

Socrates

in

Athens

Learning Goals of this Section

- Beginnings of Philosophy
- Introduction to Plato's Writings
- Difference between Substance and Method
- Substantive Themes: the theory of forms, doctrine of recollection, difference between knowledge and belief, nature of virtue, relationship between the citizen and the State
- Methodological Issues: defining one's terms, the proper form of a definition, the nature of true argumentation, the value of *elenchus*, the hypothetical method

Ancient Greece and the Pre- Socratics

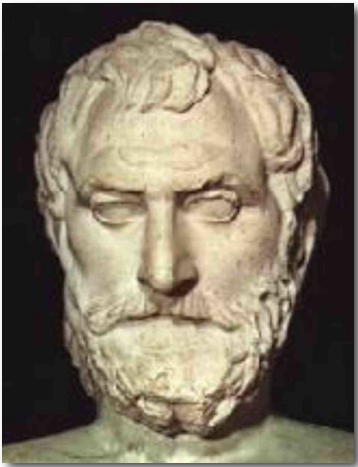
The Mediterranean



Ancient Greece



Miletus

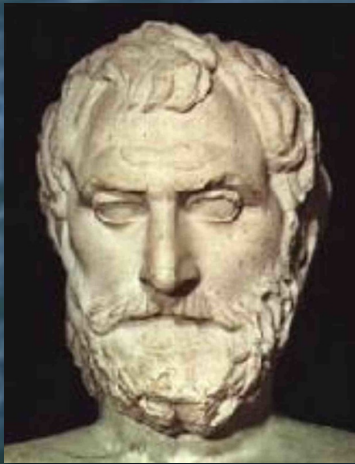


Thales
(c. 624-545 BCE)

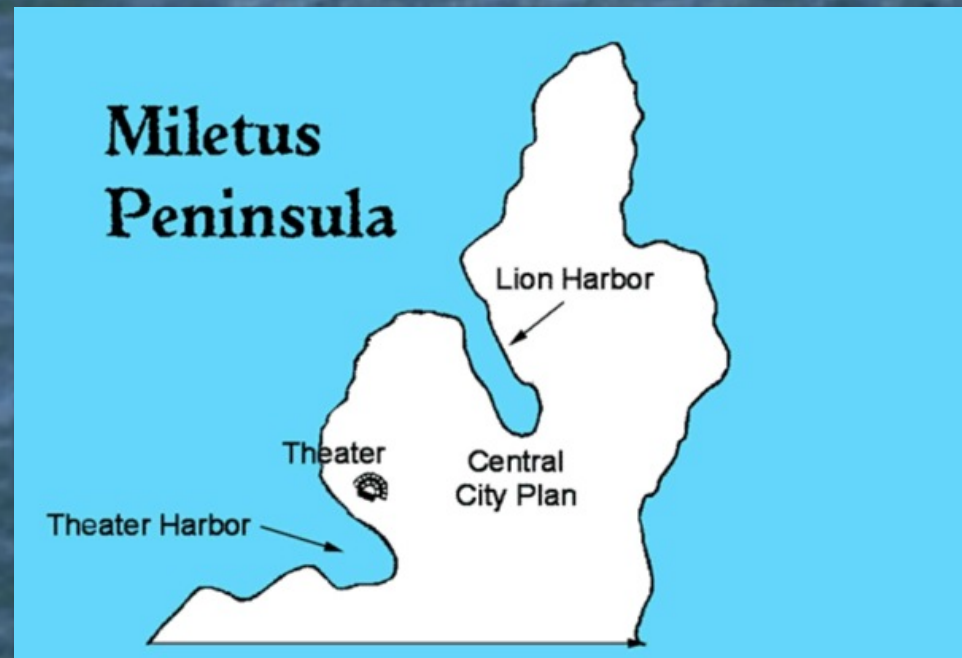


Thales: Everything is Water

- Explains Nature in terms of Nature.
- Separates Reality from Appearance.

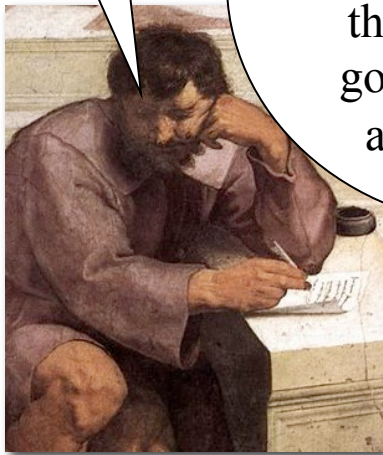


Thales
(c. 624-545 BCE)



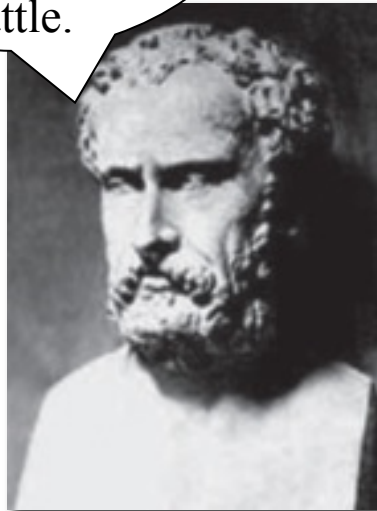
A Few Other Pre-Socratics

You can't step
in the same
river twice.

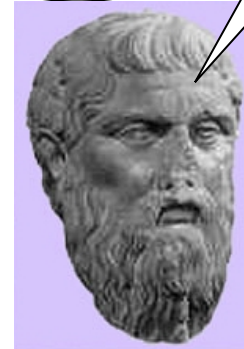


Heraclitus
(c.544-c.480 BCE)

If cattle and horses
had hands
horses would draw
the forms of the
gods like horses,
and cattle like
cattle.



It is the same
thing that can
be thought and
that can be.



Protagoras
(c.490-c.420 BCE)

Xenophanes
(c.570-c.480 BCE)

Parmenides
(c.515-c.450 BCE)

Humans are
the measure of
all things.



Socrates

and his

Followers

Ancient Greece

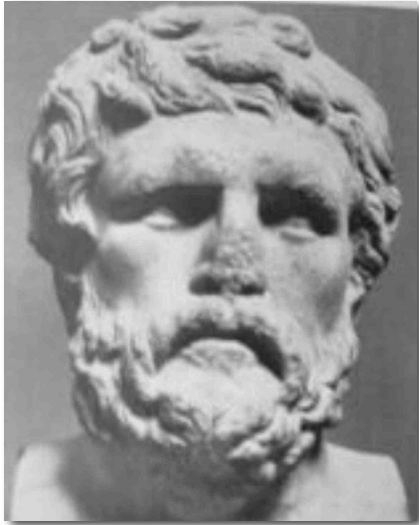
Delphi

Athens

Sparta

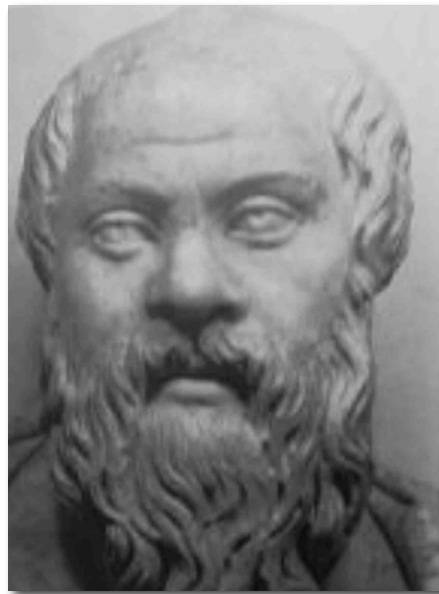
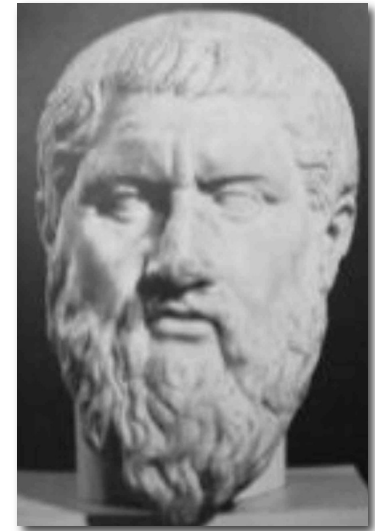


Sources for the Historical Socrates

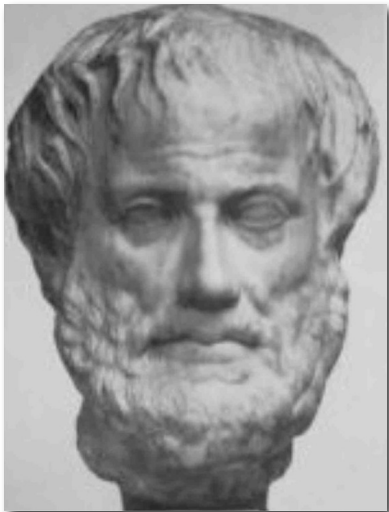


Xenophon
(c.430-c.355 BCE)

Plato
(427-347 BCE)

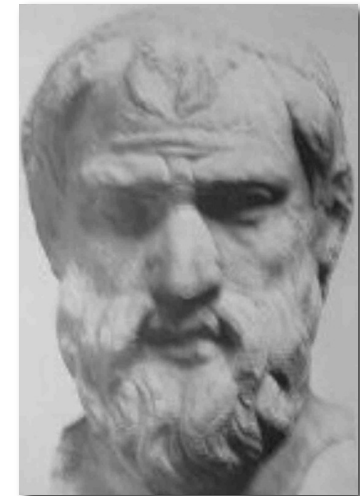


SOCRATES
(469-399 BCE)



Aristotle
(384-322 BCE)

Aristophanes
(450-387 BCE)



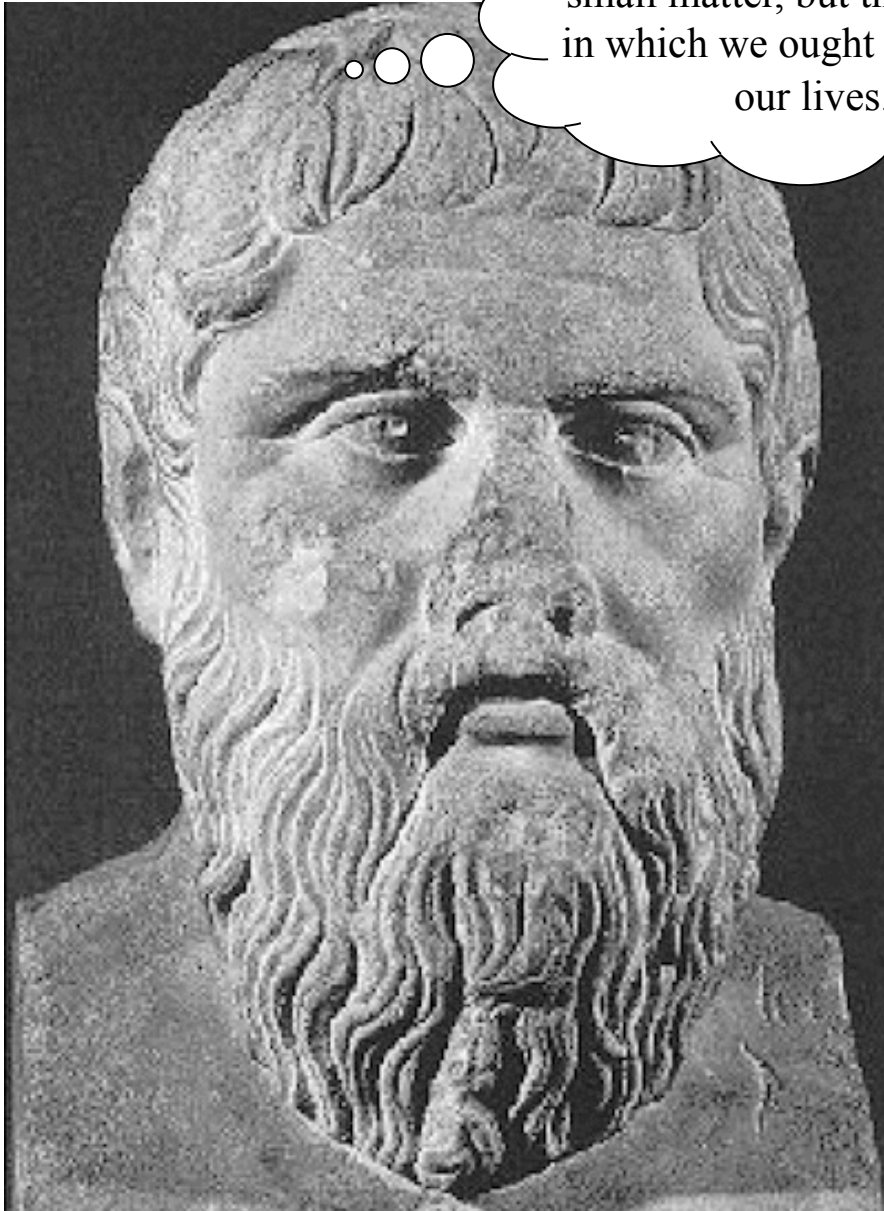


The
unexamined
life is not
worth living.

Socrates

(469-399 BCE)



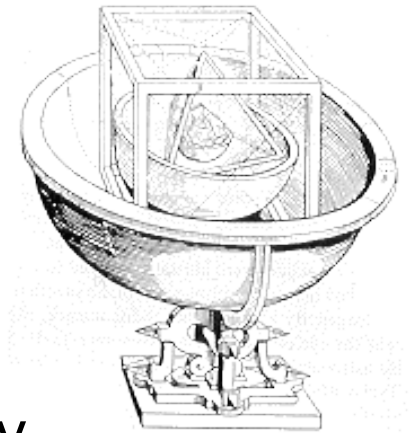


What we are discussing is no small matter, but the manner in which we ought to conduct our lives.

Plato

(427-347 BCE)

“Let no
non-
geometers
enter”



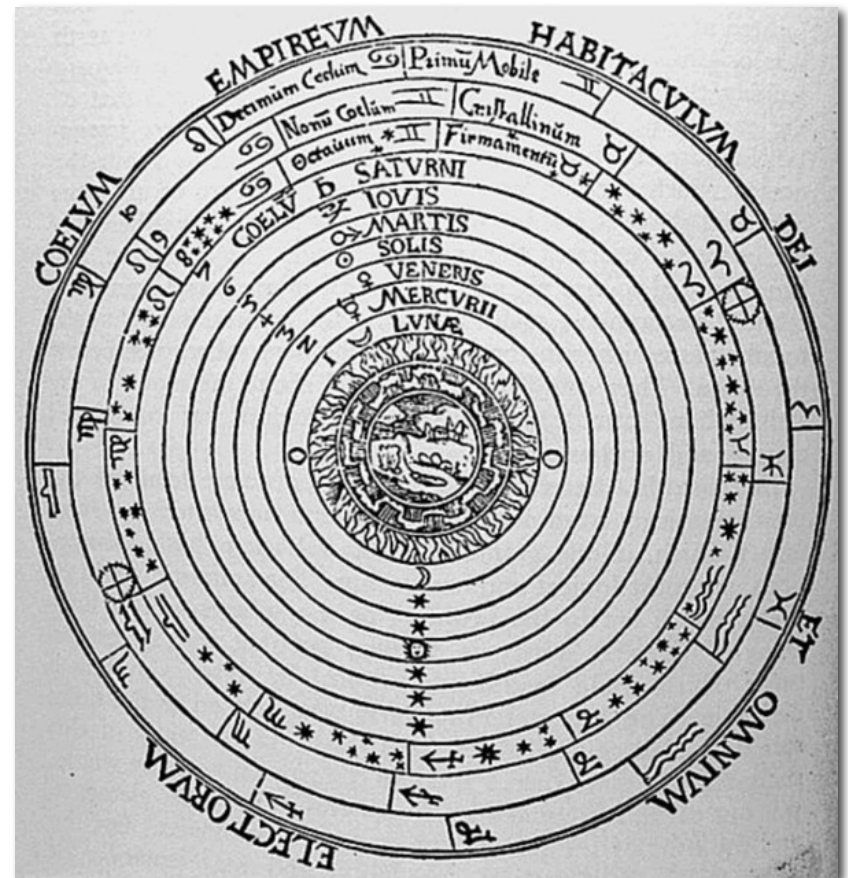
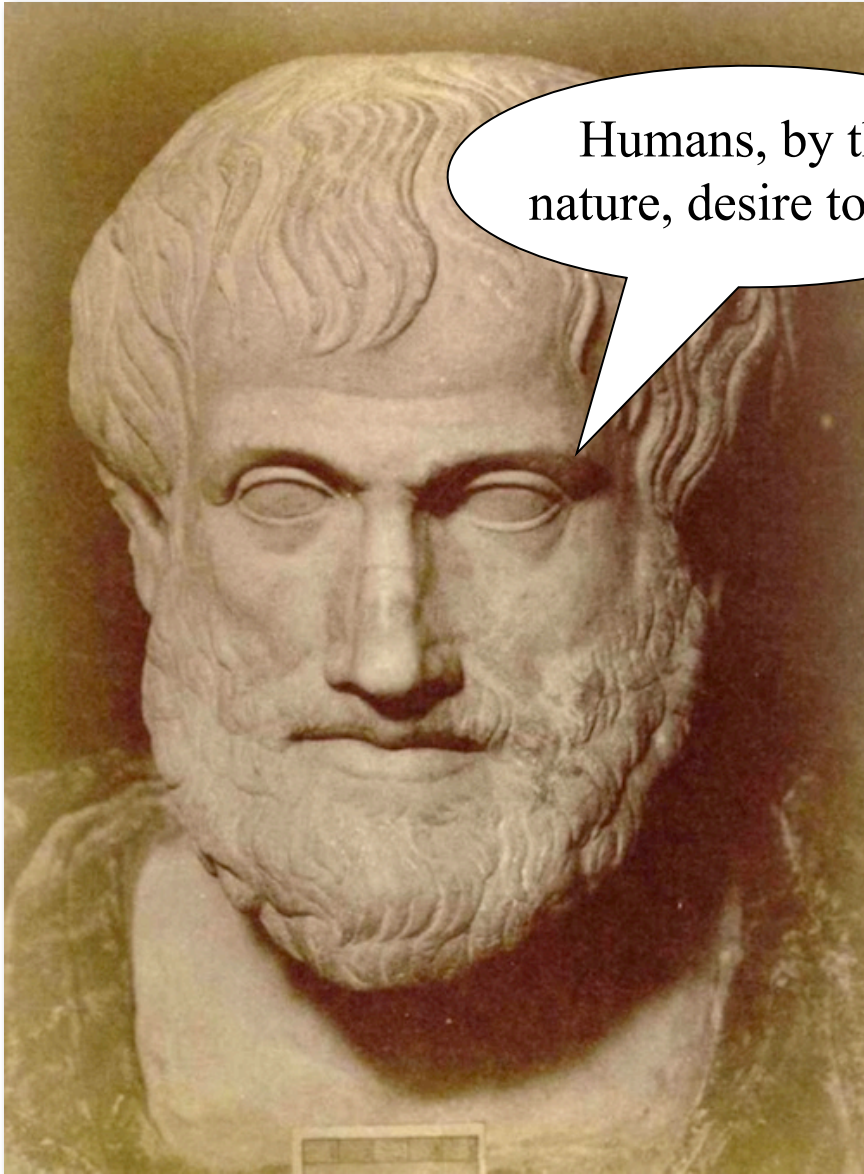
Plato's Academy



Aristotle

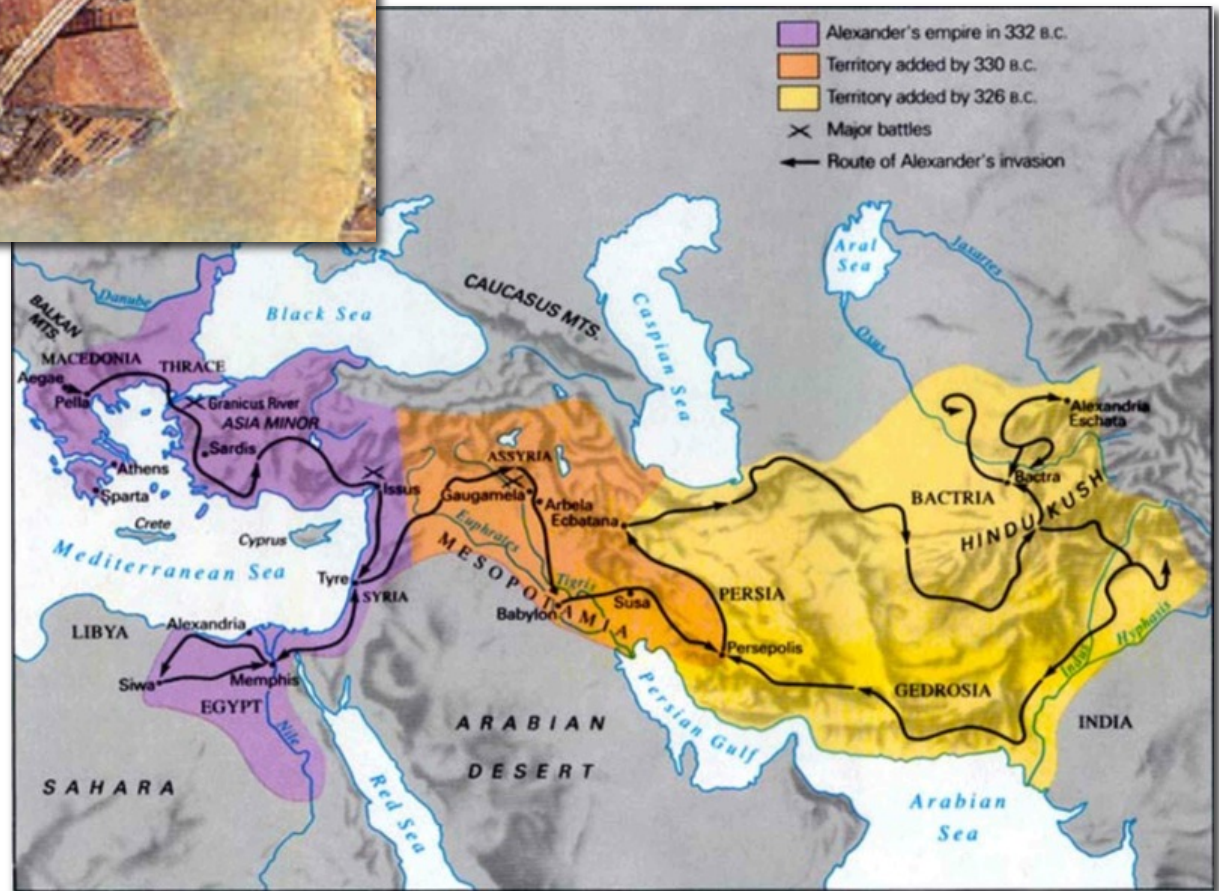
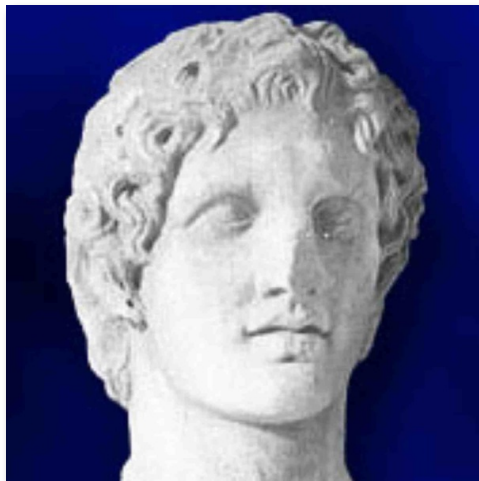
(384-322 BCE)

Humans, by their nature, desire to know.

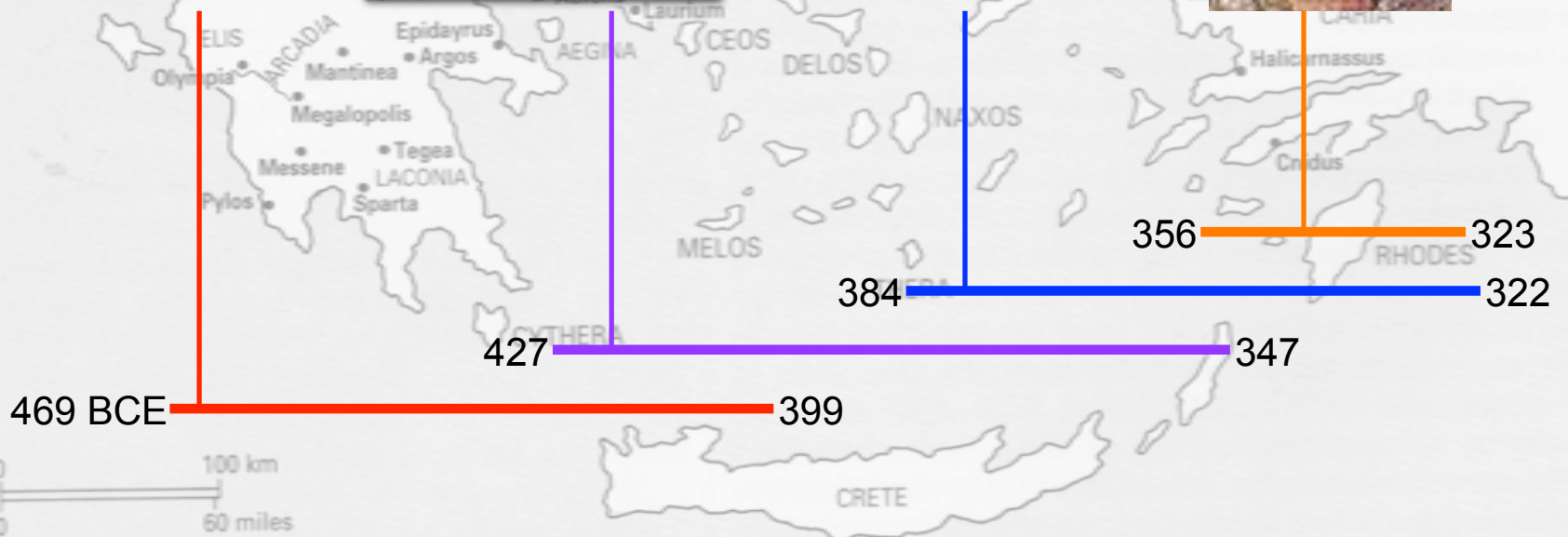
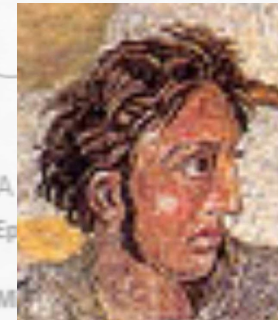
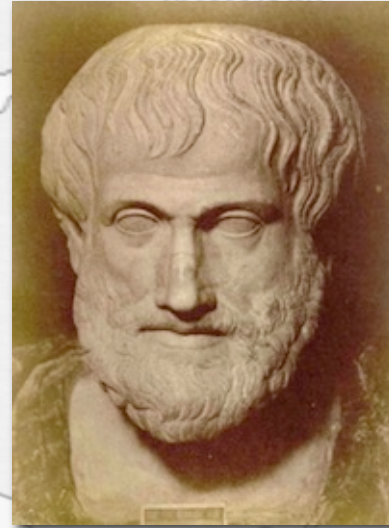
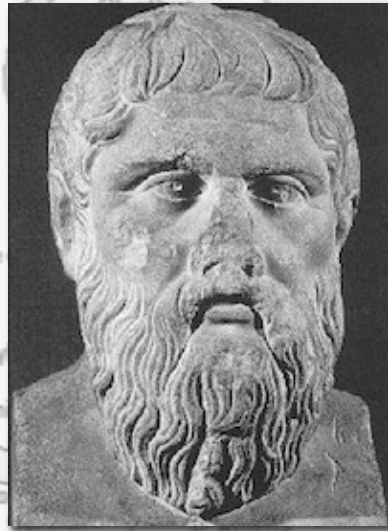
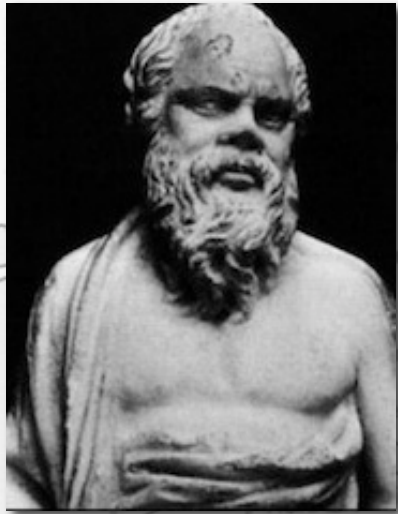


Alexander

(356-323 BCE)

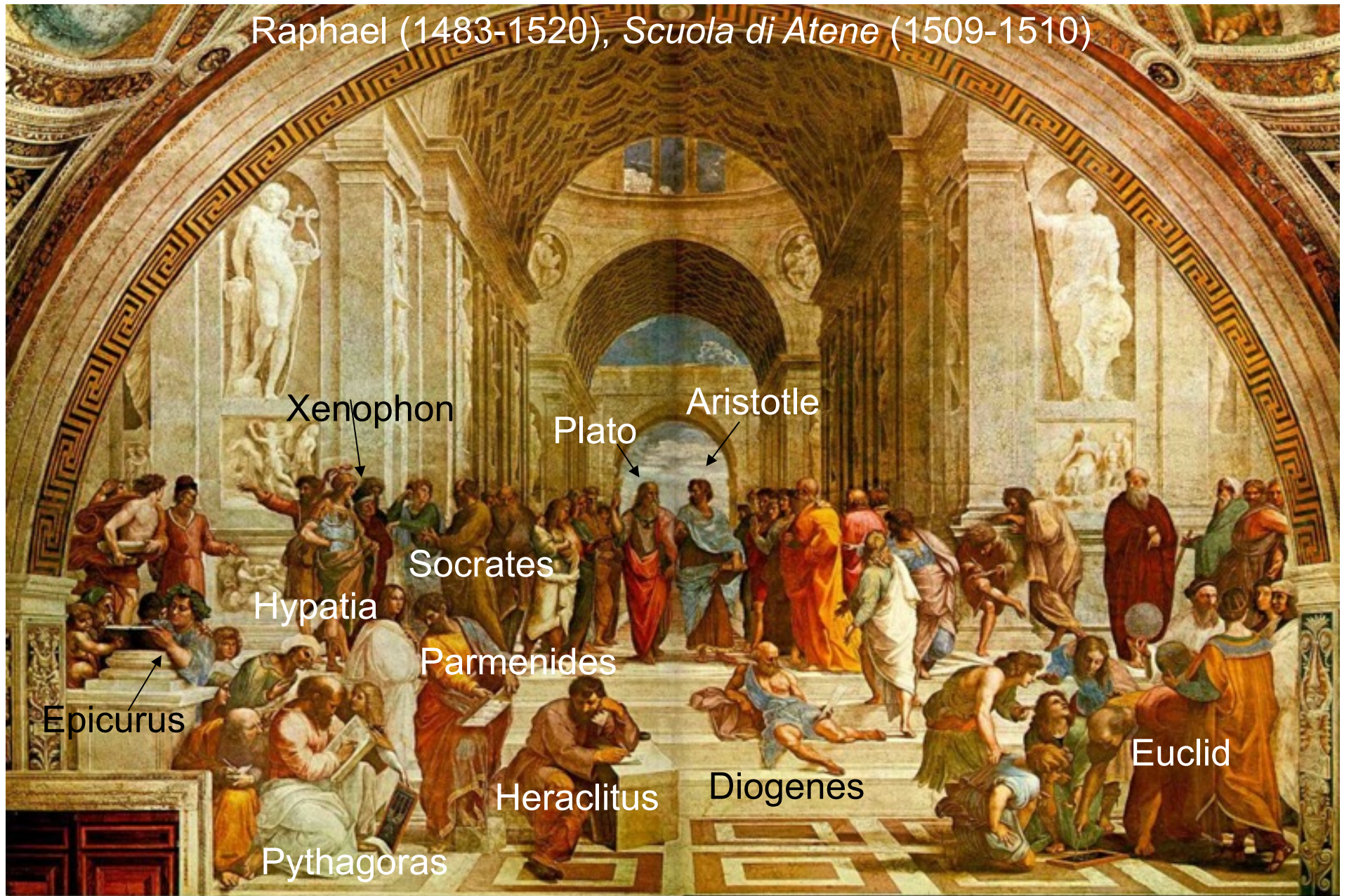


The Socratic Lineage



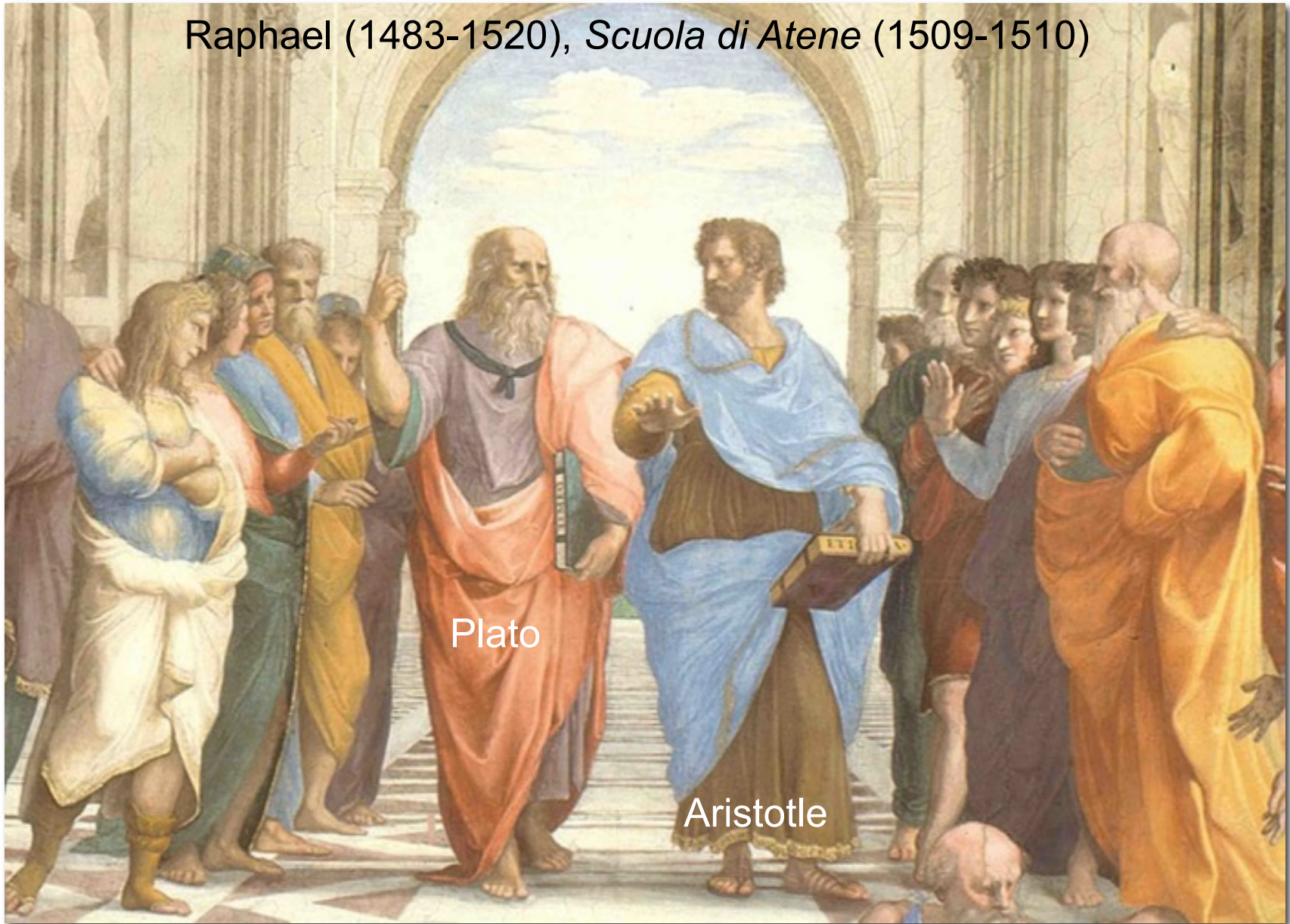
School of Athens

Raphael (1483-1520), *Scuola di Atene* (1509-1510)



School of Athens (detail)

Raphael (1483-1520), *Scuola di Atene* (1509-1510)



Plato

Aristotle

Plato's
Apology
and the role of
Philosophers

Socrates and his Accusers

Earlier Accusers

1. Socrates is “a student of all things in the sky and below the earth ...”
2. “... who makes the worse argument appear the stronger” (18b-c).

Current Accusers (Meletus, Anytus, and Lycon)

1. “Socrates is guilty of corrupting the young...”
2. “... and of not believing in the gods in whom the city believes, but in other new divinities” (24b).

Socrates and the Sophists

1. Sophists presented themselves as teachers; Socrates claimed he knew nothing, so had nothing to teach.
2. Sophists took fees; Socrates did not.
3. Sophists traveled from city to city; Socrates stayed in Athens.
4. Sophists were skeptics; Socrates was skeptical.
5. Sophists practiced rhetoric; Socrates practiced dialectic.

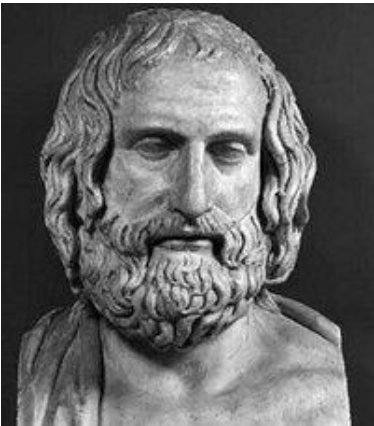
Socrates and the Sophists

1. Sophists presented themselves as teachers; Socrates claimed he knew nothing, so had nothing to teach.

We can teach you
many practical
things!

Protagoras

c.490-c.420 BCE



Gorgias

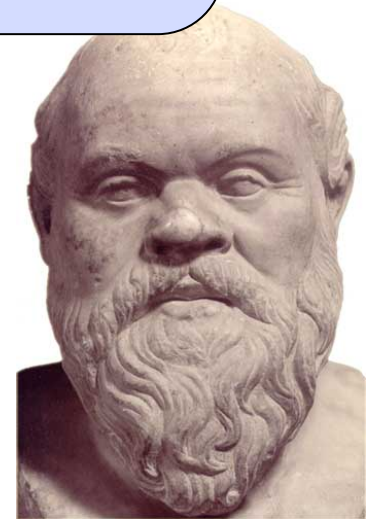
c.485-c.380 BCE



All I know is that
I know nothing.

Socrates

469-399 BCE



Socrates and the Sophists

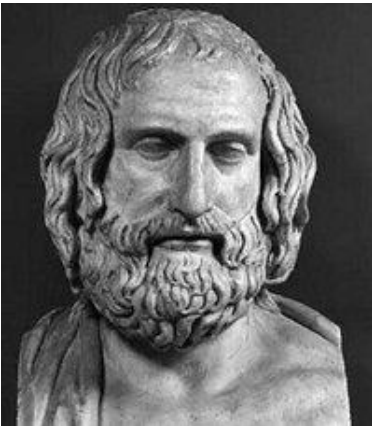
2. Sophists took fees; Socrates did not.

So what's the big deal here? It's how we feed ourselves...

I'm doing my duty to the gods; for this I will accept no money.

Protagoras

c.490-c.420 BCE



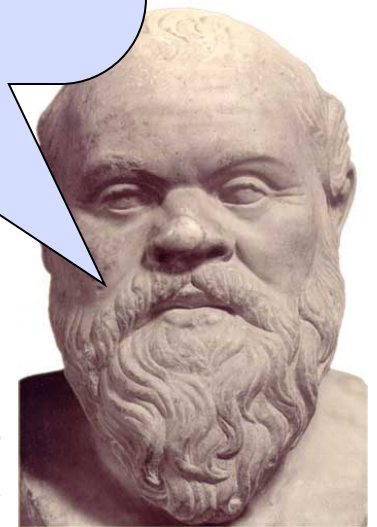
Gorgias

c.485-c.380 BCE



Socrates

469-399 BCE



Socrates and the Sophists

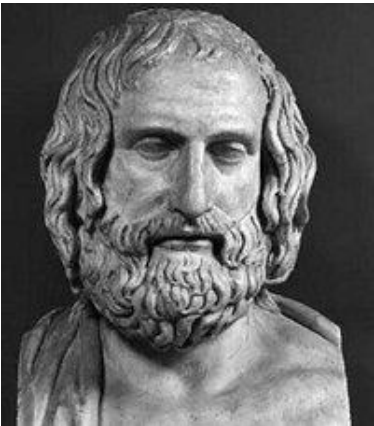
3. Sophists traveled from city to city; Socrates stayed in Athens.

What? We go wherever there are paying students...

I was attached to this city by the god, to rouse the Athenians from their sleep.

Protagoras

c.490-c.420 BCE



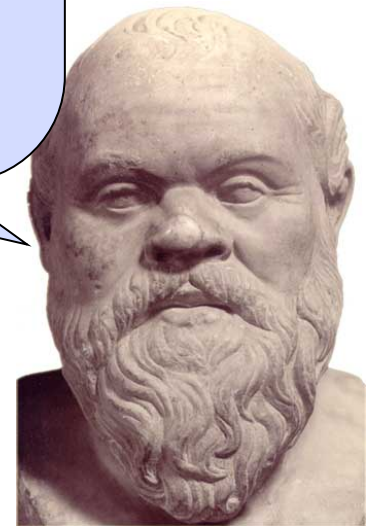
Gorgias

c.485-c.380 BCE



Socrates

469-399 BCE



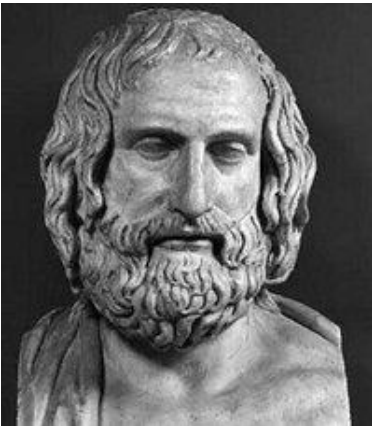
Socrates and the Sophists

4. Sophists were skeptics; Socrates was skeptical.

All is mere opinion;
so let my opinion be
the one that prevails!

Protagoras

c.490-c.420 BCE



Gorgias

c.485-c.380 BCE

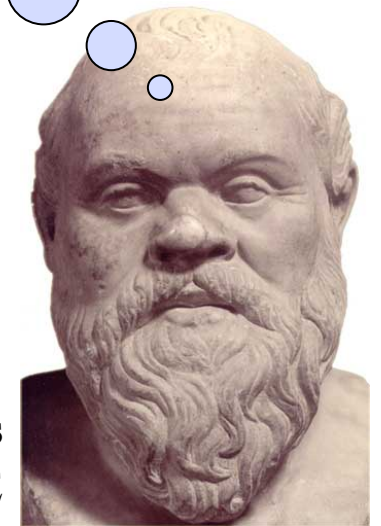


There is a truth to
be found, but it
appears that you've
not yet found it.

Skeptesthai: (Greek) let us
examine it

Socrates

469-399 BCE



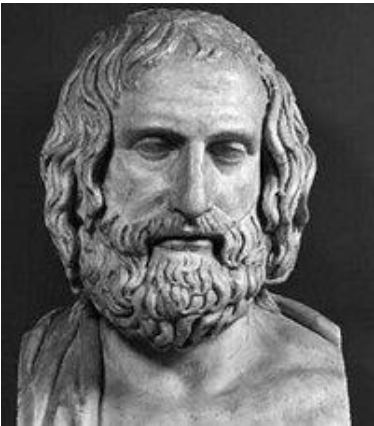
Socrates and the Sophists

5. Sophists practiced rhetoric; Socrates practiced dialectic.

I can persuade an audience to believe P one day, and not-P the next day. Such are my skills!

Protagoras

c.490-c.420 BCE



Gorgias

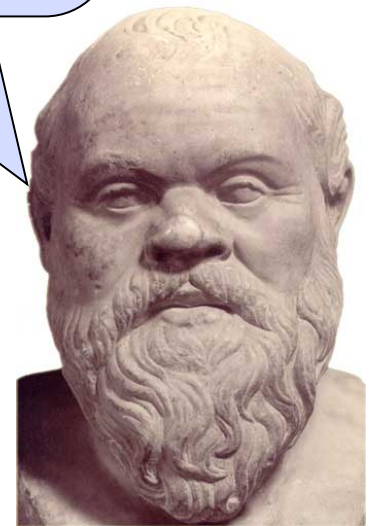
c.485-c.380 BCE



Together, through patient discussion, the two of us will seek the truth.

Socrates

469-399 BCE

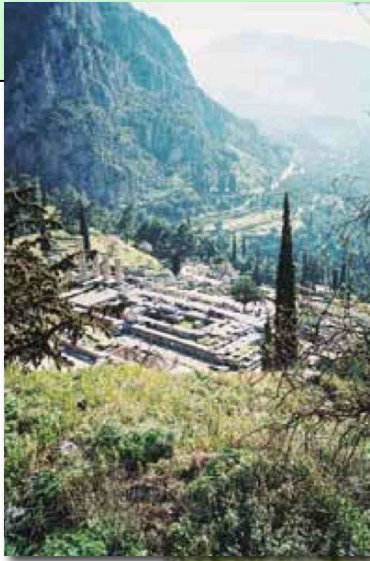


The Philosophical Way of Life

1. Discovering **intellectual error**: “They do not know what they think they know.”
2. Highlighting **moral error**: “They do not care that they do not know.”
3. The philosopher’s role: To serve society as a gadfly serves a horse.
4. Virtue is knowledge: To know the good is to desire the good.
5. The Philosopher as Post-Troglodyte.
6. Understanding as the source of human dignity.

The Oracle at Delphi

“Know thyself”
[γνῶθι σεαυτόν]



The Philosopher as Post-Troglodyte



Jean-Paul Sartre (1905-1980)



- **French existentialist philosopher, playwright, novelist.**
- **Nobel Prize for Literature (1964), which he refused to accept.**
- **“Existence precedes essence” — slogan of existentialist philosophy.**

The Spanish Civil War (1936-39)



Pablo Picasso (1881-1973) painted *Guernica* (1937) in memory of the massacre, by aerial bombardment, of the Basque village of Guernica on April 27th, 1937 — a bombing practice carried out on behalf of General Franco by Hitler's German air force. The city burned for three days; sixteen hundred people were killed.