty because he and the Father are one, then the grace of Christ is sufficiently powerful to save anyone from his or her sin, whether Jewish, Gentile or anything else. If Socrates wrote anything down, it has not survived directly. Plato and Xenophon, another of his students, recounted a lot of his teachings, as did the playwright Aristophanes. It is only through philosophy that the world can be free of evils. He argued against democracy proper, rule by the people themselves, since in his view, a democracy had murdered his teacher, Socrates. All things of the material world can change, and our perception of them also, which means that the reality of the material world is weaker, less defined than that of the immaterial abstractions. Plato argued that something must have created the Universe. Whatever it is, the Universe is its offspring, and we, living on Earth, our bodies and everything that we see and hear and touch around us, are less real than the creator of the Universe, and the Universe itself. This is a foundation on which 4 based his understanding of existentialism. But consider that Aristotle is the first to have written systems by which to understand and criticize everything from pure logic to ethics, politics, literature, even science. Aristotle is also the first person in Western history to argue that there is a hierarchy to all life in the Universe; that because Nature never did anything unnecessary as he observed, then in the same way, this animal is in charge of that animal, and likewise with plants and animals together. The Medieval Christian theorists ran with this idea, extrapolating it to the hierarchy of God with Man, including angels. Thus, the angelic hierarchy of Catholicism, usually thought as a purely Catholic notion, stems from Aristotle, who lived and died before Jesus was born. Aristotle was, in fact, at the very heart of the classical education system used through the Medieval western world. His principles of ethics were founded on the concept of doing good, rather than merely being good. A person may be kind, merciful, charitable, etc. We could go on about Aristotle, of course, but this list has gone on long enough. Honorable mentions are very many, so list

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them as you like.

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Chapter 2 : Greek Philosophy – A Brief History Of Classical Greek Ideas

Excerpt from Greek Thinkers, Vol. 1: A History of Ancient Philosophy The present version of the first volume of Griechische Denker has been rendered directly from the German edition of , published by Veit & Company of Leipsic, which was placed in my hands in June,

Cosmology and the metaphysics of matter Because the earliest Greek philosophers focused their attention upon the origin and nature of the physical world, they are often called cosmologists, or naturalists. Although monistic views which trace the origin of the world to a single substance prevailed at first, they were soon followed by several pluralistic theories which trace it to several ultimate substances. Monistic cosmologies There is a consensus , dating back at least to the 4th century bc and continuing to the present, that the first Greek philosopher was Thales of Miletus flourished 6th century bc. Thales was counted, however, among the legendary Seven Wise Men Sophoi , whose name derives from a term that then designated inventiveness and practical wisdom rather than speculative insight. Thales demonstrated these qualities by trying to give the mathematical knowledge that he derived from the Babylonians a more exact foundation and by using it for the solution of practical problems—such as the determination of the distance of a ship as seen from the shore or of the height of the Egyptian pyramids. Although he was also credited with predicting an eclipse of the Sun , it is likely that he merely gave a natural explanation of one on the basis of Babylonian astronomical knowledge. Thales is considered the first Greek philosopher because he was the first to give a purely natural explanation of the origin of the world, free from mythological ingredients. He held that everything had come out of water —an explanation based on the discovery of fossil sea animals far inland. His tendency and that of his immediate successors to give nonmythological explanations was undoubtedly prompted by the fact that all of them lived on the coast of Asia Minor , surrounded by a number of nations whose civilizations were much further advanced than that of the Greeks and whose own mythological explanations varied greatly. It appeared necessary, therefore, to make a fresh start on the basis of what a person could observe and infer by looking at the world as it presented itself. This procedure naturally resulted in a tendency to make sweeping generalizations on the basis of rather restricted, though carefully checked, observations. Within this apeiron something arose to produce the opposites of hot and cold. These at once began to struggle with each other and produced the cosmos. The cold and wet partly dried up becoming solid earth , partly remained as water , and—by means of the hot—partly evaporated becoming air and mist , its evaporating part by expansion splitting up the hot into fiery rings, which surround the whole cosmos. Because these rings are enveloped by mist, however, there remain only certain breathing holes that are visible to human beings, appearing to them as the Sun, Moon, and stars. Anaximander was the first to realize that upward and downward are not absolute but that downward means toward the middle of the Earth and upward away from it, so that the Earth had no need to be supported as Thales had believed by anything. Life , being closely bound up with moisture, originated in the sea. All land animals, he held, are descendants of sea animals; because the first humans as newborn infants could not have survived without parents, Anaximander believed that they were born within an animal of another kind—specifically, a sea animal in which they were nurtured until they could fend for themselves. His position was for a long time thought to have been a step backward because, like Thales, he placed a special kind of matter at the beginning of the development of the world. But this criticism missed the point. Neither Thales nor Anaximander appear to have specified the way in which the other things arose out of water or apeiron. Anaximenes, however, declared that the other types of matter arose out of air by condensation and rarefaction. In this way, what to Thales had been merely a beginning became a fundamental principle that remained essentially the same through all of its transmutations. This concept of a principle that remains the same through many transmutations is, furthermore, the presupposition of the idea that nothing can come out of nothing and that all of the comings to be and passings away that human beings observe are nothing but transmutations of something that essentially remains the same eternally. In this way it also lies at the bottom

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of all of the conservation laws—the laws of the conservation of matter, force, and energy—that have been basic in the development of physics. Although Anaximenes of course did not realize all of the implications of his idea, its importance can hardly be exaggerated. But this is hardly an adequate characterization. It is, rather, characteristic of them that they did not clearly distinguish between kinds of matter, forces, and qualities, nor between physical and emotional qualities. To realize these ambiguities is important to an understanding of certain later developments in Greek philosophy.

Xenophanes of Colophon c. He criticized the popular notions of the gods, saying that people made the gods in their own image. But, more importantly, he argued that there could be only one God, the ruler of the universe, who must be eternal. For, being the strongest of all beings, he could not have come out of something less strong, nor could he be overcome or superseded by something else, because nothing could arise that is stronger than the strongest. The argument clearly rested on the axioms that nothing can come out of nothing and that nothing that exists can vanish. These axioms were made more explicit and carried to their logical and extreme conclusions by Parmenides of Elea born c. There can be no motion either, for it would have to be a motion into something that is—which is not possible since it would be blocked—or a motion into something that is not—which is equally impossible since what is not does not exist. Hence, everything is solid, immobile being. The familiar world, in which things move around, come into being, and pass away, is a world of mere belief *doxa*. In a second part of the poem, however, Parmenides tried to give an analytical account of this world of belief, showing that it rested on constant distinctions between what is believed to be positive. It is significant that Heraclitus of Ephesus c. Pluralistic cosmologies Parmenides had an enormous influence on the further development of philosophy. Most of the philosophers of the following two generations tried to find a way to reconcile his thesis that nothing comes into being nor passes away with the evidence presented to the senses.

Empedocles of Acragas c. But the elements are constantly mixed with one another by love and again separated by hate. Thus, through mixture and decomposition, composite things come into being and pass away. Because Empedocles conceived of love and hate as blind forces, he had to explain how, through random motion, living beings could emerge. This he did by means of a somewhat crude anticipation of the theory of the survival of the fittest. In the process of mixture and decomposition, the limbs and parts of various animals would be formed by chance. But they could not survive on their own; they would survive only when, by chance, they had come together in such a way that they were able to support and reproduce themselves. It was in this way that the various species were produced and continued to exist.

Anaxagoras of Clazomenae c. In the beginning, all of these particles had existed in an even mixture, in which nothing could be distinguished, much like the indefinite *apeiron* of Anaximander. But then *nous*, or intelligence, began at one point to set these particles into a whirling motion, foreseeing that in this way they would become separated from one another and then recombine in the most various ways so as to produce gradually the world in which human beings live. In contrast to the forces assumed by Empedocles, the *nous* of Anaxagoras is not blind but foresees and intends the production of the cosmos, including living and intelligent beings; however, it does not interfere with the process after having started the whirling motion. This is a strange combination of a mechanical and a nonmechanical explanation of the world. By far of greatest importance for the later development of philosophy and physical science was an attempt by the atomists Leucippus flourished 5th century bc and Democritus c. There are, then, two fundamental principles of the physical world, empty space and filled space—the latter consisting of atoms that, in contrast to those of modern physics, are real atoms; that is, they are absolutely indivisible because nothing can penetrate to split them. On these foundations, laid by Leucippus, Democritus appears to have built a whole system, aiming at a complete explanation of the varied phenomena of the visible world by means of an analysis of its atomic structure. This system begins with elementary physical problems, such as why a hard body can be lighter than a softer one. The explanation is that the heavier body contains more atoms, which are equally distributed and of round shape; the lighter body, however, has fewer atoms, most of which have hooks by which they form rigid gratings. The system ends with educational and ethical questions. A sound and cheerful person, useful to his fellows, is literally well composed. Although destructive passions involve violent, long-distance atomic

motions, education can help to contain them, creating a better composure. Democritus also developed a theory of the evolution of culture, which influenced later thinkers. Civilization, he thought, is produced by the needs of life, which compel human beings to work and to make inventions. When life becomes too easy because all needs are met, there is a danger that civilization will decay as people become unruly and negligent.

Epistemology of appearance All of the post-Parmenidean philosophers, like Parmenides himself, presupposed that the real world is different from the one that human beings perceive. Thus arose the problems of epistemology, or theory of knowledge. According to Anaxagoras, everything is contained in everything. But this is not what people perceive. He solved this problem by postulating that, if there is a much greater amount of one kind of particle in a thing than of all other kinds, the latter are not perceived at all. The observation was then made that sometimes different persons or kinds of animals have different perceptions of the same things. He explained this phenomenon by assuming that like is perceived by like. If, therefore, in the sense organ of one person there is less of one kind of stuff than of another, that person will perceive the former less keenly than the latter. This reasoning was also used to explain why some animals see better at night and others during the day. According to Democritus, atoms have no sensible qualities, such as taste, smell, or colour, at all. Thus, he tried to reduce all of them to tactile qualities explaining a bright white colour, for instance, as sharp atoms hitting the eye like needles, and he made a most elaborate attempt to reconstruct the atomic structure of things on the basis of their apparent sensible qualities.

Also of very great importance in the history of epistemology was Zeno of Elea. c. Parmenides had, of course, been severely criticized because of the strange consequences of his doctrine: To support him, however, Zeno tried to show that the assumption that there is motion and plurality leads to consequences that are no less strange. This he did by means of his famous paradoxes, saying that the flying arrow rests since it can neither move in the place in which it is nor in a place in which it is not, and that Achilles cannot outrun a turtle because, when he has reached its starting point, the turtle will have moved to a further point, and so on *ad infinitum*—that, in fact, he cannot even start running, for, before traversing the stretch to the starting point of the turtle, he will have to traverse half of it, and again half of that, and so on *ad infinitum*. All of these paradoxes are derived from the problem of the continuum. Although they have often been dismissed as logical nonsense, many attempts have also been made to dispose of them by means of mathematical theorems, such as the theory of convergent series or the theory of sets.

Metaphysics of number All of the philosophies mentioned so far are in various ways historically akin to one another. Toward the end of the 6th century bc, however, there arose, quite independently, another kind of philosophy, which only later entered into interrelation with the developments just mentioned: Pythagoras traveled extensively in the Middle East and in Egypt and, after his return to Samos, emigrated to southern Italy because of his dislike of the tyranny of Polycrates. c. At Croton and Metapontum he founded a philosophical society with strict rules and soon gained considerable political influence. He appears to have brought his doctrine of the transmigration of souls from the Middle East. Originally, this, too, was a very broad generalization made on the basis of comparatively few observations: But because the followers of Pythagoras tried to apply their principle everywhere with the greatest of accuracy, one of them—Hippasus of Metapontum flourished 5th century bc—made one of the most fundamental discoveries in the entire history of science: At first sight this discovery seemed to destroy the very basis of the Pythagorean philosophy, and the school thus split into two sects, one of which engaged in rather abstruse numerical speculations, while the other succeeded in overcoming the difficulty by ingenious mathematical inventions. The speculations described so far constitute, in many ways, the most important part of the history of Greek philosophy because all of the most fundamental problems of Western philosophy turned up here for the first time. One also finds here the formation of a great many concepts that have continued to dominate Western philosophy and science to the present day.

Anthropology and relativism In the middle of the 5th century bc, Greek thinking took a somewhat different turn through the advent of the Sophists. Philosophically they were, in a way, the leaders of a rebellion against the preceding development, which increasingly had resulted in the belief that the real world is quite different from the phenomenal world. This is the meaning of the pronouncement of Protagoras

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of Abdera c. The Sophists were not only skeptical of what had by then become a philosophical tradition but also of other traditions. On the basis of the observation that different nations have different rules of conduct even in regard to things considered most sacred—such as the relations between the sexes, marriage, and burial—they concluded that most rules of conduct are conventions. What is really important is to be successful in life and to gain influence over others.

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Chapter 3 : Ancient Greek philosophy - Wikipedia

Ancient Greek philosophy arose in the 6th century BC and continued throughout the Hellenistic period and the period in which Ancient Greece was part of the Roman Empire. Philosophy was used to make sense out of the world in a non-religious way.

Before philosophy for tens of thousands of years, human beings did not see the world as we see it. Why did the Nile rise and flood the fields with dark, fertile soil? Because the Pharaoh had commanded it to. Why did the violent storm destroy the village and its people? Because it wished to. Thoughts, no less than acts and feelings, are subordinated to this experience. It is to the lasting glory of the Greeks that they forever liberated the human mind from these shackles. Major Periods Greek philosophy, and philosophy itself, begins around B. These three movements of thought define the major periods of ancient Greek philosophy: The time of the philosophers before Socrates, the Presocratics, which spans about years; the time of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle, which spans roughly another years; and the time of the Hellenistic philosophers, by far the longest period, stretching approximately from B. The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man is invaluable for anyone wishing to fully appreciate the significance of the contribution made by the Greek philosophers. Although rather dry and academic in places, it presents a fascinating view of the pre-philosophic mind. Jones is very good at making difficult ideas clear, he includes long excerpts from the philosophers themselves, and he goes to great lengths to place each important thinker or movement in the proper cultural setting. Zeller, a great 19th century German scholar, saw the Greeks as champions of reason over myth and religion and let this view guide his *Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy*, a short, classic account of Greek philosophy that may still be consulted with profit. The Presocratic Philosophers Thales, by asking a very simple question, began an intellectual revolution of the most profound kind. What, he asked, is the one thing to which the great variety of things making up the world may be reduced? This is of course wrong, but that is not at all important. What is important is the radically new way of looking at the world underlying his question, the view that the great multiplicity making up the world may be reduced to a unity, and that the unit to which this multiplicity may be reduced is itself a part of nature, not a god or other supernatural entity. With this approach, Thales started a tradition rich in theories about the fundamental nature of the physical world—some saying it reduces to one thing but disagreeing about what it was, others saying it reduces to several but disagreeing about what they were. Pythagoras was the source of a lesser stream of thought during this early period. Deeply religious, he and his followers formed secretive mystery cults devoted to the redemption and purification of the soul. This was achieved by the attainment of wisdom, and in its pursuit they cultivated music, science and mathematics—especially mathematics in its cosmological applications. The cosmos for them was well-ordered, and it was well-ordered because it was a material expression of numbers and numerical relations—just as, on a much smaller scale, the harmonies of a tuned lyre are an auditory expression of numbers and their ratios. The Pythagoreans, although distinguished from other Presocratic philosophers by their mystical bent, share with them the fundamental notion that unity and order underlie the universe and as such are very much a part of the same philosophic and scientific tradition. The Presocratic philosophers are best approached by first studying a work on the history of philosophy giving a unified account of the entire period, and then studying the individual philosophers of the period in more detail. We now possess only fragments of the original works from the period, but even the bits and pieces we do possess may be studied with profit. Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle Socrates, unlike the philosophers before him, was not particularly interested in the natural world. He was mainly interested in getting a clear grasp of the moral concepts guiding our lives and in the method by which we come to know the truth about them and about anything else. He would often get together with some of the best and brightest young men of Athens to discuss questions such as "What is courage? Although Socrates never committed anything to writing, his ideas were to have a lasting influence. The nobility of his soul and the force of his intellect deeply impressed many of the young men in

his circle, some of whom would carry on his work. Plato, an Athenian nobleman, was one of these young men. Disgusted with the butchery and political incompetence of his times, with its moral relativism and skepticism, and profoundly inspired by Socrates, he turned his back on the political career to which he was destined and devoted himself to a life of philosophy. He passionately wanted to construct an ideal state and to place it on a solid moral and metaphysical basis. This basis, he held, was the world of Forms, a world of unchanging, perfect objects existing in some non-natural and non-temporal dimension, a world that is the source of, and more real than, the physical world in which we live. To know, he believed, is to know these Forms, not the perceptible objects around us, and the noblest life that anyone can live is the life of a philosopher, a life devoted to grasping them. Not surprisingly, his ideal state turned out to be one ruled by such philosophers. For him, only the world we live in exists and he had a passionate love for it, believing that every part of it had a beauty of its own, from the heavenly bodies to the lowliest grub. Knowledge of this world is acquired by allowing our eyes and ears and other senses to perceive it, and by then letting our intelligence go to work on the material provided by the operation of our senses defining it, analyzing it, and systematizing it. Our intelligence, or reason, is our highest power, and our possession of this power distinguishes us from all other creatures and makes us human. Our aim in life is to be as fully human as possible, to flourish as human beings. More than anything, that means pursuing knowledge as diligently as we can, contemplating it once we have it, and always, so far as humanly possible, letting our actions be guided by it. The forthcoming *Socrates* by Williams should prove to be a short and lucid introduction to the life and thought of Socrates, and *The Philosophy of Socrates*, edited by Vlastos, offers a detailed and learned treatment of the thought of Socrates, containing a collection of critical essays by some of the foremost scholars in that field. *The Works of Aristotle Translated into English*, edited by Ross and Smith, is still the best edition of the complete works. There are also a number of works on more specialized topics in Aristotle by Objectivists or authors sympathetic to Objectivism. To be sure, the schools both had founded continued to exist for centuries, until the Christian emperor Justinian closed them down in A. Three new schools of thought were more original and met with considerable success: Their very success, however, was a measure of the growing failure of the ancient world. Economic, political and social conditions became gradually worse, and over time people felt increasingly troubled and insecure. More and more there was a narrowing of the human horizon, a limiting of what it was thought possible for humans to achieve in life. Increasingly people sought, not so much to achieve something positive, but to avoid a negative: The message of the three new schools of thought resonated with this sense of the times, for the main concern of each was to attain this inner peace. Each, however, mapped out a different road toward that end—the Stoics arguing that it was attained through "acceptance of nature," the Epicureans through a life of "repose," and the Sceptics through "intellectual equipoise," a stance achieved when one realizes that there are as many reasons for any given position as there are against it. For the last period of ancient Greek philosophy, long as it is, useful works are not as numerous as for the other two periods. However, *Stoic and Epicurean* by Hicks, a learned Cambridge classicist, offers a detailed treatment of the three new schools, and each of the following works focuses its attention on one particular school: *The Greek Atomists and Epicurus*. Oxford University Press, Hildesheim and New York: *A History of Philosophy*, volume I. Henri Frankfort et al. *The Intellectual Adventure of Ancient Man*. The University of Chicago Press, Allan Gotthelf and James G. Cambridge University Press, *A History of Greek Philosophy*, vols. Edith Hamilton and Huntington Cairns, eds. *The Collected Dialogues of Plato*. *A History of Western Philosophy*, vol. Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, David Keyt and Fred Miller, eds. New York and London, *The Basic Works of Aristotle*. Columbia University Press, *The Works of Aristotle Translated into English*, 12 vols. *The Philosophy of Socrates: A Collection of Critical Essays*. The Odyssey Press, Oxford University Press, forthcoming. *History of Ancient Philosophy*. *Outlines of the History of Greek Philosophy*. Revised by Wilhelm Nestle. If so, please consider making a donation. Our digital channels garner over 1 million views per year. Your contribution will help us to achieve and maintain this impact.

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Chapter 4 : History of Philosophy: Ancient

Ancient Greek Philosophy. From Thales, who is often considered the first Western philosopher, to the Stoics and Skeptics, ancient Greek philosophy opened the doors to a particular way of thinking that provided the roots for the Western intellectual tradition.

April 16, by Rajib Mukherjee Ancient Greek Civilization and its Influences on the Western Way of Life Western civilization and its ideologies have been influenced by Greek philosophy and its thinking since its inception back in the 4th and 5th century BCE. Greece not only gave the modern Western Civilization its understanding of philosophy, cosmogony and theology but it also imparted greater influences in the areas of governance, social and other forms of science. Classical Greece was a melting of ideas that emancipated from all corners of the ancient world and influenced every aspect of its existence. Greeks devised advanced mathematics. In fact Greeks used this science to reason and find answers to everything around them. The influence of mathematics in ancient Greece is amazing to note. They knew about the Golden Ratio, which is common in nature, and used it in building magnificent structures. The best example of which is the Parthenon which was built in the 5th century BCE during the Greek Classical Era as a tribute to the patron deity Athena. This eulogy of a bygone era was necessary for the discussion that follows about Greek Philosophy. Because philosophy is something that is at the root of every human pursuit, scientific or otherwise. Influence of Advanced Eastern Civilizations Greece would have never become what it was, back in the 5th century, let alone influence modern philosophy, if it did not benefit from the exchange of ideas from some of the most advanced and highly evolved civilizations of the ancient world, namely, Egypt, Mesopotamia, Persia, Assyria and the Hittites. In fact a lot can be attributed to the fact that a majority of the Greek city states of the time were conveniently located just across the Mediterranean Sea, at the other shore of which lied these advanced civilizations of the time. A majority of the Greek city states not only benefited from original ideas from these much evolved mid-eastern civilizations but they also benefitted through trade. Everything, as it seemed was exchanged across the Mediterranean. Athens was the most dominant of the city states of the time and it also benefited from its close proximity to the Saronic Gulf which made it possible to bring in ideas and materials from across the sea. This is why ancient Athens is often also referred to as the cradle of western civilization. Athens has along with its fertile lands and fertile environment fit for thinking, achieved more than some of the other war-mongering city states in Greece of the likes of Sparta have. Greek Philosophy Greek philosophy continued to flourish till the end of the Hellenistic period. Modern philosophers often state that Greek philosophy started much earlier than that. Even as early as in BCE philosophy was a favorite subject among Greek thinkers. But, it was not until the classical period in Greece that its ideals and ideologies started influencing the western way of thinking and which has survived till today. At a later point, however, and at the end of the Hellenistic period, when Rome brought Greece under its control, it influenced the Roman way of thinking as well. The most striking influence is however, from the Classical Greek era, a period which ended with the death of Alexander the great. The importance of Athens and its influence started to dwindle, however, with its increasingly losing struggle against another dominant force in ancient Greece – Sparta. Ancient Greek Philosophers Ancient Greek philosophers can be divided into two main groups: The pre-Socratic The Socratic. The pre-Socratic period embodies the work of the ancient thinkers, notable among whom are Miletus from Thales who started the Milesian School and Heraclitus. Classical Greek Philosophers The Classical Greek philosophers have the highest influence on the western way of thinking and the overall western civilization. Some of the greatest philosophers from this era include Socrates, Plato and Aristotle. Socrates BCE – BCE Probably the best known among ancient Classical Greek Philosophers and the figure-head of western philosophy, Socrates was a man who was both centuries ahead of his time and a continuous source of trouble for the city-state of Athens. Much of what is known today about Socrates is from his dialogues that were later written down by his students, chief of whom were Plato and Xenophon. To some extent some

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information is also available from the accounts left by his contemporary Aristophanes. In that sense Plato who was a student of Socrates also sometimes transgresses the boundaries of reality and went deep into fiction in some of his dialogues. His depiction of Socrates is sometimes hugely exaggerated. The really true and somewhat unbiased account is somewhat attributed to Xenophon. Socrates rejected the notion that god is omnipotent and he also believed that the upper echelons of power in Athens should be a representation of the best intellectual minds of the time. Because of his radical ideas he came in frequent clashes with the powers that be at Athens. He was finally charged with the crime of polluting the minds of the young Athenians and being a non-believer of the Athenian Gods, something that was punishable by death in ancient Athens. He was tried by jury who found him guilty. Socrates, thus was condemned to death and execution was carried out by having him drink a poisonous potion made of hemlock from a cup. This method is also known as the Socratic Method, in which one person would ask another a series of questions and through the answers both the person asking the question and the answerer would come to a logical answer. This is also very well described by Plato in the Socratic Dialogues. Today, modern western philosophy is greatly indebted to Socrates for devising this method back in the 5th century BCE. The method can be to some extent be compared with the process of trial and error in which the wrong methods or in this case the wrong hypotheses are eliminated and at the end the one true or best logical explanation can be arrived at. Today, Plato is known for his priceless Socratic Dialogues, his initiation of the Academy in Athens, which promoted free thinking and exchange of ideas on a wide variety of subjects including mathematics, logic, religion and philosophy which ultimately lead to the establishment of the Platonic ideals. Plato has been credited by many modern philosophers as the person to have influenced western thinking and in that sense has been placed ahead of his teacher and mentor Socrates. Plato came from a well-to-do family who were actively involved in the political scene of Athens. Interestingly Plato after his military services had joined the group known as Thirty Tyrants, the very group that his teacher Socrates had defied and enraged. This group also consisted Charmides his uncle. Plato had some ambitions in the political scene of Athens, but the upheaval brought about by the toppling of the Thirty Tyrants and then later on the trial and execution of Socrates prompted him to leave Attica and travel the world in search for knowledge and to study the work of other master-minds of the time. He traveled as far as Egypt and to Cyrene and to Italy in order to exchange ideas and increase his own knowledge in astronomy, geometry and religion among other branches of studies. One of the first things that Plato did upon his return from travels after 12 years was to establish the Academy on the hallowed grounds and according to some mythologies the burial ground of a Greek Hero Academos. Widely considered to be the earliest European university, the center offered education on a variety of subjects and helped young free thinking minds an environment for exchange of ideas. The school had continued in some form till CE at which point curtains were drawn over it by the last Latin speaking roman emperor of the east, Justinian I. Plato unlike his teacher Socrates was a prolific writer and left behind no less than 36 dialogues and 13 letters. At the age of 17 he joined the Academy in Athens founded by Plato and remained there for almost two decades. Later on he founded his own school the Lyceum, also in Athens. Later on, however, after the death of Plato, he become increasingly involved in the study of Empiricism. Aristotle is also attributed to as the tutor of the then young prince Alexander, son of Philip II of Macedonia who later on came to be known as Alexander the Great. The Macedonian court had always been supportive of Aristotle and that is why when Alexander the Great went on to conquer Athens, he gave permission to Aristotle to start a school there. The Lyceum had, at that time in history, one of the finest libraries filled with manuscripts that contained deductions and works of hundreds of scholars who lived and studied there. Among the many areas that Aristotle touched as a philosopher, scholar and researcher were geology, biology, philosophy, meteorology which included the sciences of weather as well earthly materials, astronomy, psychology and metaphysics.

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Greek Thinkers A History of Ancient Philosophy by Theodor Gomperz Vol. 1 The Dialogues of Plato Translated Into English With Analyses and Introductions by Plato.

Presocratic Thought An analysis of Presocratic thought presents some difficulties. Even these purportedly verbatim words often come to us in quotation from other sources, so it is difficult, if not impossible, to attribute with certainty a definite position to any one thinker. Presocratic thought marks a decisive turn away from mythological accounts towards rational explanations of the cosmos. Indeed, some Presocratics openly criticize and ridicule traditional Greek mythology, while others simply explain the world and its causes in material terms. This is not to say that the Presocratics abandoned belief in gods or things sacred, but there is a definite turn away from attributing causes of material events to gods, and at times a refiguring of theology altogether. The foundation of Presocratic thought is the preference and esteem given to rational thought over mythologizing. This movement towards rationality and argumentation would pave the way for the course of Western thought. The Milesians Thales c. Aristotle offers some conjectures as to why Thales might have believed this Graham First, all things seem to derive nourishment from moisture. Next, heat seems to come from or carry with it some sort of moisture. Finally, the seeds of all things have a moist nature, and water is the source of growth for many moist and living things. Some assert that Thales held water to be a component of all things, but there is no evidence in the testimony for this interpretation. It is much more likely, rather, that Thales held water to be a primal source for all thingsâ€”perhaps the sine qua non of the world. Like Thales, Anaximander c. That he did not, like Thales, choose a typical element earth, air, water, or fire shows that his thinking had moved beyond sources of being that are more readily available to the senses. He might have thought that, since the other elements seem more or less to change into one another, there must be some source beyond all theseâ€”a kind of background upon or source from which all these changes happen. How it is that this separation took place is unclear, but we might presume that it happened via the natural force of the boundless. The universe, though, is a continual play of elements separating and combining. If our dates are approximately correct, Anaximenes c. However, the conceptual link between them is undeniable. Like Anaximander, Anaximenes thought that there was something boundless that underlies all other things. Unlike Anaximander, Anaximenes made this boundless thing something definiteâ€”air. For Anaximander, hot and cold separated off from the boundless, and these generated other natural phenomena Graham For Anaximenes, air itself becomes other natural phenomena through condensation and rarefaction. Rarefied air becomes fire. When it is condensed, it becomes water, and when it is condensed further, it becomes earth and other earthy things, like stones Graham This then gives rise to all other life forms. Furthermore, air itself is divine. Air, then, changes into the basic elements, and from these we get all other natural phenomena. Xenophanes of Colophon Xenophanes c. At the root of this poor depiction of the gods is the human tendency towards anthropomorphizing the gods. Indeed, Xenophanes famously proclaims that if other animals cattle, lions, and so forth were able to draw the gods, they would depict the gods with bodies like their own F Beyond this, all things come to be from earth F27 , not the gods, although it is unclear whence came the earth. The reasoning seems to be that God transcends all of our efforts to make him like us. If everyone paints different pictures of divinity, and many people do, then it is unlikely that God fits into any of those frames. Pythagoras and Pythagoreanism Ancient thought was left with such a strong presence and legacy of Pythagorean influence, and yet little is known with certainty about Pythagoras of Samos c. Many know Pythagoras for his eponymous theoremâ€”the square of the hypotenuse of a right triangle is equal to the sum of the squares of the adjacent sides. Whether Pythagoras himself invented the theorem, or whether he or someone else brought it back from Egypt, is unknown. He developed a following that continued long past his death, on down to Philolaus of Croton c. Whether or not the Pythagoreans followed a particular doctrine is up for debate, but it is clear that, with Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans, a new way of thinking was born in ancient philosophy that

had a significant impact on Platonic thought. The Pythagoreans believed in the transmigration of souls. The soul, for Pythagoras, finds its immortality by cycling through all living beings in a 3-year cycle, until it returns to a human being. Indeed, Xenophanes tells the story of Pythagoras walking by a puppy who was being beaten. What exactly the Pythagorean psychology entails for a Pythagorean lifestyle is unclear, but we pause to consider some of the typical characteristics reported of and by Pythagoreans. Plato and Aristotle tended to associate the holiness and wisdom of number—and along with this, harmony and music—with the Pythagoreans. Perhaps more basic than number, at least for Philolaus, are the concepts of the limited and unlimited. Nothing in the cosmos can be without limit, including knowledge. Imagine if nothing were limited, but matter were just an enormous heap or morass. Next, suppose that you are somehow able to gain a perspective of this morass to do so, there must be some limit that gives you that perspective! Presumably, nothing at all could be known, at least not with any degree of precision, the most careful observation notwithstanding. Additionally, all known things have number, which functions as a limit of things insofar as each thing is a unity, or composed of a plurality of parts. Heraclitus of Ephesus c. His aphoristic style is rife with wordplay and conceptual ambiguities. Heraclitus saw reality as composed of contraries—a reality whose continual process of change is precisely what keeps it at rest. Fire plays a significant role in his picture of the cosmos. No God or man created the cosmos, but it always was, is, and will be fire. At times it seems as though fire, for Heraclitus, is a primary element from which all things come and to which they return. At others, his comments on fire could easily be seen metaphorically. Whether one travels up the road or down it, the road is the same road. This, according to Aristotle, supposedly drove Cratylus to the extreme of never saying anything for fear that the words would attempt to freeze a reality that is always fluid, and so, Cratylus merely pointed. So, the cosmos and all things that make it up are what they are through the tension and distention of time and becoming. The river is what it is by being what it is not. Fire, or the ever-burning cosmos, is at war with itself, and yet at peace—it is constantly wanting fuel to keep burning, and yet it burns and is satisfied. Parmenides and Zeno If it is true that for Heraclitus life thrives and even finds stillness in its continuous movement and change, then for Parmenides of Elea c. Parmenides was a pivotal figure in Presocratic thought, and one of the most influential of the Presocratics in determining the course of Western philosophy. According to McKirahan, Parmenides is the inventor of metaphysics—the inquiry into the nature of being or reality. While the tenets of his thought have their home in poetry, they are expressed with the force of logic. The Parmenidean logic of being thus sparked a long lineage of inquiry into the nature of being and thinking. Parmenides recorded his thought in the form of a poem. In it, there are two paths that mortals can take—the path of truth and the path of error. The first path is the path of being or what-is. The right way of thinking is to think of what-is, and the wrong way is to think both what-is and what-is-not. The latter is wrong, simply because non-being is not. In other words, there is no non-being, so properly speaking, it cannot be thought—there is nothing there to think. It is only our long entrenched habits of sensation that mislead us into thinking down the wrong path of non-being. The world, and its appearance of change, thrusts itself upon our senses, and we erroneously believe that what we see, hear, touch, taste, and smell is the truth. But, if non-being is not, then change is impossible, for when anything changes, it moves from non-being to being. For example, for a being to grow tall, it must have at some point not been tall. Since non-being is not and cannot therefore be thought, we are deluded into believing that this sort of change actually happens. Similarly, what-is is one. If there were a plurality, there would be non-being, that is, this would not be that. Parmenides thus argues that we must trust in reason alone. In the Parmenidean tradition, we have Zeno c. Zeno seems to have composed a text wherein he claims to show the absurdity in accepting that there is a plurality of beings, and he also shows that motion is impossible. Zeno shows that if we attempt to count a plurality, we end up with an absurdity. If there were a plurality, then it would be neither more nor less than the number that it would have to be. Thus, there would be a finite number of things. On the other hand, if there were a plurality, then the number would be infinite because there is always something else between existing things, and something else between those, and something else between those, ad infinitum. Thus, if there were a

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plurality of things, then that plurality would be both infinite and finite in number, which is absurd F4. The most enduring paradoxes are those concerned with motion. It is impossible for a body in motion to traverse, say, a distance of twenty feet. In order to do so, the body must first arrive at the halfway point, or ten feet. But in order to arrive there, the body in motion must travel five feet. But in order to arrive there, the body must travel two and a half feet, ad infinitum. Since, then, space is infinitely divisible, but we have only a finite time to traverse it, it cannot be done. Presumably, one could not even begin a journey at all. Achilles must first reach the place where the slow runner began. This means that the slow runner will already be a bit beyond where he began.

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Chapter 6 : Greek Thinkers: A History of Ancient Philosophy by Theodor Gomperz

The first group of Greek philosophers is a triad of Milesian thinkers: Thales, Anaximander, and Anaxagoras. Their main concern was to come up with a cosmological theory purely based on natural phenomena.

His poems and thoughts always seemed to have a significant influence from Xenophanes, leading to most of the historians contemplating that he must have been his pupil. Among the pre-Socratic philosophers those who went into the limelight before the time-period of Socrates, he is placed among one of the most significant ones. If truth be told, his attempt at deciphering this philosophical mystery and a rhetorical one, some might say leads to a rather paradoxical statement rather than a satisfying answer. And in turn, it becomes a paradox because it is impossible to think of what is not, and again, it is also impossible to think of something that cannot be thought of. The subsequent philosophers that succeeded him would work on to simply these philosophical impossibilities. His philosophical views much revolved around the nature itself. As it was the case with most of the philosophers in ancient Greece, his ideas contrasted and collided with the contemporary ideologies and beliefs that led him to face life-threatening consequences. Anaxagoras is credited for being the first to establish a philosophy in its entirety in Athens, a place where it would go on to reach its peak, and continue to have an impact on the society for hundreds of years to come. He believed that in the physical world, everything contains a portion of everything else. He is credited for being the first known writer on philosophy – given that he is the only known philosopher to have authored the first surviving lines of western philosophy. He is also a known figure in early of biology and geography. Moreover, he created the first world image of an open universe, diverting from the-then notion of closed universe and making him the first speculative astronomer in the human history. This source acted as the prime point of differentiation for polar opposites like hot and cold, light and dark and so on. Much of his work may remain truncated, especially at the hands of subsequent generations of philosophers. But he was indeed one of the greatest minds in the ancient Greece. One of his philosophical landmarks has been his assertion of four element theory of matter. It states that all matter is basically composed of four primary elements – earth, air, fire and water. This became one of the earliest theories to have been postulated on particle physics, although some historians see it as a haggard effort to negate the no-dualism theory of Parmenides. He simply rejected the presence of any void or an empty space, thus contradicting the philosophical ideology of Parmenides through and through. He put forth the idea of opposite motive forces involved in building of the world – namely, love as the cause of union and strife as the cause of separation. He also went on to become the first person to give an evolutionary account on the development of species. It is worth noticing he tried to lay a detailed explanation to contradicting conclusions present in the physical world in days much before the development of logic. Zeno further expanded and defended the philosophical ideologies established by Parmenides, which were facing much opposition from common opinion at that time. He propounded multiple paradoxes himself, which became as debated among later generations of philosophers. A majority of contemporary arguments on his paradoxes used to lead to dividing time and space infinitely – such as if there is a distance; there also is half of that distance and so on. Zeno was first in the philosophical history of mankind to show the concept of infinity exists. In fact, he is best known for the theorem in geometry that is named after him. He is one of the most familiar names from pre-Socratic society, but yet, what we know about him surprisingly less. He is credited with founding a philosophical school that amassed him a number of followers. It was at this school that Pythagoras tried to find a mutual harmony between real life and the practical aspects of philosophy. He regarded the world as perfect harmony and aimed his teaching on how to lead a harmonious life. He openly diverted from the relentless physical speculations prior philosophers were so busy interpreting and assimilating, and attempted to establish an ethical system that would be based on human reasoning rather than various and often widely debated theological doctrines. Instead of regurgitating ideas solely based on his

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individual interpretations, he would question people relentlessly on their beliefs, and try to find definitions of virtues by conversing with anyone who would proclaim to possess such qualities. Socrates became a key figure amassing numerous followers, but he also made many enemies. Eventually, his beliefs and realistic approach in philosophy led to his execution. But one might argue that his philosophical martyrdom, more than anything else, turned him into the iconic figure that he is today. But while Socrates was relentlessly occupied with interpreting philosophy based solely on human reasoning, Plato indulged himself in combining the two major approaches – pre-Socratic metaphysics and nature theology with Socratic ethical theology. In physics, he agreed with much of the views of Pythagoreans. His interpretation of things were more based on facts learnt from experience one would gain in their lives, an approach that differed from that of his master who preferred a perspective that was beyond the accessibility of physical senses. He proved to be an imaginative writer and equally creative polymath, gradually re-writing pre-established concepts in almost all areas of knowledge that he touched. At a time when the expertise of human knowledge remained far too generalized, he broke down the overall knowledge assimilation into distinct categories such as ethics, biology, mathematics and physics – a classification pattern still used today. Aristotle is truly a key figure in the ancient Greek philosophy whose influence went on to have an impact way beyond the bounds of ancient Greece, and much further in time. He is reputed among historians as the Father of Ancient Greek Philosophy. Thales is also said to be the founder of school of natural philosophy. As a philosopher, Thales rarely confined his research to a limited area among available knowledge and was actively indulged in understanding various aspects of knowledge such as philosophy, mathematics, science, geography and what not. He is also said to have developed a well-defined standard to theorize why changes occur in things. He proposed water as the basic underlying component of the world. Thales was highly esteemed among ancient Greeks and his hypotheses usually added meaning and girth into already existing ideas on nature. Final Conclusion The emergence of entire western philosophical tradition can be traced back to era of ancient Greek philosophy. The evolution of philosophical concerns and critical thinking among the philosophers in ancient Greece that started somewhere around the 6th century BCE arguably played a pivotal role in the subsequent development of knowledge as we know it today. They practiced varying approaches in their philosophical journey, seeking answers to known paradoxes, and creating countless more on the way. It started with the first attempt by Thales at perceiving the world from a methodical perspective. The succeeding cohort of critical thinkers went on diversify this approach into natural science, metaphysics and, eventually, ethical theology – leading to the evolution of philosophy as we know it today.

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Chapter 7 : Ancient Greek Philosophers for Kids

Thales of Miletus gets the top spot on this list for being the pivotal point in ancient Greek philosophy whereon the subsequent generations of many famous thinkers, theorists, dialectics, meta physicists and philosophers sprouted from.

Tests will consist of essay questions. All tests will be comprehensive. On Thursday September 15th class will be held in Rod Library. The research report should be typed, double-spaced, and include your name and the course title. Your research report should include a word description of your topic. The description should include the names of philosophers you will use, and a description of the issues on which you will focus. Also, include information about questions you have concerning your research and whether you will be working with other students. The second part of your research report should include the following information: Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Edwards, ed. Additional reference works may be used and may be included in the report. The Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Paul Edwards, ed. The bibliography must be typed. It should include no less than four articles or books which were the main sources for your research other than assigned reading and not including reference works. Web sources should not be among your four main sources. Also, do not include encyclopedias among your four sources. The four main sources must be philosophical. For each source write two paragraphs containing the following information: The paper must be typed, double-spaced. The paper should be written in complete sentences, not in outline form. Each paper should begin with a paragraph stating: Include a cover sheet with the following information: Also, include an updated, corrected version of your annotated bibliography. Staple together the cover sheet, paper, and annotated bibliography. Points will be deducted if any part of the written work is late. One point per day will be deducted for each part of the written assignment which is handed-in late. Also, research reports must be handed-in in order to receive credit for bibliographies and papers, and bibliographies must be handed-in in order to receive credit for papers. The following are among the research topics which would be appropriate for this course. Specific information about the extra credit option will be provided in September. There are many excellent secondary sources for ancient Greek philosophy. This list represents some of the sources with which I am familiar. I encourage you to select some of these to assist you during the semester. Also, if you go to my web site you will find some helpful links. Tice and Thomas P. Students requesting instructional accommodations due to disabilities must arrange for such accommodation through the Office of Disability Services. The ODS is located at:

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Lecture 8 Greek Thought: Socrates, Plato and Aristotle The political and social upheaval caused by the Persian Wars as well as continued strife between Athens and Sparta see Lecture 7 had at least one unintended consequence. In the 5th century, a flood of new ideas poured into Athens. In general, these new ideas came as a result of an influx of Ionian thinkers into the Attic peninsula. Athens had become the intellectual and artistic center of the Greek world. Furthermore, by the mid-5th century, it had become more common for advanced thinkers to reject traditional explanations of the world of nature. As a result of the experience of a century of war, religious beliefs declined. Gods and goddesses were no longer held in the same regard as they had been a century earlier. I suppose we could generalize and say that the Persian and Peloponnesian Wars taught that the actions of men and women determine their own destiny, and not "Moirai. The Greeks used their creative energies to explain experience by recourse to history, tragedy, comedy, art and architecture. But their creative energies were also used to "invent" philosophy, defined as "the love of wisdom. Over time, Greek thinkers began to suspect that there was a rational or logical order to the universe. Miletus was a prominent trading depot and its people had direct contact with the ideas of the Near East. What was so revolutionary about Thales was that he omitted the gods from his account of the origins of nature. It is also necessary to point out that Thales committed none of his views to writing. Anaximander of Miletus c. According to Anaximander, the cold and wet condensed to form the earth while the hot and dry formed the moon, sun and stars. The heat from the fire in the skies dried the earth and shrank the seas. Thales and Anaximander were "matter" philosophers -- they believed that everything had its origin in a material substance. Pythagoras of Samos c. The Pythagoreans, who lived in Greek cities in southern Italy, discovered that the intervals in the musical scale could be expressed mathematically and that this principle could be extended to the universe. In other words, the universe contained an inherent mathematical order. What we witness in the Pythagoreans is the emphasis on form rather than matter, and here we move from sense perception to the logic of mathematics. Parmenides of Elea c. What Parmenides did was to apply logic to the arguments of the Pythagoreans, thus setting the groundwork of formal logic. He argued that reality is one, eternal and unchanging. We "know" reality not by the senses, which are capable of deception, but through the human mind, not through experience, but through reason. As we shall see, this concept shall become central to the philosophic thought of Plato. Perhaps the most important of all the Pre-Socratic philosophers was Heraclitus of Ephesus fl. Known as "the weeping philosopher" because of his pessimistic view of human nature and "the dark one" because of the mystical obscurity of his thought, Heraclitus wrote *On Nature*, fragments of which we still possess. Whereas the Pythagoreans had emphasized harmony, Heraclitus suggested that life was maintained by a tension of opposites, fighting a continuous battle in which neither side could win a final victory. Movement and the flux of change were unceasing for individuals, but the structure of the cosmos constant. This law of individual flux within a permanent universal framework was guaranteed by the Logos, an intelligent governing principle materially embodied as fire, and identified with soul or life. Fire is the primordial element out of which all else has arisen -- change becoming is the first principle of the universe. Cratylus, a follower of Heraclitus, once made the remark that "You cannot step twice into the same river. The logical conclusion of this is the opposite of flux, that is, a belief in an absolute, unchanging reality of which the world of change and movement is only a quasi-existing phantom, phenomenal, not real. Democritus of Abdera c. His universe consisted of empty space and an infinite number of atoms a-tomos, the "uncuttable". Eternal and indivisible, these atoms moved in the void of space. An atomic theory to the core, Democritus saw all matter constructed of atoms which accounted for all change in the natural world. What the Pre-Socratic thinkers from Thales to Democritus had

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done was nothing less than amazing -- they had given to nature a rational and non-mythical foundation. This new approach allowed a critical analysis of theories, whereas mythical explanations relied on blind faith alone. Such a spirit even found its way into medicine, where the Greek physician Hippocrates of Cos c. Physicians observed ill patients, classified symptoms and then made predictions about the course of a disease. For instance, of epilepsy, he wrote: The Sophists were men whose responsibility it was to train and educate the sons of Athenian citizens. There were no formal school as we know them today. The Sophists taught the skills sophia of rhetoric and oratory. Both of these arts were essential for the education of the Athenian citizenry. After all, it was the sons of the citizens who would eventually find themselves debating important issues in the Assembly and the Council of Five Hundred. Rhetoric can be described as the art of composition, while oratory was the art of public speaking. The Sophists abandoned science, philosophy, mathematics and ethics. What they taught was the subtle art of persuasion. In other words, what mattered was persuasion and not truth. The Sophists were also relativists. They believed that there was no such thing as a universal or absolute truth, valid at all times. According to Protagoras c. Nothing is good or bad since everything depends on the individual. Gorgias of Leontini c. And if he could, he could not describe it and if he could describe it, no one would understand him. The Sophistic movement of the fifth century B. He does not treat them as real seekers after truth but as men whose only concern was making money and teaching their students success in argument by whatever means. Aristotle said that a Sophist was "one who made money by sham wisdom. They wanted the freedom to sweep away old conventions as a way of finding a better understanding of the universe, the gods and man. The Sophists have been compared with the philosophes of the 18th century Enlightenment who also used criticism and reason to wipe out anything they deemed was contrary to human reason. Regardless of what we think of the Sophists as a group or individually, they certainly did have the cumulative effect of further degrading a mythical understanding of the universe and of man. What we do know is that his father was Sophroniscus, a stone cutter, and his mother, Phaenarete, was a midwife. Sophroniscus was a close friend of the son of Aristides the Just c. In his youth he fought as a hoplite at Potidaea , Delium and Amphipolis during the Peloponnesian Wars. To be sure, his later absorption in philosophy made him neglect his private affairs and he eventually fell to a level of comparative poverty. He was perhaps more in love with the study of philosophy than with his family -- that his wife Xanthippe was shrew is a later tale. Just the same, his entire life was subordinated to "the supreme art of philosophy. The true champion if justice, if he intends to survive even for a short time, must necessarily confine himself to private life and leave politics alone. What we can be sure about Socrates was that he was remarkable for living the life he preached. Taking no fees, Socrates started and dominated an argument wherever the young and intelligent would listen, and people asked his advice on matters of practical conduct and educational problems. Socrates was not an attractive man -- he was snub-nosed, prematurely bald, and overweight. But, he was strong in body and the intellectual master of every one with whom he came into contact. The Athenian youth flocked to his side as he walked the paths of the agora. They clung to his every word and gesture. He was not a Sophist himself, but a philosopher, a lover of wisdom. His most famous student, Plato, tells us, that he was charged "as an evil-doer and curious person, searching into things under the earth and above the heavens; and making the worse appear the better cause, and teaching all this to others. Oddly enough, the jury offered Socrates the chance to pay a small fine for his impiety. He also rejected the pleas of Plato and other students who had a boat waiting for him at Piraeus that would take him to freedom. But Socrates refused to break the law. What kind of citizen would he be if he refused to accept the judgment of the jury? No citizen at all. He spent his last days with his friends before he drank the fatal dose of hemlock. Although Socrates was neither a heretic nor an agnostic, there was prejudice against him. He also managed to provoke hostility. For instance, the Delphic oracle is said to have told Chaerephon that no man was wiser than Socrates. During his trial Socrates had the audacity to use this as a justification of his examination of the conduct of all Athenians, claiming that in exposing their falsehoods, he had proved the god right -- he at least knew that he knew nothing. Socrates has been described as a gadfly -- a first-class pain. He did not reveal answers. He did not reveal truth. Many of his questions were, on the surface,

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quite simple: But what Socrates discovered, and what he taught his students to discover, was that most people could not answer these fundamental questions to his satisfaction, yet all of them claimed to be courageous, virtuous and dutiful. So, what Socrates knew, was that he knew nothing, upon this sole fact lay the source of his wisdom. And there is a difference between the two. Plato Socrates wrote nothing himself.

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Chapter 9 : List of ancient Greek philosophers - Wikipedia

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They studied and analyzed the world around them using logic and reason. Although we often think of philosophy as religion or "the meaning of life", the Greek philosophers were also scientists. Many studied mathematics and physics as well. Often the philosophers were teachers of wealthy children. Some of the more famous ones opened their own schools or academies. He came up with the Socratic Method. This was a way of studying issues and problems through a question and answer technique. Socrates introduced political philosophy and got the Greeks to start thinking hard about morals, good and evil, and how their society should work. Plato wrote much of his philosophy in conversations called dialogues. The dialogues feature Socrates as one of the speakers. In this work Socrates discusses the meaning of justice and how cities and governments should be ruled. He describes his ideal society in the conversations. This work is still studied today and has had an impact on both philosophy and political theory throughout history. Plato believed that no one should be rich or live in luxury. He also believed that each person should do the job that they are best suited for. He thought a philosopher-king should rule society. He founded his own school called the Academy where he taught students, such as Aristotle. Aristotle liked to focus on more practical areas of philosophy including science. He founded his own school called the Lyceum. He thought that reason was the highest good and that it was important to have self control. Aristotle was a tutor for Alexander the Great. Other Greek Philosophers Pythagoras - Pythagoras is most known for the Pythagorean Theorem which is used to find the length of sides of right triangles. He also believed that the world was based on mathematics. Epicurus - Said that the gods had no interest in humans. That what we should do is enjoy our lives and be happy. Zeno - Founded a type of philosophy called Stoicism. He said that happiness was from accepting whatever happened, good or bad. Activities Take a ten question quiz about this page. Listen to a recorded reading of this page: Your browser does not support the audio element. For more about Ancient Greece: