

## Greek philosophy

### Pythagoras:

Considered the body to be a tomb of the divine psyche. The duty of a rational person was to gain knowledge, and purify the psyche or soul by asceticism (self discipline). The purification process was expected to last more than one lifetime. At death, the soul would leave the body and go to another body, human or animal, to continue the purification process. This process was called metempsychosis; when soul sufficiently purified, would return to the realm of the gods. Believed that to harm an animal was like harming one's own soul.

### Socrates:

Known primarily through Plato's dialogues.

Professed ignorance. Questioned others in hope of learning something of value. All those he questioned he found knew nothing of value, but thought they did. He became popular among Athenian youth, and was tried and found guilty of corrupting Athenian youth for encouraging them to act as he did.

### Plato:

Student of Socrates.

Academy

World is in constant state of change, so is not a reliable source for knowledge. All knowledge is derived from an inborn awareness of what exists in the "real" world. This world is only a pale reflection of the real divine unchanging world of the gods. We recognize things in this world only to the extent that they participate in the real divine world. Allegory of the cave. His teaching became dominant.

### Aristotle:

Lyceum more like a research center

Not metaphysical speculation. Observation, classification.

Worked with specialists.

Natural science, logic, math, physics ethics rhetoric drama

Submits natural and social phenomena to rational analysis.

Undermined faith in traditional religious tradition.

Belief in blind fate (tyche) became dominant.

Other schools of philosophy.

Sophism: teach happiness by teaching skills in gaining success.

Epicurians: avoid anxiety life is a material phenomena; there is no after life.

Stoicism: the divine is everywhere present (like pantheism); only material existence is real,

Cynics: Diogenes; shameless scruffy kuikos (dog like)

Asklepios: god of healing

Magical practices

End of 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE, Aristotle, named his pupil Theophrastus as his successor. Provides us with insight into the practices of the superstitious man: provides insight into anxieties of religious man

Hellenistic mystery religions offered salvation from blind power of Fate. Devotee has personal bond with deity.

A devotee could enter into bond with multiple deities; ie multiple mystery religions.

Eleusinian mystery religion: centers on Demeter. Lasted into 3<sup>rd</sup> century.