# THE GREEK PHILOSOPHY

## **PLAN**

- THE THREE PERIODS OF THE GREEK PHILOSOPHY
- EARLY GREEK PHILOSOPHY. THE PRE-SOCRATICS
- THE CLASSIC PERIOD
- THE ROMAN PERIOD

# THE EARLY PERIOD OF THE GREEK PHILOSOPHY

- IV century BC (the appearance of philosophical thinking) – V century BC
- The philosophers are called PRE-SOCRATICS
- The representatives: Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, Heraclitus, Pythagoras, Parmenides, Zeno of Elea

# THE CLASSIC PERIOD

- The philosophy changes the sphere of its interests – from the cosmogonic problems to the study of the man and the problems of his existence
- The representatives: Socrates, Plato,
  Aristotle, Democritus.

# THE ROMAN PERIOD

- The end of the IV century V-VI centuries
- There are several schools:
  - epicurean (Epicurus)
  - skeptics (Pyrrho)
  - stoics (Cicero, Seneca)

# **THALES**

- He was the founder of Greek philosophy. Thales became famed for his knowledge of astronomy after predicting the eclipse of the sun that occurred on May 28, 585 bc.
- the original principle of all things is water, from which everything proceeds and into which everything is again resolved.
- Before Thales, explanations of the universe were mythological, and his concentration on the basic physical substance of the world marks the birth of scientific thought.

# ANAXIMANDER

- His contribution was his authorship of the earliest prose work concerning the cosmos and the origins of life.
- He conceived of the universe as a number of concentric cylinders, of which the outermost is the sun, the middle is the moon, and the innermost is the stars. Within these cylinders is the earth, unsupported and drum-shaped.
- The origin of the universe as the result of the separation of opposites from the primordial material. Hot moved outward, separating from cold, and then dry from wet. Further, Anaximander held that all things eventually return to the element from which they originated.

# ANAXIMENES

- He held that air is the primary element to which everything else can be reduced. To explain how solid objects are formed from air, he introduced the notions of condensation and rarefaction.
- These processes, he claimed, make air, in itself invisible, visible as water, fire, and solid matter. He thought that air becomes warmer and turns to fire when it is rarefied and that it becomes colder and turns solid when it is condensed.

# **ANAXIMENES**



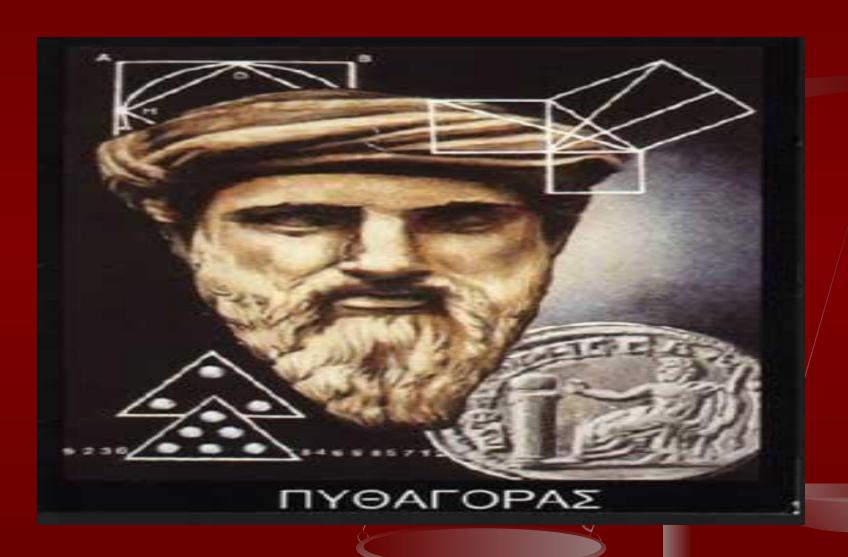
# HERACLITUS



# HERACLITUS

- HE believed that fire is the primordial source of matter and that the entire world is in a constant state of change.
- Heraclitus added to the "being" of his predecessors the concept of "becoming," or flux, which he took to be a basic reality underlying all things, even the most apparently stable. In ethics he introduced a new social emphasis, holding virtue to consist in a subordination of the individual to the laws of a universal, reasonable harmony.

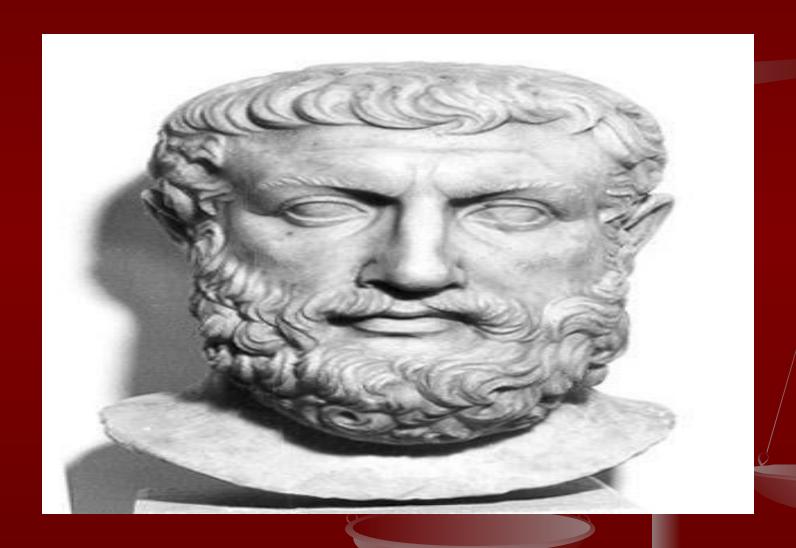
# **PYTHAGORAS**



## **PYTHAGORAS**

- HE referred to certain mysteries.
- Obedience and silence, simplicity in dress and possessions, and the habit of frequent self-examination were prescribed. The Pythagoreans believed in immortality and in the transmigration of souls.
- He cultivated the concept of number, which became for him the ultimate principle of all proportion, order, and harmony in the universe.

# PARMENIDES

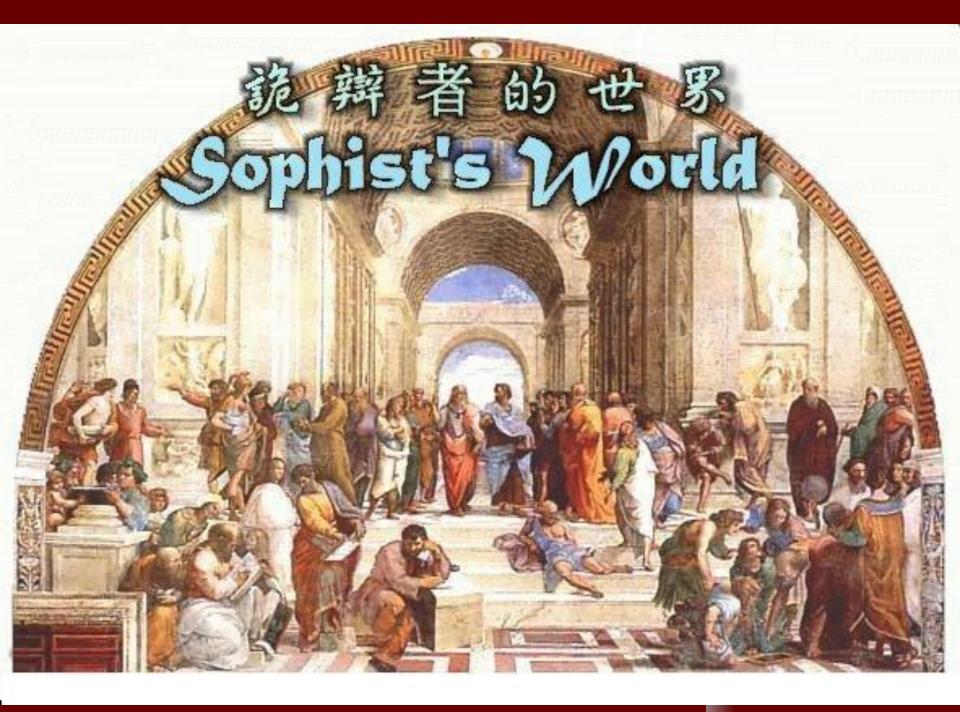


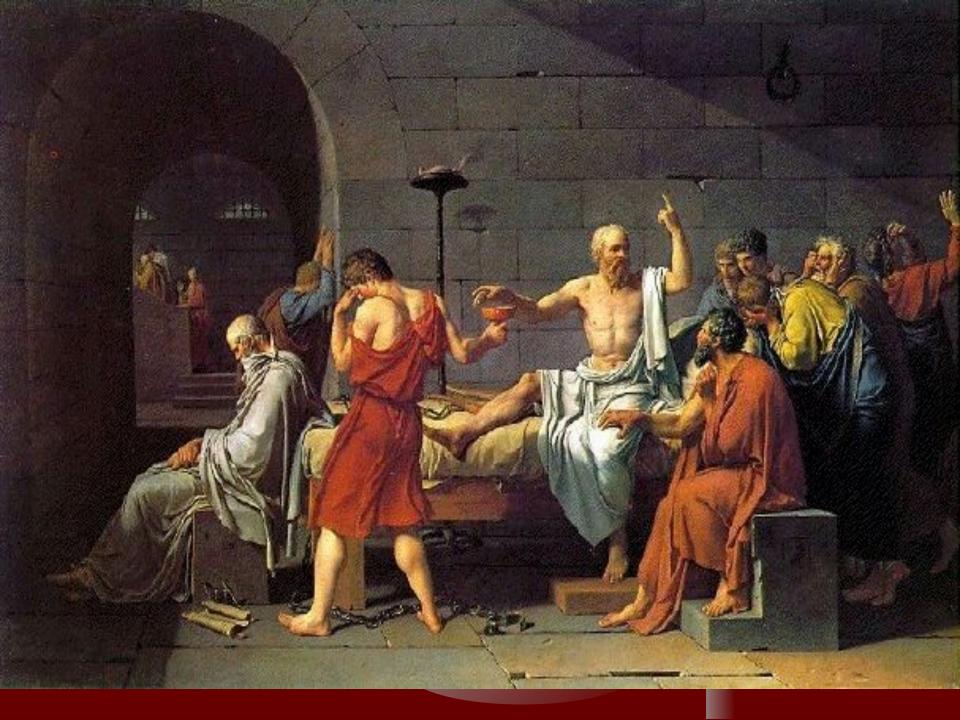
# PARMENIDES

- Greek philosopher, considered by many scholars the greatest member of the Eleatic school.
- Parmenides held that the phenomena of nature are only apparent and due to human error; they seem to exist, but have no real existence. He also held that reality, True Being, is not known to the senses but is to be found only in reason.
- Parmenides' theory that Being cannot arise from Nonbeing, and that Being neither arises nor passes away, was applied to matter by his successors, who made it the foundation of their materialistic explanations of the universe.

# SOPHISTS

- Sophists (Greek man of wisdom), a name applied to teachers who provided instruction in several higher branches of learning for a fee.
- the Sophists popularized the ideas of various early philosophers; most of them concluded that truth and morality were essentially matters of opinion. Thus, in their own teaching, they tended to emphasize forms of persuasive expression, such as the art of rhetoric, which provided pupils with skills useful for achieving success in life, particularly public life.





#### GREEK PHILOSOPHY



Three major philosophers who lived in Athens in the 400s and 300s BC laid the foundations for nearly all later Greek philosophy.

#### Socrates, c. 470-399 BC

- Sought truths about broad concepts such as truth, justice, and virtue
- Thought people could learn best by asking questions
- Believed that philosophers could study human behavior to learn how to improve society as a whole

#### Plato, c. 428-348 BC

- Thought philosophers were best suited to govern other people
- Believed that every material object in the world was only the reflection of a perfect ideal. For example, all the trees growing in Greece were only reflections of a single ideal tree that did not actually exist.

#### Aristotle, 384–322 BC

- Pioneered the use of reason and logic to study the natural world
- Believed that the greatest good people could perform was the practice of rational thought
- Contributed to the development of science, especially biology

# Philosophy of Socrates

#### Asking Question's

- Socrates believed philosophers could learn what made good people, societies by asking questions
- Started with basic questions, like "What is truth?"
- Socrates followed up with more questions

#### Socratic Method

- By working through series of questions, Socrates thought people could discover basic nature of life
- Method of learning through questions called the Socratic method

#### Plato

- One of Socrates' students, became great philosopher in own right
- Left behind great number of writings that record ideas on wide variety of topics, from nature of truth to ideal form of government
- The Republic argues that government should be led by philosophers

#### **Theory of Government**

- Philosophers most qualified to make good decisions
- Did not support Athenian democracy in which all men could take part
- Plato wanted to make philosopher's education more formal
- Founded the Academy, which in Plato's lifetime became most important site for Greek philosophers to do their work

### Aristotle

#### The Third Philosopher

- Aristotle was among students who studied at the Academy
- More concerned with nature of world that surrounded him.
- Tried to apply philosophical principles to every kind of knowledge

#### Emphasis on Reason and Logic

- Emphasis on reason, logic
- **Reason**, clear and ordered thinking; use reason to learn about world
- Observe carefully, think rationally about what one has seen

#### Inferring New Facts

- Aristotle also helped develop field of logic, process of making inferences
- Example: birds have feathers, lay eggs; owls have feathers, lay eggs; therefore, owl must be a type of bird

# SOCRATES

- I KNOW THAT I KNOW NOTHING
- THE POWER SHOULD BELONG TO THE BEST, I.E. WISE AND ABLE TO LEARN THE ART OF GOVERNING
- HE CRITISIZED THE GREEK DEMOCRACY

# DEMOCRITUS

- HE developed the atomic theory of the universe.
- All things are composed of minute, invisible, particles of pure matter (atoma), which move about eternally in infinite empty space (kenon).
- Although atoms are made up of precisely the same matter, they differ in shape, size, weight, sequence, and position. The creation of worlds as the natural consequence of the ceaseless whirling motion of atoms in space. Atoms collide and spin, forming larger aggregations of matter.

# **PLATO**

- HE was the first to use the term philosophy, which means "love of knowledge."
- Chief among his ideas was the theory of forms, which proposed that objects in the physical world merely resemble perfect forms in the ideal world, and that only these perfect forms can be the object of true knowledge.
- The goal of the philosopher, according to Plato, is to know the perfect forms and to instruct others in that knowledge.

# Plato's Method of Inquiry

Plato points up to the heavenly Forms, which are known to us from birth even though we need "gadflies" such as Socrates to help us remember what we know.

His method of inquiry is to ask questions that stimulate the memory.



Aristotle holds his hand flat, to show that the objects of human knowledge are things in this world, which can only be known through sense experience.

His method of inquiry is to abstract ideas from empirical observations.



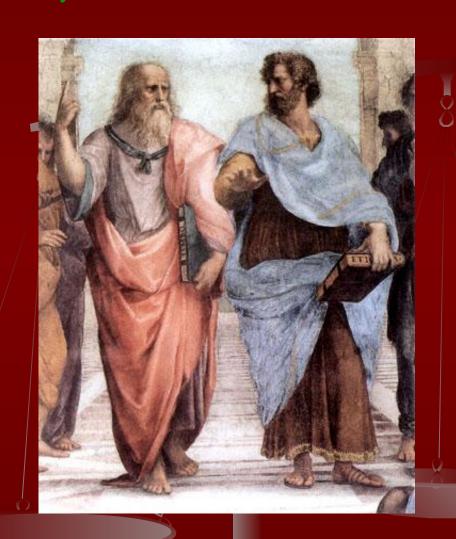
# Aristotle

- Born in 384.
- From the northwestern edge of the Greek Empire in Stagira.
- Father was physician to King Amyntas of Macedonia.



# A Student of Plato

- Aristotle came to Athens to study under Plato from the age of 18 to 37.
- Eventually he classified the branches of knowledge into categories, including: physics, psychology, poetics, logic, and rhetoric.



# Tutor of Alexander the Great

Around 340 B.C., when he was over 40, Aristotle returned to his home, Stagira, and he became tutor to the king's son, soon to become Alexander the Great. Alexander, through military campaigns, would later expand the empire of Greece to cover all of the Mideast reaching all the way to India.



# **ARISTOTLE**

- HE proposed a finite, spherical universe, with the earth at its center. The central region is made up of four elements: earth, air, fire, and water.
- The heavens, therefore, must be made of a fifth, and different element, which he called Ether.
- In reasoning, the basic links are syllogisms: pairs of propositions that, taken together, give a new conclusion. For example, "All humans are mortal" and "All Greeks are humans" yield the valid conclusion "All Greeks are mortal."

# **EPICURUS**

- The essential doctrine of Epicureanism is that pleasure is the supreme good and main goal of life.
- Intellectual pleasures are preferred to sensual ones, which tend to disturb peace of mind.
- True happiness, Epicurus taught, is the serenity resulting from the conquest of fear of the gods, of death, and of the afterlife.
- The ultimate aim of all Epicurean speculation about nature is to rid people of such fears.

# ZENO, STOICISM

- Zeno founded his own school of philosophy, known as Stoicism.
- Good lies not in external objects, but in the state of the soul itself, in the wisdom and restraint by which a person is delivered from the passions and desires that perturb the ordinary life. The four cardinal virtues of the Stoic philosophy are wisdom, courage, justice, and temperance, a classification derived from the teachings of Plato.

# Sophists

- Their point of view is reflected in their maxims "Man is the measure of all things"
- and "Nothing is; or if anything is, it cannot be known."
- THEY declared that all statements concerning reality are false and that, even if true, their truth can never be proved.
- THEY taught that human beings can know only their perceptions of things, not the things themselves.