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Ancient Philosophers

Radically Biblical, Apostolic, Christianity



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Abelard, Peter (1079-1142?), French philosopher and theologian, whose fame, as a teacher, made him one of the most celebrated figures of the 12th century.

Born in LePallet, Brittany, Abelard left home, to study at Loches, with the French – William of Champeaux. Critical of his masters, Abelard began to teach at Melun, at Corbeil and, in 1108, at Paris. He soon, gained fame throughout Europe, as a teacher and original thinker. In 1117, he became tutor to Heloise, the niece of Fulbert, a canon of the Cathedral of Notre-Dame, in Paris.

Heloise and Abelard fell in love, and she gave birth to a son, whom they named Astrolabe. At Abelard's insistence, they were married, secretly. Abelard persuaded Heloise, to take holy vows, at the Benedictine Abbey of Saint-Argenteuil. Her uncle Fulbert, at first enraged, by the relationship between Heloise and Abelard, and later, somewhat placated by their marriage, finally decided, that Abelard had abandoned Heloise, at the abbey and had him castrated. Abelard, too, retired to a religious retreat, at the Abbey of Saint-De-nis-en-France, in Paris.

Abelard's first published work, a treatise on the Trinity (1121), was condemned and ordered, burned by a Roman Catholic council, that met at Soissons, in the same year. Forced by criticism, to leave Saint-Denis-en-France, Abelard founded a chapel and oratory, called the Paraclete, at Nogent-sur-Seine. In 1125, he was elected, abbot of the monastery, at Saint-Gildas-de-Rhuis. Heloise, who meanwhile, had become prioress, at Argenteuil, was called to the Paraclete, as abbess of the convent, established there. At Saint-Gildas, Abelard wrote his autobiographical, *Historia Calamitosa* (History of Misfortunes, 1132). At this time, the famous exchange of letters with Heloise began; these letters have become classics of romantic correspondence. In 1140, Saint Bernard of Clairvaux, an eminent French ecclesiastic, who thought Abelard's influence, dangerous, prevailed upon a Roman Catholic council, in session at Sens, and upon Pope Innocent II, to condemn Abelard, for his skeptical, rationalistic writings and teaching. On his way to Rome, to appeal the condemnation, Abelard accepted the hospitality of Peter the Venerable, abbot of the Abbey of Cluny, remaining there for many months. Abelard died, at a Clunist priory, near Chalon-sur-Saone. His body was taken to the Paraclete; when Heloise died, in 1164, she was buried beside him. In 1817, both bodies were moved to a single tomb, in the cemetery of Pere Lachaise, in Paris.

The romantic appeal of the life of Abelard often overshadows the importance of his thought. In the emphasis he placed on dialectical discussion, Abelard followed the 9th-century philosopher and theologian, Johannes Scotus Erigena, and he foreshadowed the Italian Scholastic philosopher, Thomas Aquinas. Abelard's important dialectical thesis, that truth must be attained, by carefully weighing all sides of any issue, is presented in *Sic et Non* (Thus and Otherwise, 1123?). He also, foreshadowed the later theological reliance, on the works of Aristotle, rather than on those of Plato.

Abelard, reacted strongly, against the theories of extreme realism, denying that universals have an independent existence, outside the mind. According to

Abelard, a universal, is a functional word, expressing the combined image of that word's common associations, within the mind. This position, is not nominalism, because Abelard adds, that the associations, from which, the image is formed and, to which, a universal name is given, have a certain likeness, or common nature. His theory, is a definite step, toward the moderate realism of Aquinas, but it lacks an explanation, of how ideas are formed. In the development of ethics, Abelard's great contribution, was to maintain, that an act is to be judged by the intention of the doer.

In addition to the writings mentioned, Abelard, wrote many works in Latin on ethics, theology, and dialectics, as well as, poetry and hymns.

Abraham ibn Daud or **Abraham ben David** (1110?-80?), Spanish historian and philosopher, one of the first Jewish philosophers to introduce the Aristotelian system of knowledge to Judaism. He was born in Toledo, Spain. His philosophical work, written in Arabic, *Al-akidah al-Rafiyah*, and preserved in a Hebrew translation as *Emanah Ramah* (The Sublime Faith, 1168), influenced the philosopher, Maimonides. Ibn Daud's historical work, *Sefer ha-Kabbalah* (Book of Tradition, 1161), includes a history of the Jews, in Spain.

Aenesidemus (lived 1st century B.C.), Greek skeptic philosopher, who attempted to demonstrate the relative character of all judgments and opinions. Born in Knossos, on the island of Crete, he taught at Alexandria, Egypt. Ten well-known arguments, (called *tropoi*) for skepticism, are attributed to him. He held that judgment, must be suspended in seeking knowledge and that nothing is certain, either in itself or through anything else. This principle seemed evident to him, as objects appear differently to people, according to the perspective taken. He believed, that proof of an assumption, requires an infinite process of proof (that is, one assumption, is based on another, and so on, indefinitely).

Albertus Magnus, Saint (circa 1200-80), called Albert the Great and known as *doctor universalis*, for his wide interest in natural science. He was, especially noted, for his introduction of Greek and Arabic science and philosophy, to the medieval world.

Born in Lauingen, Bavaria, to a noble military family, Albert was studying at Padua, in 1223, when he was attracted to the Dominican Order of Preachers, then less than ten years old. He was ordained, in Germany, and taught there, before going on to the University of Paris, where he became a master of theology, in 1245, and subsequently, held one of the Dominican chairs of theology. Among his early students, was Thomas Aquinas. Albert was an influential teacher, Church administrator, and preacher. He traveled through western Europe, on behalf, of his order and served as a provincial, and briefly, as bishop of Regensburg (1260-62) before returning to teaching and research.

Albert was a key figure in the assimilation of Aristotelian philosophy, into medieval Scholasticism, and in the revival of natural science, that it inspired. Early in the 13th century, a body of philosophical and scientific writings, previously unknown to Western philosophers and theologians, became a disturbing force in Scholastic circles. These

Latin writings, based on Arabic translations of the works of Aristotle, were accompanied by the writings of Arab commentators, notably Avicenna and Averroes. As such, they presented, a point of view, foreign to the Church-trained Scholastics, whose knowledge of Aristotle, was confined to his logic, as taught and interpreted, for centuries by the Church, in the tradition of St. Augustine and the Neoplatonists.

Albert had, on his journeys, shown an intense interest in natural phenomena, and he seized on Aristotle's scientific writings. He examined them, commented on them, and occasionally, contradicted them on the evidence of his own careful observations. He produced, essentially, new works, and according to the English philosopher, Roger Bacon, held much the same authority, in his time, as did Aristotle himself.

As a theologian, Albert was outstanding among the medieval philosophers, but not as innovative, as his pupil, Aquinas. In his *Summa Theologiae* (circa 1270), he attempted to reconcile Aristotelianism and Christian teachings. He maintained, that human reason, could not contradict revelation, but he defended the philosopher's right, to investigate divine mysteries.

Albert died, at Cologne on November 15, 1280. He was beatified, in 1622, and declared a saint by Pope Pius XI, in 1931, at which time, he was acclaimed, an official Doctor of the Church. In 1914, Pope Pius XII made him the patron, of all who study the natural sciences. His feast day is November 15.

Anaxagoras (500?-428 B.C.), Greek philosopher, who introduced the notion of *nous* (Greek, "mind" or "reason") into the philosophy of origins; previous philosophers had studied the elements (earth, air, fire, water), as ultimate reality.

Born in Clazomenae (near modern Izmir, Turkey), Anaxagoras, was the first philosopher to settle (circa 480) in Athens, later a flourishing center of philosophy. His pupils included the Greek statesman, Pericles, the Greek dramatist, Euripides, and probably, Socrates. Anaxagoras had taught in Athens, for about 30 years, when he was imprisoned for impiety for suggesting, that the sun is a hot stone and the moon, made of earth. Later, he went to Ionia (in Asia Minor) and settled at Lampsacus, a colony of Miletus, where he died.

Anaxagoras explained his philosophy in *Peri Physeos* (On Nature), but only fragments of the books have survived. He held, that all matter, had existed originally, as atoms, or molecules; that these atoms, infinitely numerous and infinitesimally small, but existed from all eternity; and that order, was first produced, out of this infinite chaos of minute atoms, through the influence and operation, of an eternal intelligence (*nous*). He also believed, that all bodies are simply, aggregations of atoms, for example, that a bar of gold, iron, or copper, is composed of inconceivably, minute particles of the same material.

Anaxagoras marks a great turning point in the history of Greek philosophy: His doctrine of the *nous*, was adopted by Aristotle, and his doctrine of atoms, prepared the way for

the atomic theory of the philosopher, Democritus.

Anaximander (circa 611-c. 547 B.C.), Greek philosopher, mathematician, and astronomer, born in Miletus, in what is now Turkey. He was a disciple and friend of the Greek philosopher, Thales. Anaximander is said, to have discovered the obliquity of the ecliptic, that is, the angle, at which, the plane of the ecliptic, is inclined to the celestial equator. He is credited with introducing the sundial into Greece and with inventing cartography. Anaximander's outstanding 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. Anaximander postulated, 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 (circa 570-500 B.C.), Greek philosopher of nature, the last member of the Ionian school, founded by the philosopher, Thales. Born at Miletus, Ionia, in Asia Minor, 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. His importance lies, not in his cosmology, but in his attempt, to discover the ultimate nature of reality.

Anselm, Saint (circa 1033-1109), theologian, philosopher, and Church leader, who proposed an argument for God's existence, that is still being debated.

Anselm was born of a well-to-do family, at Aosta, in northern Italy; in 1060, he joined the Benedictine monastery at Bec, in Normandy, where the English prelate, Lanfranc, was prior. Sometime later, after Lanfranc was called to England to become archbishop of Canterbury, Anselm was elected, abbot of Bec. During these years, he acquired a reputation for learning and piety, and his monks urged him, to write out the meditations, that were the basis of his instructions to them. Thus, he composed the *Monologium* (Soliloquy, 1077), in which -reflecting the influence of St. Augustine -- he spoke of God, as the highest being and investigated God's attributes. Encouraged by its reception, in 1078, he continued his project of faith, seeking understanding, completing the *Proslogium* (Discourse), the second chapter, of which, presents the original statement, of what, in the 18th century, became known, as the ontological argument.

Anselm argued, that even, those who doubt the existence of God, would have to have some understanding of what, they were doubting: Namely, they would understand God, to be a being, than which, nothing greater can be thought. Given that, it is greater to exist outside the mind, rather than just in the mind, a doubter, who denied God's existence, would be making a contradiction, because, he or she, would be saying, that it

is possible to think of something greater, than a being, than which, nothing greater, can be thought.

Hence, by definition, God exists, necessarily. The basic criticism of Anselm's argument is that one cannot infer, the extramental existence of anything, by analyzing its definition. In Anselm's own time, a fellow monk, Gaunilo of Marmoutier, challenged his argument, as did the later, philosophers, Thomas Aquinas and Immanuel Kant. Nonetheless, Rene Descartes, Baruch Spinoza, Gottfried Leibniz, and some contemporary philosophers, have offered, similar arguments.

In 1093, Anselm was called, to succeed Lanfranc, as the archbishop of Canterbury. As archbishop, Anselm entered into a time of great strife with King William II, the successor of William the Conqueror, over the Church's independence of the king's control. In and out of England, in exile in Italy, Anselm led a life of conflict with the secular powers. Despite these power struggles, he continued his theological speculations, writing *Cur Deus Homo* (Why God Became Man), a study of the incarnation and crucifixion of Christ, as a way of atoning for sin.

In 1100, when Henry I, succeeded to the English throne, Anselm returned to Canterbury. Controversy, with the king, continued over investiture, with another period of exile for Anselm. Anselm returned to Canterbury, in 1106, where he died on April 21, 1109. He was canonized, in 1163, and declared, a Doctor of the Church, in 1720. His feast day is April 21.

Antisthenes (444? - after 371 B.C.), Greek philosopher, founder of the school of philosophy, called Cynicism. He was born in Athens and became a disciple of Socrates. Antisthenes taught in the gymnasium, known as the Cynosarges, outside Athens, and his followers were called Cynics. Antisthenes regarded happiness, as attainable, only through, virtue. He denounced art and literature, condemned luxury and comfort, and extolled hard work. His most famous pupil was the Greek Cynic philosopher, Diogenes.

Aquinas, Saint Thomas, sometimes called the Angelic Doctor and the Prince of Scholastics (1225-74), Italian philosopher and theologian, whose works have made him the most important figure in Scholastic philosophy and one of the leading Roman Catholic theologians.

Aquinas was born of a noble family in Roccasecca, near Aquino, and was educated at the Benedictine monastery of Monte Cassino and the University of Naples. He joined the Dominican order, while still an undergraduate in 1243, the year of his father's death. His mother, opposed to Thomas's affiliation with a mendicant order, confined him to the family castle, for more than a year, in a vain attempt, to make him abandon his chosen course. She released him in 1245, and Aquinas, then journeyed to Paris, to continue his studies. He studied under the German Scholastic philosopher, Albertus Magnus, following him to Cologne in 1248. Because Aquinas was heavysset and taciturn, his fellow novices called him, Dumb Ox, but Albertus Magnus is said to have predicted that

“this ox will, one day, fill the world with his bellowing.”

Early Years

Aquinas was ordained, a priest, about 1250, and he began to teach at the University of Paris, in 1252. His first writings, primarily, summaries and amplifications of his lectures, appeared two years later. His first major work was, *Scripta Super Libros Sententiarum* (Writings on the Books of the Sentences, 1256?), which consisted of commentaries on an influential work, concerning the sacraments of the Church, known as the *Sententiarum Libri Quatuor* (Four Books of Sentences), by the Italian theologian, Peter Lombard.

In 1256, Aquinas was awarded a doctorate in theology and appointed professor of philosophy at the University of Paris. Pope Alexander IV (reigned 1254-61) summoned him to Rome in 1259, where he acted as adviser and lecturer to the papal court. Returning to Paris in 1268, Aquinas immediately became involved in a controversy with the French philosopher, Siger de Brabant, and other followers of the Islamic philosopher, Averroes.

Study of Aristotle and the Averroists

To understand the crucial importance of this controversy for Western thought, it is necessary to consider the context, in which, it occurred. Before the time of Aquinas, Western thought had been dominated by the philosophy of St. Augustine, the Western Church's great Father and Doctor of the 4th and 5th centuries, who taught that, in the search for truth, people must depend upon sense experience. Early in the 13th century, the major works of Aristotle were made available in a Latin translation, accompanied by the commentaries of Averroes and other Islamic scholars. The vigor, clarity, and authority of Aristotle's teachings re-stored confidence in empirical knowledge and gave rise to a school of philosophers, known as Averroists. Under the leadership of Siger de Brabant, the Averroists asserted that philosophy was independent of revelation.

Averroism threatened the integrity and supremacy of Roman Catholic doctrine and filled orthodox thinkers with alarm. To ignore Aristotle, as interpreted by the Averroists, was impossible; to condemn his teachings was ineffectual. He had to be reckoned with. Albertus Magnus and other scholars had attempted to deal with Averroism, but with little success. Aquinas succeeded brilliantly.

Reconciling the Augustinian emphasis upon the human spiritual principle with the Averroist claim of autonomy for knowledge derived from the senses, Aquinas insisted that the truths of faith and those of sense experience, as presented by Aristotle, are fully compatible and complementary. Some truths, such as that of the mystery of the incarnation, can be known, only through, revelation, and others, such as that of the composition of material things, only through experience; still others, such as that of the existence of God, are known through, both equally. All knowledge, Aquinas held, originates in sensation, but sense data can be made intelligible, only by the action of the intellect, which elevates thought toward the apprehension, of such, immaterial realities as the human soul, the angels, and God. To reach an understanding of the highest

truths, those, with which, religion is concerned, the aid of revelation is needed. Aquinas's moderate realism, placed the universals firmly in the mind, in opposition to extreme realism, which posited their independence of human thought. He admitted a foundation for universals in existing things, however, in opposition to nominalism and conceptualism.

Later Years

Aquinas, first suggested his mature position, in the treatise, *De Unitate Intellectus Contra Averroistas* (1270; trans. *The Trinity and the Unicity of the Intellect*, 1946). This work turned the tide against his opponents, who were condemned by the Church.

Aquinas left Paris, in 1272, and proceeded to Naples, where he organized a new Dominican school. In March of 1274, while traveling to the Council of Lyon, to which, he had been commissioned by Pope Gregory X, Aquinas fell ill. He died on March 7, at the Cistercian monastery of Fossanova.

Aquinas was canonized by Pope John XXII, in 1323, and proclaimed a Doctor of the Church by Pope Pius V., in 1567.

Assessment

More successfully, than any other theologian or philosopher, Aquinas organized the knowledge of his time, in the service of his faith. In his effort to reconcile faith with intellect, he created a philosophical synthesis of the works and teachings of Aristotle and other classic sages; of Augustine and other Church fathers; of Averroes, Avicenna, and other Islamic scholars; of Jewish thinkers such as Maimonides and Solomon ben Yehuda ibn Gabirol; and his predecessors in the Scholastic tradition. This synthesis, he brought into line, with the Bible and Roman Catholic doctrine.

Aquinas's accomplishment was immense; his work marks one of the few great culminations, in the history of philosophy. After Aquinas, Western philosophers could choose, only between, humbly following him and striking off, in some altogether, different direction. In the centuries, immediately following his death, the dominant tendency, even among Roman Catholic thinkers, was to adopt the second alternative. Interest in Thomist philosophy began to revive, however, toward the end of the 19th century. In the encyclical, *Aeterni Patris* (Of the Eternal Father, 1879), Pope Leo XIII, recommended that St. Thomas's philosophy, be made the basis of instruction in all Roman Catholic schools. Pope Pius XII, in the encyclical *Humani Generis* (Of the Human Race, 1950), affirmed that the Thomist philosophy is the surest guide to Roman Catholic doctrine and discouraged all departures from it. Thomism remains a leading school of contemporary thought. Among the thinkers, Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic alike, who have operated within the Thomist framework, have been the French philosophers, Jacques Maritain and Etienne Gilson.

St. Thomas, was an extremely prolific author, and about 80 works, are ascribed to him. The two most important are, *Summa Contra Gentiles* (1261-64; trans., *On the Truth of the Catholic Faith*, 1956), a closely reasoned treatise intended to persuade intellectual

Muslims of the truth of Christianity; and *Summa Theologica* (Summary Treatise of Theology, 1265-73), in three parts (on God, the moral life of man, and Christ), of which, the last was left unfinished. *Summa Theologica* has been republished frequently, in Latin and vernacular editions.

Aristippus (circa 435-c. 360 B.C.), Greek philosopher, who studied with Socrates in Athens and founded the Cyrenaic school of hedonism. He held, that pleasure, is the greatest good, and pain, the least. Virtue, then, is the capacity to enjoy pleasure and eschew pain. Aristippus maintained, that people should dedicate their lives, to the pursuit of pleasure, but that they should, also, exercise judgment and restraint, to keep dangerous impulses in check.

Aristotle (384-322 B.C.), Greek philosopher and scientist, who shares with Plato and Socrates, the distinction of being the most famous of ancient philosophers.

Aristotle was born at Stagira, in Macedonia, the son of a physician to the royal court. At the age of 17, he went to Athens, to study at Plato's Academy. He remained there for about 20 years, as a student, and then, as a teacher.

When Plato died in 347 B.C., Aristotle moved to Assos, a city in Asia Minor, where a friend of his, Hermias was ruler. There he counseled Hermias and married his niece and adopted daughter, Pythias. After Hermias was captured and executed by the Persians, in 345 B.C., Aristotle went to Pella, the Macedonian capital, where he became the tutor of the king's young son, Alexander, later known as, Alexander the Great. In 335, when Alexander became king, Aristotle returned to Athens and established his own school, the Lyceum. Because much of the discussion in his school took place while teachers and students were walking about the Lyceum grounds, Aristotle's school, came to be known, as the Peripatetic ("walking" or "strolling") school. Upon the death of Alexander, in 323 B.C., strong anti-Macedonian feelings developed in Athens, and Aristotle retired to a family estate, in Euboea. He died there the following year.

Works

Aristotle, like Plato, made regular use of the dialogue in his earliest years at the Academy, but lacking Plato's imaginative gifts, he probably, never found the form congenial. Apart from a few fragments, in the works of later writers, his dialogues have been wholly lost. Aristotle, also wrote, some short technical notes, such as a dictionary of philosophic terms and a summary of the doctrines of Pythagoras. Of these, only a few brief excerpts have survived. Still extant, however, are Aristotle's lecture notes for carefully outlined courses treating almost, every branch of knowledge and art. The texts, on which, Aristotle's reputation rests, are largely based, on these lecture notes, and which, were collected and arranged by later editors.

Among the texts are treatises on logic, called *Organon* ("instrument"), because they provide the means, by which, positive knowledge, is to be attained. His works on natural science include *Physics*, which gives a vast amount of information on astronomy, meteorology, plants, and animals. His writings on the nature, scope, and

properties of being, which Aristotle called, *First Philosophy (Prote Philosophia)*, were given the title, *Metaphysics* in the first published edition of his works (60? B.C.), because, in that edition, they followed *Physics*. His treatment of the Prime Mover, or first cause, as pure intellect, perfect in unity, immutable, and as he said, “the thought of thought,” is given in the *Metaphysics*. To his son, Nicomachus, he dedicated his work of ethics, called the *Nicomachean Ethics*. Other essential works include his, *Rhetoric*, his *Poetics* (which survives in incomplete form), and his *Politics* (also incomplete).

Methods

Perhaps because of the influence of his father’s medical profession, Aristotle’s philosophy, laid its principal stress on biology, in contrast to Plato’s emphasis on mathematics. Aristotle regarded the world, as made up of individuals (substances), occurring in fixed natural kinds (species). Each individual has its built-in specific pattern of development and grows toward proper self-realization, as a specimen of its type. Growth, purpose, and direction, are thus, built into nature. Although science studies general kinds, according to Aristotle, these kinds, find their existence, in particular individuals. Science and philosophy, must, therefore, balance, not simply, choose between, the claims of empiricism, (observation and sense experience) and formalism (rational deduction).

One of the most distinctive of Aristotle’s philosophic contributions, was a new notion, of causality. Each thing or event, he thought, has more than one “reason,” that helps to explain what, why, and where, it is. Earlier Greek thinkers had tended to assume, that only one sort of cause, can be explanatory; Aristotle proposed, four. (The word, Aristotle, uses, *aition*, “a responsible, explanatory factor,” is not synonymous, with the word, *cause*, in its modern sense).

These four causes are the material cause, the matter, out of which, a thing is made; the efficient cause, the source of motion, generation, or change; the formal cause, which is the species, kind, or type; and the final cause, the goal, or full development, of an individual, or the intended function of a construction or invention. Thus, a young lion is made up of tissues and organs, its material cause; the efficient cause is its parents, who generated it; the formal cause is its species, lion; and its final cause is its built-in drive toward becoming a mature specimen. In different contexts, while the causes are the same four, they apply, analogically. Thus, the material cause of a statue is the marble, from which, it was carved; the efficient cause, is the sculptor; the formal cause, is the shape the sculptor realized -- Hermes, perhaps, or Aphrodite; and the final cause, is its function, to be a work of fine art.

In each context, Aristotle insists that something can be better understood when its causes can be stated in specific terms, rather than in general terms. Thus, it is more informative, to know, that a sculptor made the statue than to know, that an artist made it; and even more informative to know, that Polycleitus, chiseled it, rather, than simply, that a sculptor did so.

Aristotle thought his causal pattern was the ideal key for organizing knowledge. His

lecture notes, present impressive evidence of the power of this scheme.

Doctrines

Some of the principal aspects of Aristotle's thought can be seen, in the following summary of his doctrines, or theories.

Physics, or Natural Philosophy

In astronomy, Aristotle proposed a finite, spherical universe, with the earth, as its center. The central region is made up of four elements: earth, air, fire, and water. In Aristotle's physics, each of these four elements has a proper place, determined by its relative heaviness, its "specific gravity." Each moves, naturally, in a straight line -- earth down, fire up -- toward its proper place, where it will be at rest. Thus, terrestrial motion, is always, linear, and always comes, to a halt. The heavens, however, move naturally and endlessly, in a complex circular motion. The heavens, therefore, must be made of a fifth, and different element, which he called, *aither*. A superior element, *aither*, is incapable of any change, other than, change of place in a circular movement.

Aristotle's theory, that linear motion, always takes place through a resisting medium, is in fact, valid for all observable terrestrial motions. He also, held, that heavier bodies, of a given material, fall faster than lighter ones when their shapes are the same, a mistaken view that was accepted, as fact, until the Italian physicist and astronomer, Galileo, conducted his experiment, with weights dropped from the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

Biology

In zoology, Aristotle proposed a fixed set of natural kinds ("species"), each reproducing true to type. An exception occurs, Aristotle thought, when some "very low" worms and flies come from rotting fruit or manure by "spontaneous generation." The typical life cycles are epicycles: The same pattern repeats but through a linear succession of individuals. These processes are, therefore, intermediate between the changeless circles of the heavens and the simple linear movements of the terrestrial elements. The species form a scale, from simple, (worms and flies at the bottom) to complex (human beings at the top), but evolution, is not possible.

Aristotelian Psychology

For Aristotle, psychology was a study of the soul. Insisting, that form (the essence, or unchanging characteristic element in an object) and matter (the common undifferentiated substratum of things), always exist together; Aristotle defined a soul, as a "kind of functioning of a body, organized so that, it can support vital functions." In considering the soul, as essentially associated with the body, he challenged the Pythagorean doctrine, that the soul is a spiritual entity, imprisoned in the body. Aristotle's doctrine, is a synthesis of the earlier notion, that the soul does not exist, apart from the body, and of the Platonic notion, of a soul, as a separate, non-physical entity. Whether any part of the human soul is immortal, and, if so, whether its immortality is personal, are not entirely clear in his treatise, *On the Soul*.

Through the functioning of the soul, the moral and intellectual aspects of humanity, are

developed. Aristotle argued, that human insight, in its highest form, (*nous poietikos*, “active mind”), is not reducible, to a mechanical physical process. Such insight, however, presupposes an individual “passive mind,” that does not appear, to transcend physical nature. Aristotle, clearly stated the relationship between human insight and the senses, in what has become a slogan of empiricism -- the view, that knowledge is grounded in sense experience. “There is nothing in the intellect, “ he wrote, “that was not first in the senses.”

Ethics

It seemed, to Aristotle, that the individual’s freedom of choice, made an absolutely accurate analysis of human affairs, impossible. “Practical science,” then, such as politics or ethics, was called, science only, by courtesy and analogy. The inherent limitations, on practical science, are made clear, in Aristotle’s con-cepts of human nature and self-realization. Human nature, certainly involves, for everyone, a capacity for forming habits; but the habits that a particular individual forms, depend on that individual’s culture and repeated personal choices. All human beings, want “happiness,” an active, engaged realization of their innate capacities, but this goal can be achieved in a multiplicity of ways.

Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, is an analysis of character and intelligence, as they relate, to happiness. Aristotle distinguished, two kinds of “virtue,” or human excellence: moral and intellectual. Moral virtue, is an expression of character, formed by habits, reflecting repeated choices. A moral virtue, is always, a mean, between two less desirable extremes. Courage, for example, is a mean, between cowardice and thoughtless rashness; generosity, between extravagance and parsimony. Intellectual virtues, are not subject to this doctrine, of the mean. Aristotle argued, for an elitist ethics: Full excellence, can be realized, only by, the mature male adult of the upper class, not by women, or children, or barbarians, (non-Greeks), or salaried “mechanics,” (manual workers), for whom, indeed, Aristotle, die not want to allow voting rights.

In politics, many forms of human association, can obviously, be found; which one is suitable, depends on circumstances, such as the natural resources, cultural traditions, industry, and literacy, of each community. Aristotle, did not regard politics, as a study of ideal states, in some abstract form, but rather, as an examination of the way, in which, ideals, laws, customs, and property, interrelate in actual cases. He thus, approved, the contemporary institution of slavery, but tempered his acceptance, by insisting, that matters should not abuse their authority, since the interests of master and slave, are the same. The Lyceum library, contained a collection of 158 constitutions of the Greek and other states. Aristotle, himself, wrote the *Constitution of Athens*, as part of the collection, and after being lost, this description was rediscovered, in a papyrus copy, in 1890. Historians, have found the work of great value in reconstructing many phases of the history of Athens.

Logic

In logic, Aristotle developed rules for chains of reasoning that would, if followed, never lead from true premises to false conclusions (validity rules). 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.” Science results, from constructing more complex systems of reasoning. In his logic, Aristotle, distinguished between dialectic and analytic. Dialectic, he held, only tests opinions for their logical consistency; analytic works, deductively from principles, resting on experience and precise observation. This is clearly, an intended break, with Plato’s Academy, where dialectic, was supposed to be, the only proper method for science and philosophy, alike.

Metaphysics

In his metaphysics, Aristotle argued, for the existence of a divine being, described as the Prime Mover, who is responsible, for the unity and purposefulness, of nature. God is perfect, and therefore, the aspiration, of all things in the world, because all things desire to share perfection. Other movers, exist, as well – the intelligent movers of the planets and stars (Aristotle suggested, that the number of these is “either 55 or 47”). The Prime Mover, or God, described by Aristotle, is not very suitable for religious purposes, as many later philosophers and theologians, have observed. Aristotle limited his “theology,” however, to what he believed, science requires, and can establish.

Influence

Aristotle’s works, were lost in the West, after the decline of Rome. During the 9th century A.D., Arab scholars introduced Aristotle, in Arabic translation, to the Islamic world. The 12th-century Spanish-Arab philosopher, Averroes, is the best known, of the Arabic scholars, who studied and commented, on Aristotle. In the 13th century, the Latin West, renewed its interest in Aristotle’s work, and Saint Thomas Aquinas, found in it, a philosophical foundation for Christian thought. Church officials, at first, questioned Aquinas’s use of Aristotle; in the early stages of its rediscovery, Aristotle’s philosophy, was regarded, with some suspicion, largely because, his teachings were thought to lead to a materialistic view of the world. Nevertheless, the work of Aquinas, was accepted, and the later philosophy of scholasticism, continued the philosophical tradition, based on Aquinas’s adaptation of Aristotelian thought.

The influence of Aristotle’s philosophy, has been pervasive; it has even helped, to shape modern language and common sense. His doctrine of the Prime Mover, as final cause, played an important role, in theology. Until the 20th century, logic meant, Aristotle’s logic. Until the Renaissance, and even later, astronomers and poets alike, admired his concept of the universe. Zoology rested on Aristotle’s work, until British scientist, Charles Darwin, modified the doctrine of the changelessness of species, in the 19th century. In the 20th century, a new appreciation has developed of Aristotle’s method and its relevance to education, literary criticism, the analysis of human action, and political analysis.

Not only the discipline of zoology, but also, the world of learning, as a whole, seems to

amply justify, Darwin's remark, that the intellectual heroes, of his own time, "were mere schoolboys, compared to old Aristotle.

Augustine of Hippo, St. (354-430) The greatest of the Latin church fathers and possibly the most influential Christian thinker after St. Paul. St. Augustine emphasized man's need for grace. His *Confessions* and *The City of God* were highly influential.

Averroes (1126-98). Spanish-born Arabian philosopher, lawyer, and physician whose detailed commentaries on Aristotle were influential for over 300 years. He emphasized the compatibility of faith and reason but believed philosophical knowledge to be derived from reason. The church condemned his views.

Avicenna (980-1037). Islamic medieval philosopher born in Persia. His Neoplatonist interpretation of Aristotle greatly influenced medieval philosophers, including St. Thomas Aquinas. He was also a physician; his writings on medicine were important for nearly 500 years.

Bacon, Sir Francis (1561-1626). English statesman, essayist, and philosopher, one of the great precursors of the tradition of British empiricism and of belief in the importance of scientific method. He emphasized the use of inductive reasoning in the pursuit of knowledge.

Bentham, Jeremy (1748-1832). English philosopher and lawyer, and one of the founders of utilitarianism. He was a highly influential reformer of the British legal, judicial, and prison systems. He is the author of *Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*.

Berkeley, George (1685-1753). Irish philosopher and an Anglican bishop, one of the British empiricists. He held to a "subjective idealism." He believed that everything that exists is dependent on being perceived by a mind. According to this view, material objects are simply collections of sensations or "ideas" in the mind of a person or of God. His works include *Essay Toward a New Theory of Vision* and *A Treatise Concerning the Principles of Human Knowledge*.

Boethius (circa 480-524), Roman philosopher and statesman. He gained the esteem and confidence of Theodoric, King of the Ostrogoths, then the Ruler of Rome, and in 510, was made a Consul. Later, Boethius, was accused, by his enemies, of plotting treason, and although innocent, was imprisoned in Pavia, and executed. During his imprisonment, he wrote, *De Consolatione Philosophiae* (The Consolation of Philosophy, c. 523), a philosophic work that, although written by a non-Christian, contained so many elements of Christian ethics, that it was highly regarded in Europe during medieval times. Many translations of the work, were made, notably (in England), by King Alfred the Great, and by the poet, Geoffrey Chaucer. Boethius, also wrote, treatises on logic, that profoundly influenced, the terminology of medieval logic; translations and commentaries, on the works of Aristotle, from which, medieval scholars, largely derived their knowledge, of the Greek philosopher; and works on music,

arithmetic, and theology.

Buber, Martin (1878-1965). German-Israeli philosopher influenced by Jewish mysticism and existentialism, a major force in 20th century Jewish thought and philosophy of religion.. His *I and Thou* held that God and man can have a direct and mutual “dialogue.”

Comte, Auguste (1798-1857). French founder of positivism and social reformer. He put forth a “religion of humanity’ that replaced the notion of God with the notion of humankind as a whole. He invented the term *sociology*.

Confucius, in Chinese, K`ung Fu-Tzu (circa 551-479 B.C.), Chinese philosopher, one of the most influential figures in Chinese history.

According to tradition, Confucius was born in the State of Lu (present-day Shandong [Shantung] Province) of the noble K`ung clan. His original name was K`ung Ch`iu. His father, commander of a district in Lu, died three years after Confucius was born, leaving the family in poverty; but Confucius, nevertheless, received a fine education. He was married at the age of 19, and had one son and two daughters. During the four years, immediately after his marriage, poverty compelled him to perform menial labors for the chief of the district, in which, he lived. His mother died in 527 B.C., and after a period of mourning, he began his career as a teacher, usually traveling about and instructing the small body of disciples, that had gathered around him. His fame as a man of learning and character and his reverence for Chinese ideals and customs, soon spread, through the principality of Lu.

Living as he did in the second half of the Chou dynasty (circa 1027-256 B.C.), when feudalism degenerated in China and intrigue and vice were rampant, Confucius deplored the contemporary disorder and lack of moral standards. He came to believe, that the only remedy, was to convert people, once more, to the principles and precepts of the sages of antiquity. He therefore, lectured to his pupils, on the ancient classics. He taught the great value of the power of example. Rulers, he said, can be great, only if, they themselves, lead exemplary lives, and were they willing to be guided by moral principles, their states would, in-avoidably, become prosperous and happy.

Confucius had, however, no opportunity to put his theories to a public test until, at the age of 50, he was appointed Magistrate of Chung-tu, and the next year, Minister of crime of the State of Lu. His administration was successful; reforms were introduced, justice was fairly dispensed, and crime was almost eliminated. So powerful, did Lu become, that a ruler of a neighboring state, maneuvered to secure the Minister’s dismissal. Confucius left his office in 496 B.C., traveling about and teaching, vainly hoping, that some other prince, would allow him to undertake measures of reform. In 484 B.C., after a fruitless search for an ideal ruler, he returned, for the last time, to Lu. He spent the remaining years of his life, in retirement, writing commentaries on the classics. He died in Lu and was buried in a tomb at Ch`u-fu, Shandong.

Confucius did not put into writing, the principles of his philosophy; these were handed down, only through, his disciples. The *Lun Yu* (Analects), a work compiled by some of his disciples, is considered the most reliable source of information about his life and teachings. One of the historical works, that he is said to have compiled and edited, the *Ch`un Ch`iu* (Spring and Autumn Annals), is an annalistic account of Chinese history in the State of Lu from 722 to 481 B.C. In learning, he wished to be known as a transmitter, rather than, as a creator, and he therefore, revived the study of the ancient books. His own teachings, together with those of his main disciples, are found in the *Shih Shu* (Four Books) of Confucian literature, which became the textbooks of later Chinese generations. Confucius was greatly venerated during his lifetime and in succeeding ages. Although, he himself, had little belief in the supernatural, he has been revered, almost, as a spiritual being, by millions.

The entire teaching of Confucius, was practical and ethical, rather than religious. He claimed to be a restorer of ancient morality, and held, that proper outward acts, based on the five virtues of kindness, uprightness, decorum, wisdom, and faithfulness constitute the whole of human duty. Reverence for parents, living and dead, was one of his key concepts. His view of government was paternalistic, and he enjoined all individuals, to observe carefully, their duties toward the state. In subsequent centuries, his teachings exerted a powerful influence on the Chinese nation.

Democritus (circa 460-c. 370 B.C.), Greek philosopher, who developed the atomic theory of the universe, which had been originated by his mentor, the philosopher, Leucippus.

Democritus was born in Abdera, Thrace. He wrote extensively, but only fragments of his works remain. According to his exposition of the atomic theory of matter, all things are composed of minute, invisible, indestructible, particles of pure matter (*atoma*, "indivisibles"), which move about, eternally, in infinite empty space (*kenon*, "the void"). Although atoms are made up, of precisely, the same matter, they differ in shape, size, weight, sequence, and position. Qualitative differences, in what, the senses perceive and the birth, decay, and disappearance of things, are the results, not of characteristics, inherent in atoms, but of quantitative arrangements of atoms. Democritus viewed 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.

Democritus, also wrote, on ethics, proposing happiness, or "cheerfulness," as the highest good -- a condition to be achieved through moderation, tranquility, and freedom from fear. In later histories, Democritus, was known as the Laughing Philosopher, in contrast to the more somber and pessimistic, Heraclitus, the Weeping Philosopher. His atomic theory, anticipated the modern principles of the conservation of energy and the irreducibility of matter.

Descartes, Rene (1596-1650). French philosopher and scientist, considered the father of modern philosophical inquiry. He tried to extend mathematical method to all knowledge in his search for certainty. Discarding the medieval appeal to authority, he

began with “universal doubt,” finding that the only thing that could not be doubted was his own thinking. The result was his famous “*Cogito, ergo sum*” or “I think, therefore I am.” His major works are the *Discourse on Method* and *Meditations*.

Dewey, John (1859-1952). Leading American philosopher, psychologist, and educational theorist. He developed the views of Charles S. Peirce (1839-1914) and William James into his own version of pragmatism. He emphasized the importance of inquiry in gaining knowledge and attacked the view that knowledge is passive.

Diderot, Denis (1713-84). Materialist thinker of the French Enlightenment and originator of the *Encyclopedie*.

Diogenes (1713-325 B.C.) Greek founder of cynicism who rejected social conventions and supposedly lived in a tub in defiance of conventional comforts.

Empedocles (circa 493-433 B.C.), Greek philosopher, statesman, and poet, born in Agrigentum (now Agrigento), Sicily. He was a disciple of the Greek philosophers, Pythagoras and Parmenides. According to tradition, he refused to accept the crown offered to him, by the people of Agrigentum, after he had aided in overthrowing the ruling oligarchy. Instead, he instituted a democracy.

Modern knowledge of his philosophy is based on the extant fragments of his poems on nature and purification. He asserted, that all things are composed of four primal elements: earth, air, fire, and water. Two active and opposing forces, love and hate, or affinity and antipathy, act upon these elements, combining and separating them, into infinitely varied forms. According to Empedocles, reality is cyclical. At the beginning of a cycle, the four elements are bound together, by the principles of love. When hate penetrates the cycle, the elements begin to separate. Love reunites everything; then hate begins the process, once again. The world, as we know it, is halfway between, the primary sphere and the stage of total separation of the elements. Empedocles, believed also, that no change involving the creation of new matter is possible; only change in the combinations of the four existing elements, may occur. He also formulated, a primitive theory of evolution, in which, he declared, that humans and animals evolved from antecedent forms.

Engels, Friedrich (1820-95) German socialist thinker and historian, and the cofounder of Marxism; His lifelong collaborator and coauthor of the *Communist Manifesto*; and an originator of the philosophy of dialectical materialism.

Epictetus (55?-135?), Greek philosopher, whose philosophy of Stoicism emphasized freedom, morality, and humanity. Epictetus, was probably, born at Hierapolis, Phrygia (now in Turkey). Although a slave, as a youth, he studied the philosophy of Stoicism. His master, subsequently, granted him his freedom, and until A.D., 90, Epictetus taught philosophy at Rome. In that year, the Roman emperor, Domitian, fearful of the dangers engendered by the teachings of the Stoics, exiled Epictetus and several other philosophers. Epictetus settled at Nicopolis, in southern Epirus, where he died. His

doctrines, have been preserved, in two works, compiled by his pupil, the Greek historian and philosopher, Arrian: the *Encheiridion* (Handbook), the whole, of which, survives today, and *Discourses of Epictetus*, of which, four of eight books survive.

According to these works, Epictetus was concerned, chiefly, with the problem of morality -- that is, of defining *good*. He asserted, that humans, are basically, limited and irrational beings, but that the universe, ruled by God, through pure reason, is perfect. Because human beings, can neither know, nor control their destiny, they must cease striving, for the attainment of worldly ends, and instead, calmly accept the fact of their own powerlessness, before fate. As a corollary of this doctrine, Epictetus held, that human beings must, because of their own weaknesses, be tolerant of the faults of others.

Epicurus (341-270 B.C.), Greek philosopher, born on the island of Samos of an Athenian family, and privately educated by his father, a schoolteacher, and by various philosophers. At the age of 18, he went to Athens to perform military service. After a brief stay, he joined (322) his father in Colophon, where he began teaching. Epicurus founded a philosophical school in Mitilini on the island of Lesbos about 311, and two or three years later, he became head of a school in Lampsacus (now Lapseki, Turkey). Returning to Athens in 306, he settled there, permanently, and taught his doctrines to a devoted body of followers. Because instruction took place in the garden of Epicurus's home, his followers were known as, "philosophers of the garden." Both women and men requested his garden, and this occasioned much gossip about the alleged activities there. Students from all over Greece and Asia Minor flocked to Epicurus's school, attracted as much by his charm, as by his intellect.

Epicurus was a prolific author. According to the account of his life, by the 3rd-century A.D., historian and biographer, Diogenes Laertius, he left 300 manuscripts, including 37 treatises on physics and numerous works on love, justice, the gods, and other subjects. Of his writings, only three letters and a number of short fragments survive, preserved in Diogenes Laertius's biography. The principal additional sources of information about the doctrines of Epicurus, are the works of the Roman writers, Cicero, Seneca, Plutarch, and Lucretius, whose poem, *De Rerum Natura* (On the Nature of Things) delineates the Epicurean philosophy.

Erigena, John Scotus (815?-877?), Irish-born scholar, who produced the first great philosophical system of the Middle Ages.

It is believed that he was the son of Scottish parents and was born in Ireland, as indicated by his use of the pseudonym, Johannes Ierugena or Johannes Eriugena (meaning "Irish-born"). About 847, Charles I, King of France, appointed him supervisor of the court school. Charles, also commissioned him, to translate into Latin, the Neoplatonic works of Dionysius the Areopagite. Erigena came into conflict with Pope Nicholas I, when he did not submit his work to censorship, but Charles supported him, and he was retained, at court, until the king's death in 877. The councils of Valence (855), Langres (859), and Vercelli (1050), condemned his treatise, *De Divina Praede-*

stinazione (Concerning Divine Predestination, 851), which defended the belief of Hincmar, Archbishop of Reims, that the destiny of the individual is not completely dependent upon God, but that free will, has some part, in determining salvation. Erigena, also asserted, in this writing, that there is no damnation, as traditionally, understood. All human beings, he believed, will become pure spirits.

In his pantheistic work, *De Divisione Naturae* (Concerning the Division of Nature, 865-70), he rejected the orthodox Christian belief, that the universe was created out of nothing. He asserted, that the world of space and time, is the manifestation of ideas, in the mind of God and described God, as the consummation of all development. Erigena, also insisted, that reason does not need the sanction of authority; rather, reason itself, is the basis of authority. *De Divisione Naturae* was condemned at the Council of Sens (1225), and Pope Honorius III, ordered it burned.

It is believed that Erigena, also composed, a work denying the actual presence of Christ in the Eucharist. Although some of Erigena's views were considered heretical, he is respected for his great learning and, is generally regarded, as one of the first representatives of Scholasticism.

Gorgias (circa 485-c. 380 B.C.), Greek rhetorician and Sophistic philosopher. Gorgias was born in Leontini, Sicily. He served as an Ambassador to Athens in 427 B.C., and later settled in Athens, to practice and teach the art of rhetoric. As a rhetorician, Gorgias was among the first, to introduce cadence into prose and to utilize commonplaces in arguments. He is the title character of Plato's dialogue, *Gorgias*, in which, Socrates discusses true and false rhetoric and rhetoric as the art of flattery.

Gorgias's philosophy is a nihilistic one, expressed in three propositions: Nothing exists; if anything does exist, it cannot be known; if anything exists and can be known, it cannot be communicated. The extant works by Gorgias are: *The Encomium on Helen* and *The Apology of Palamedes*. He died in Thessaly at the age of 105.

Hegel, Georg Wilhelm Friedrich (1770-1831). German philosopher whose idealistic system of metaphysics was highly influential; it was based on a concept of the world as a single organism developing by its own inner logic through trios of stages called "thesis, antithesis, and synthesis" and gradually coming to embody reason. He held the monarchy to be the highest development of the state. His works include *Logic* and *Phenomenology of Mind*.

Heidegger, Martin (1889-1976). German philosopher who studied with Husserl. His own philosophy, which was influenced by Kierkegaard, emphasized the need to understand "being," especially the unique ways that humans act in and relate to the world. He wrote *Being and Time*.

Heraclitus (540?-475? B.C.), Greek philosopher, who believed, that fire is the primordial source of matter, and that, the entire world is in a constant state of change.

He was born in Ephesus, an ancient Greek city in Asia Minor, in what is now, Turkey. Because of the loneliness of his life and the obscurity and misanthropy of his philosophy, he is also called, the dark philosopher or weeping philosopher.

Heraclitus was, in a sense, one of the founders of the Greek metaphysics, although his ideas stem, from those of the Ionian school of Greek philosophy. He postulated, fire, as the primal substance or principle, that through condensation and rarefaction, creates the phenomena of the sensible world. 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. Although his thinking was strongly influenced by popular theology, Heraclitus, attacked the concepts and ceremonies of the popular religion of his day.

Only one work, *On Nature*, is definitely, attributable to Heraclitus. Numerous fragments of this work were preserved by later writers, and collected editions of these surviving fragments, may be found in several modern editions.

Hobbes, Thomas (1588-1679). English materialist and empiricist, one of the founders of modern political philosophy. In the *Leviathan*, he argued that because men are selfish by nature, a powerful absolute ruler is necessary. In a “social contract,” men agree to give up many personal liberties and accept such rule.

Hume, David (1711-76). British empiricist whose arguments against the proofs for God’s existence are still influential. In his *Treatise of Human Nature*, he held that moral beliefs have no basis in reason, but are based solely on custom.

Husserl, Edmund (1859-1938). German philosopher who founded the phenomenology movement. He aimed at a completely accurate description of consciousness and conscious experience. His works include *Logical Investigations* and *Ideas for a Pure Phenomenology*.

Ibn Gabirol, Solomon ben Yehuda (1021?-58?), Spanish Jewish philosopher and poet, born in Malaga, and educated in Saragossa. He is also known by the Latin name, Avicbron. His *Mekor hayim* (Fountain of Life), a Neoplatonic dialogue written in Arabic, was known to medieval European scholastic philosophers in its Latin translation, *Fons Vitae*. It was considered, the work of a Christian philosopher, and, as such, its theory of the universality of matter, was ably upheld, by the Scottish philosopher and theologian, John Duns Scotus, but severely attacked by the Italian philosopher and theologian, Thomas Aquinas. The *Fons Vitae* had little influence on Jewish philosophy, but is believed, by some authorities, to have played a role in the development of the Cabala. Of his deeply felt religious poetry, the best-known work, is the ode, *Keter malkhut* (Royal Crown); it concludes with a confession of sin, now included, in the service for Yom Kippur. Ibn Gabirol’s secular poetry, deals with nature and love and gives a

description of his own life. He also wrote, in Arabic, a well-regarded treatise on ethics, *The Improvement of Moral Qualities*.

James, William (1842-1910). American philosopher and psychologist, one of the founders of pragmatism, and one of the most influential thinkers of his era. He viewed consciousness as actively shaping reality, defined truth as “the expedient” way of thinking, and held that ideas are tools for guiding our future actions rather than reproductions of our past experiences. His writings include *The Will to Believe* and *Pragmatism*.

Kant, Immanuel (1724-1804). German philosopher, possibly the most influential of modern times. He synthesized Leibniz’s rationalism and Hume’s skepticism into his “critical philosophy”: in *The Critique of Pure Reason*, he wrote that ideas do not conform to the external world, but rather the world can be known only insofar as it conforms to the mind’s own structure. In *The Critique of Practical Reason*, he claimed that morality requires a belief in God, freedom, and immortality, although these can be proved neither scientifically nor by metaphysics. Finally, in his *Metaphysic of Morals*, he presented the concept of the categorical imperative.

Kierkegaard, Soren (1813-55). Danish philosopher, religious thinker, and extraordinarily influential founder of existentialism. He held that “truth is subjectivity,” that religion is an individual matter, and that man’s relationship to God requires suffering. He wrote *Either/Or* and *Fear and Trembling*.

Kindi, al-, full name, Yaqub ibn Ishaq as-Sabah al-Kindi (801?-73?), first important Islamic philosopher, born in Al Kufah, Iraq, and educated at Al Basrah and Baghdad. Al-Kindi was one of the earliest Arab students of the Greek philosophers and one of the first translators of the works of Aristotle into Arabic. Called the philosopher of the Arabs, because he was descended from Arab nobility, he is the author of more than 270 works, most of them short tracts, covering a wide range of topics, including philosophy, medicine, mathematics, optics, and astrology. Some of his works were translated into Latin during the Middle Ages and influenced European scholars.

The philosophy of al-Kindi, was strongly influenced, by Neoplatonic Aristotelianism. He attempted to provide a philosophical basis for the speculative theology of the Mutazilites. Although he claimed that the conclusions of philosophy and religion, are essentially harmonious, he nevertheless, placed revelation, above philosophy and prophetic insights, above reason. Al-Kindi’s influence on Muslim thinkers continued for about a century, after his death.

Lao-Tzu (570?-490? B.C.), Chinese philosopher and reputed founder of Taoism. He was born in the province of Henan (Ho-nan) and was a court librarian. According to tradition, he is the author of the *Tao-te Ching* (Classic of the Way and Its Virtue), a philosophical treatise. By far, the most translated Chinese literary work, this small book, has had an enormous influence on Chinese thought and culture. It teaches that “the way” (*tao*) is realized through recognition and acceptance of nothingness; that is,

wisdom, is understanding, that weakness, truly equals, strength, that happiness, depends on disaster, and that, passivity, is the greatest action.

Leibniz, Gottfried Wilhelm (1646-1716). German philosopher, diplomat, and mathematician, one of the great minds of all time. He was an inventor (with Sir. Isaac Newton) of the calculus and a forefather of modern mathematical logic. He held that the entire universe is one large system expressing God's plan. His writings include *New Essays on Human Understanding*.

Locke, John (1632-1704). Highly influential founder of British empiricism. In his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, he wrote that all ideas come to mind from experience and that none are innate. He also held that authority derives solely from the consent of the governed, a view that deeply influenced the American Revolution and the writing of the U.S. Constitution. His two *Treatises on Government* express his political thought.

Longinus, full name, Cassius Longinus (about A.D. 213-273), Greek rhetorician and Neoplatonic philosopher. After teaching in Athens for 30 years, he went (circa 262) to Rome. About five years later, he became a tutor, and then, chief counselor to Zenobia, queen of Palmyra, whom he encouraged and aided, in her attempt, to bring all Syria, Asia Minor, and Egypt, under her way, free from the domination of Rome. Upon her defeat of Zenobia, by the Roman emperor, Aurelian, Longinus was beheaded, as a traitor to the Roman state. He wrote many books on philosophy, literature, and rhetoric, most of which, have been lost; parts of *The Art of Rhetoric* and *On the Chief End*, however, are extant. The famous treatise on literary criticism, *On the Sublime*, once attributed to Longinus, is believed to be the work of an unknown writer of the 1st century A.D.

Lucretius (c. 99-55 B.C.) Roman Epicurean philosopher and poet. In *De Rerum Natura* (On the Nature of Things), he depicted the entire world, including the soul, as composed of atoms.

Machiavelli, Niccolo (1469-1527). Italian Renaissance statesman and political writer. In *The Prince*, one of the most influential political books of modern times, he argues that any act of a ruler designed to gain and hold power is permissible. The term *Machiavellian* is used to refer to any political tactics that are cunning and power-oriented.

Maimonides (1135-1204), Jewish philosopher and physician, born in Cordoba, Spain. He, was also known, as Rabbi Moses ben Maimon, or, from the initials of his name, Rambam. Following the capture of Cordoba in 1148, by the Almohads, who imposed Islam on Christians and Jews alike, Maimonides's family decided to emigrate. After years of wandering, they finally settled, in Cairo. There Maimonides, eventually, became the chief rabbi of Cairo and physician to Saladin, sultan of Egypt and Syria.

The contributions of Maimonides, to the development of Judaism, earned him the title,

“second Moses.” His greatest work, in the field of Jewish law, is the *Mishneh Torah*, arranged in 14 books and written in Hebrew (1170-80), which he continued to revise, until his death. In addition, he formulated the Thirteen Articles of Faith, one of several creeds, to which, many Orthodox Jews, still adhere. He is regarded, also, as the outstanding Jewish philosopher of the Middle Ages. In the *Guide for the Perplexed*, written in Arabic (circa 1190), Maimonides, sought to harmonize faith and reason, by reconciling the tenets of rabbinic Judaism with the rationalism of Aristotelian philosophy, in its modified Arabic form, which includes elements of Neoplatonism. This work, in which, he considers the nature of God and creation, free will, and the problem of good and evil, profoundly influenced, such Christian philosophers as, St. Thomas Aquinas and St. Albertus Magnus. His use of allegorical method of biblical interpretation, which minimized anthropomorphism, was opposed for several centuries, by many Orthodox rabbis; but the issues involved, have lost their relevancy, in modern times. Maimonides’s fame, as a physician, equaled his fame, as a philosopher and authority on Judaic law. He also, produced writings on astronomy, logic, and mathematics.

Marcus Aurelius, full name, Marcus Aelius Aurelius Antoninus (121-180), Roman emperor (161-180) and Stoic philosopher.

Marcus Aurelius, whose original name was Marcus Annius Verus, was born in Rome on April 20, 121, the nephew, by marriage, of Antoninus Pius, later emperor. After the latter succeeded to power, he adopted his nephew and married him to his daughter (145). Marcus Aurelius became emperor in 161, and throughout his reign, he was engaged in defensive wars, on the northern and eastern frontiers of the empire. His legions succeeded, in repelling the invasion of Syria, by the Parthians in 166, but Rome, was again, forced into battle in 167, by the Germanic tribes on the Rhine-Danube frontier. Marcus Aurelius returned to Rome, intermittently, during the German campaign, to make legal and administrative reforms. Although he was, particularly concerned, with public welfare and sold, even his personal possessions, to alleviate the effects of famine and plague within the empire, he ruthlessly, persecuted the Christians, believing them, a threat to the imperial system. In 176, he returned to the northern frontier, hoping to extend the boundaries of the empire, northeastward to the Vistula river. He died of the plague in Vindobona (now Vienna) on March 17, 180, before he could begin the invasion. His plan was abandoned by his son and successor, Commodus.

In his domestic policy, Marcus Aurelius, was a champion of the poor, for whom, he founded schools, orphanages, and hospitals, and alleviated, the burden of taxes. He also, tried to humanize criminal laws and the treatment of slaves, by their masters.

As a philosopher, he is remembered for his, *Meditations*, a compendium of 12 books of moral precepts, written in Greek. The work, an important formulation of the philosophy of Stoicism, reveals his belief, that the moral life leads to tranquility, and stresses the virtues of wisdom, justice, fortitude, and moderation.

Marx, Karl (1818-83). German revolutionary thinker, social philosopher, and

economist. His ideas, formulated with Engels, laid the foundation for 19th century socialism and 20th century communism. Although he was initially influenced by Hegel, he soon rejected Hegel's idealism in favor of materialism. His *Communist Manifesto* and *Das Kapital* are among the most important writings of the last 200 years.

Mencius (circa 371-c. 288 B.C.), Chinese philosopher, who is also known as, Mengtse. He was born in Chao (now in Shandong Province). After studying the philosophy of Confucius, he traveled for years, expounding Confucianism and lecturing rulers on their duties toward their subjects. He believed that the power to govern, comes from God and should be exercised in the interests of the common people. He opposed warfare, except for purposes of defense. According to tradition, Mencius, spent the latter part of his life, in seclusion with his disciples. In his teachings, he stressed the belief, that people are by nature, good, but that this goodness, becomes manifest, only when, they experience peace of mind, which in turn, depends on material security. If rulers, therefore, reduce their subjects to poverty and selfishness, they should be deposed. Since the 11th century, Mencius has been recognized as one of China's greatest philosophers; the *Mencius* (Book of Mencius) is regarded as, a basic Confucian text.

Mill, John Stuart (1806-73). English empiricist philosopher, logician, economist, and social reformer. His *System of Logic* described the basic rules for all scientific reasoning. As a student of Jeremy Bentham, he elaborated on utilitarian ethics; in *On Liberty*, he presented a plea for the sanctity of individual rights against the power of any government.

Montesquieu, Baron de (Charles-Louis de Secondat). (1689-1755). French political philosopher, influenced by Locke. In *Spirit of the Laws*, he put forth the theory of separation of powers that strongly influenced the writing of the U.S. Constitution.

Moore, G. E. (George Edward). (1873-1958). British philosopher who emphasized the "common sense" view of the reality of material objects. In ethics, he held that goodness is a quality known directly by moral intuition and that it is a fallacy to try to define it in terms of anything else.

More, Sir Thomas (1478-1535). A leading Renaissance humanist and statesman, Lord Chancellor of England. He was beheaded for refusing to accept the king as head of the church. Influenced by Greek thinking, he believed in social reform and drew a picture of an ideal peaceful state in his *Utopia*.

Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm (1844-1900). German philosopher, philologist, and poet. As a moralist, he rejected Christian values and championed a "Superman" who would create a new, life-affirming, heroic ethic by his "will to power." His works include *Thus Spake Zarathustra* and *Beyond Good and Evil*.

Parmenides (born about 515 B.C.), Greek philosopher, considered by many scholars, the greatest member of the Eleatic school. He is said, to have visited Athens, at the age of 65, and on that occasion, Socrates, then a young man, heard him speak.

Parmenides expounded his philosophy in verse form, his only surviving work, being large fragments of a didactic poem, *On Nature*. This work, argued for the existence of Absolute Being, the non-existence, of which, Parmenides declared to be inconceivable, but the nature, of which, he admitted to be equally inconceivable, since Absolute Being, is dissociated from every limitation, under which, human beings think. 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. This belief makes him a precursor of the idealism of Plato. Parmenides' theory that, Being, cannot arise from Non-being, and that, Being, neither arises, nor passes away, was applied to matter, by his successors, Empedocles and Democritus, who made it the foundation of their materialistic explanations of the universe.

Pascal, Blaise (1623-62). French philosopher, mathematician, scientist, and theologian. His posthumous "*Pensees*" ("Thoughts") argues that reason is by itself inadequate for man's spiritual needs and cannot bring man to God, who can be known only through mystic understanding.

Peripatetics, the students and followers of Aristotle. The name, may be derived, from Aristotle's custom of walking about (*peripatein*) while lecturing, or from the *peripatos* ("covered walk") of the Lyceum, the park-like area outside Athens, where he lectured. Aristotle's followers developed certain points of his logic and metaphysics, but they were more concerned, with studying nature and popularizing the study of ethics. Many spent their time, arranging and explaining Aristotle's writings. The most prominent Peripatetic philosophers were Theophrastus of Lesbos, a friend of Aristotle, as well as, cofounder of the school and famed for his *Characters*, a series of sketches; Eudemus of Rhodes (flourished 4th century B.C.), who was interested mainly, in the ethical aspects of Aristotelianism; Strato of Lampsacus, who championed mechanism, in nature, and denied the existence of a transcendent deity; and Andronicus of Rhodes, who edited many of Aristotle's works. The later, Peripatetics, leaned toward eclecticism and borrowed heavily from Stoicism.

Philo Judaeus, also Philo of Alexandria (circa 20 B.C.- A.D. 50), Jewish-Hellenistic philosopher; although considered the greatest Jewish philosopher of his age, he appropriated, so completely, the doctrines of Greek philosophy, that he must be considered, also a Greek philosopher, who combined the elements, borrowed from various sources, into an original unity.

Philo was born in Alexandria, Egypt, to a wealthy, aristocratic Jewish family and received a thorough education in the Old Testament and in Greek literature and philosophy. He had an intimate knowledge of the works of Homer and of the Greek tragedians, but his chief studies were in Greek philosophy, especially the teachings of the Pythagoreans, Plato, and the Stoics.

To Philo, the divinity of the Jewish law, was the basis and test, of all true philosophy. He maintained, that the greater part of the Pentateuch, in both its historical and legal

portions, could be explained allegorically, and that, its deepest and truest significance, is to be found, through such interpretation. He conceived of God, as being without attributes, better than virtue and knowledge, better than the beautiful and the good, a being so exalted above the world, that an intermediate class of beings, is required, to establish a point of contact between him and the world. These beings, he found, in the spiritual world of ideas -- not merely, ideas in the Platonic sense, but real, active powers, surrounding God, as a number of attendant beings. All these intermediate powers, are known, as the Logos, the divine image, in which, persons are created and, through which, they participate in the deity. An individual's duties consist of, veneration of God and love and righteousness, toward others. Humans are immortal, by reason, of their heavenly nature, but just as degrees in this divine nature exist, degrees of immortality, also exist. Mere living, after death, common to all humanity, differs from the future existence of the perfect souls, for whom, paradise is oneness with God.

Many of the numerous extant works of Philo, are concerned with the exposition and allegorical interpretation of Genesis and with the exposition of the Law of Moses, for Gentiles. His other writings, include biographies of characters and a series of works on the Ten Commandments.

Plato (circa 428-c. 347 B.C.), Greek philosopher, one of the most creative and influential thinkers in Western philosophy. He was a homosexual.

Life

Plato was born to an aristocratic family in Athens. His father, Ariston, was believed to have descended from the early kings of Athens. Perictione, his mother, was distantly related, to the 6th-century B.C., lawmaker, Solon. When Plato was a child, his father died, and his mother married Ppyrilampes, who was an associate of the statesman, Pericles.

As a young man, Plato, had political ambitions, but he became disillusioned by the political leadership in Athens. He eventually, became a disciple of Socrates, accepting his basic philosophy and dialectical style of debate: the pursuit of truth, through questions, answers, and additional questions. Plato witnessed the death of Socrates, at the hands of the Athenian democracy, in 399 B.C. Perhaps, fearing for his own safety, he left Athens, temporarily, and traveled to Italy, Sicily, and Egypt.

In 387, Plato founded the Academy in Athens, the institution, often described, as the first European university. It provided a comprehensive curriculum including, such subjects as, astronomy, biology, mathematics, political theory, and philosophy. Aristotle was the Academy's most prominent student.

Pursuing an opportunity to combine philosophy and practical politics, Plato went to Sicily, in 367, to tutor the new ruler of Syracuse, Dionysius the Younger, in the art of philosophical rule. The experiment failed. Plato made another trip to Syracuse, in 361, but again his engagement in Sicilian affairs, met with little success. The concluding years of his life, were spent, lecturing at the Academy and writing. He died, at about the

age of 80, in Athens, in 348 or 347 B.C.

Works

Plato's writings were in dialogue form: philosophical ideas were advanced, discussed, and criticized, in the context of a conversation or debate, involving two or more persons. The earliest collection of Plato's work includes, 35 dialogues and 13 letters. The authenticity of a few of the dialogues and most of the letters, has been disputed.

Early Dialogues

The dialogues may be divided into early, middle, and later periods of composition. The earliest, represent Plato's attempt, to communicate the philosophy and dialectical style of Socrates. Several of these dialogues take the same form. Socrates, encountering someone who claims to know much, professes to be ignorant and seeks assistance from the one who knows. As Socrates begins to raise questions, however, it becomes clear, that the one reputed to be wise, really does not know what he claims to know, and Socrates emerges, as the wiser one, because he, at least knows, that he does not know. Such knowledge, of course, is the beginning of wisdom. Included in this group of dialogues are, *Charmides* (an attempt to define temperance), *Lysis* (a discussion of friendship), *Laches* (a pursuit of the meaning of courage), *Protagoras* (a defense of the thesis, that virtue is knowledge and can be taught), *Euthyphro* (a consideration of the nature of piety, and Book I of the *Republic* (a discussion of justice).

Middle and Late Dialogues

The dialogues of the middle and later periods of Plato's life, reflect his own philosophical development. The ideas, in these works, are attributed, by most scholars, to Plato, himself, although Socrates continues to be the main character, in many of the dialogues. The writings, of the middle period include, *Gorgias* (a consideration of several ethical questions), *Meno* (a discussion of the nature of knowledge), the *Apology* (Socrates' defense of himself, at the trial against the charges of atheism and corrupting Athenian youth), *Crito* (Socrates' defense of obedience to the laws of the state), *Phaedo* (the death scene of Socrates, in which, he discusses the theory of Forms, the nature of the soul, and the question of immortality), the *Symposium* (Plato's outstanding, dramatic, achievement, which contains several speeches on beauty and love), the *Republic* (Plato's supreme philosophical achievement, which is a detailed discussion of the nature of justice).

The works of the later period include, the *Theaetetus* (a denial, that knowledge is to be identified, with sense perception), *Parmenides* (a critical evaluation of the theory of Forms), *Sophist* (further consideration of the theory of Ideas, or Forms), *Philebus* (a discussion of the relationship between pleasure and the good), *Timaeus* (Plato's views on natural science and cosmology), and the *Laws* (a more practical analysis of political and social issues).

Theory of Forms

At the heart of Plato's philosophy, is his theory of Forms, or Ideas. Ultimately, his view of knowledge, his ethical theory, his psychology, his concept of the state, and his

perspective on art, must be understood, in terms of this theory.

Theory of Knowledge

Plato's theory of Forms and his theory of knowledge, are so interrelated, that they must be discussed together. Influenced by Socrates, Plato was convinced, that knowledge is attainable. He, was also convinced, of two essential characteristics of knowledge. First, knowledge must be certain and infallible. Second, knowledge must have, as its object, that which, is genuinely real, as contrasted with, that which, is an appearance only. Because, that which, is fully real, must for Plato, be fixed, permanent, and unchanging; he identified the real with the ideal realm of being, as opposed to the physical world, of becoming. One consequence of this view, was Plato's rejection of empiricism, the claim, that knowledge is derived, from sense experience. He thought, that propositions derived, from sense experience, have, at most, a degree of probability. They are not certain. Furthermore, the objects of sense experience, are changeable phenomena, of the physical world. Hence, objects of sense experience, are not proper objects of knowledge.

Plato's own theory of knowledge, is found in the *Republic*, particularly, in his discussion of the image of the divided line and the myth of the cave. In the former, Plato distinguishes between two levels of awareness: opinion and knowledge. Claims or assertions about the physical or visible world, including both commonsense observations and the propositions of science, are opinions only. Some of these opinions, are well founded; some are not; but, none of them, counts as genuine knowledge. The higher level of awareness, is knowledge, because there reason, rather than sense experience, is involved. Reason, properly used, results in intellectual insights, that are certain, and the objects of these rational insights, are the abiding universals, the eternal Forms or substances, that constitute, the real world.

The myth of the cave, describes individuals, chained deep within, the recesses of a cave. Bound, so that vision is restricted, they cannot see one another. The only thing visible, is the wall of the cave, upon which, appear shadows, cast by models or statues of animals and objects, that are passed before a brightly burning fire. Breaking free, one of the individuals escapes from the cave, into the light of day. With the aid of the sun, that person sees, for the first time, the real world and returns to the cave, with the message, that the only things they have seen, heretofore, are shadows and appearances, and that the real world, awaits them if they are willing, to struggle free of their bonds. The shadowy environment of the cave symbolizes, for Plato, the physical world of appearances. Escape into the sun-filled setting, outside the cave, symbolizes the transition to the real world, the world of full and perfect being, the world of Forms, which is the proper object of knowledge.

Nature of Forms

The theory of Forms, may best be understood, in terms of mathematical entities. A circle, for instance, is defined as a plane figure, composed of a series of points, all of which, are equidistant from a given point. No one, has ever actually seen, such a figure, however.

What people, have actually seen, are drawn figures, that are more or less, close approximations of the ideal circle. In fact, when mathematicians define a circle, the points referred to, are not spatial points at all; they are logical points. They do not occupy space. Nevertheless, although the Form of a circle has never been seen -- indeed, could never be seen -- mathematicians and others, do in fact, know what a circle is. That they can define a circle, is evidence, that they know what it is. For Plato, therefore, the Form, "circularity" exists, but not in the physical world, of space and time. It exists, as a changeless object, in the world of Forms or Ideas, which can be known, only by reason. Forms have greater reality, than objects in the physical world, both because, of their perfection and stability and because they are models, resemblance, to which, gives ordinary physical objects, whatever reality they have. Circularity, squareness, and triangularity are excellent examples, then, of what Plato meant by Forms. An object existing, in the physical world, may be called, a circle or a square or a triangle, only to the extent, that it resembles ("participates in," is Plato's phrase) the Form "circularity" or "squareness" or "triangularity."

Plato extended his theory beyond the realm of mathematics. Indeed, he was most interested in its application, in the field of social ethics. The theory, was his way of explaining, how the same universal term, can refer, to so many particular things or events. The word, "*justice*," for example, can be applied to hundreds of particular acts, because these acts have something in common, namely, their resemblance to, or participation in, the Form "justice." An individual is human, to the extent, that, he or she, resembles or participates in the Form, "humanness." If "humanness," is defined, in terms, of being a rational animal, then an individual is human, to the extent, that, he or she, is rational. A particular act is courageous or cowardly, to the extent, that it participates in its Form. An object is beautiful, to the extent, that it participates in the Idea, or Form, of beauty. Everything in the world of space and time, is what it is, by virtue of its resemblance to, or participation in, its universal Form. The ability to define the universal term, is evidence, that one has grasped the Form, to which, that universal refers.

Plato conceived the Forms, as arranged hierarchically; the supreme Form, is the Form of the Good, which, like the sun in the myth of the cave, illuminates all the other Ideas. There is a sense, in which, the Form of the Good, represents Plato's movement in the direction of an ultimate principle of explanation. Ultimately, the theory of Forms, is intended to explain how one comes to know, and also, how things have come to be, as they are. In philosophical language, Plato's theory of Forms, is both, an epistemological (theory of knowledge) and an ontological (theory of being) thesis.

Political Theory

The *Republic*, Plato's major political work, is concerned with the question of justice, and therefore, with the questions, "what is a just state" and "who is a just individual?"

The ideal state, according to Plato, is composed of three classes. The economic structure of the state, is maintained, by the merchant class. Security needs are met, by

the military class, and political leadership, is provided by the philosopher-kings. A particular person's class, is determined, by an educational process, that begins, at birth and proceeds, until that person has reached the maximum level of education, compatible with interest and ability. Those who complete the entire educational process, become philosopher-kings. They are the ones, whose minds, have been so developed, that they are able to grasp the Forms, and therefore, to make the wisest decisions. Indeed, Plato's ideal educational system, is primarily structured, so as, to produce philosopher-kings.

Plato associates the traditional Greek virtues, with the class structure of the ideal state. Temperance is the unique virtue, of the artisan class; courage is the virtue, peculiar to the military class; and wisdom, characterizes the rulers. Justice, the fourth virtue, characterizes society, as a whole. The just state is one, in which, each class performs its own function well, without infringing on the activities of the other classes.

Plato divides the human soul into three parts: the rational part, the will, and the appetites. The just person is the one, in whom, the rational element, supported by the will, controls the appetites. An obvious analogy exists here, with the threefold class structure of the state, in which, the enlightened philosopher-kings, supported by the soldiers, govern the rest of society.

Ethics

Plato's ethical theory rests, on the assumption, that virtue, is knowledge, and can be taught, which has to be understood, in terms, of his theory of Forms. As indicated previously, the ultimate Form for Plato, is the Form of the Good, and knowledge of this Form, is the source of guidance, in moral decision making. Plato, also argued, that to know the good, is to do the good. The corollary of this, is that, anyone who behaves immorally, does so, out of ignorance. This conclusion follows, from Plato's conviction, that the moral person, is the truly happy person, and because, individuals always desire their own happiness, they always desire to do, that which, is moral.

Art

Plato had an essentially antagonistic view of art and the artist, although he approved of certain religious and moralistic kinds of art. Again, his approach is related to his theory of Forms. A beautiful flower, for example, is a copy or imitation of the universal Forms, "floweriness" and "beauty." The physical flower, is one step removed, from reality, that is, the Forms. A picture of the flower is, therefore, two steps removed, from reality. This also meant, that the artist, is two steps removed, from knowledge, and, indeed, Plato's frequent criticism of the artists, is that, they lack genuine knowledge of what they are doing. Artistic creation, Plato observed, seems to be rooted in a kind of inspired madness.

Influence

Plato's influence throughout the history of philosophy, has been monumental. When he died, Speusippus became head of the Academy. The school continued, in existence, until A.D., 529, when it was closed by the Byzantine emperor, Justinian I, who objected

to its pagan teachings. Plato's impact, on Jewish thought, is apparent, in the work of the 1st-century Alexandrian philosopher, Philo Judaeus. Neoplatonism, founded by the 3rd-century philosopher, Plotinus, was an important, later development of Platonism. The theologians, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and St. Augustine, were early Christian exponents of a Platonic perspective. Platonic ideas have had a crucial role in the development of Christian theology, and also, in medieval Islamic thought.

During the Renaissance, the primary focus of Platonic influence, was the Florentine Academy, founded in the 15th century, near Florence. Under the leadership of Marsilio Ficino, members of the Academy, studied Plato in the original Greek. In England, Platonism was revived in the 17th century, by Ralph Cudworth, and others, who became known, as the Cambridge Platonists. Plato's influence, has been extended, into the 20th century, by such thinkers as, Alfred North Whitehead, who once, paid him tribute, by describing the history of philosophy, as simply, "a series of foot-note to Plato."

Plotinus (A.D. 205-70), Roman philosopher, who founded Neoplatonism. Plotinus was born in Asyut, Egypt. He studied with the philosopher, Ammonius Saccas (flourished, 1st half of 3rd century), at Alexandria for ten years, and about 244, went to Rome, where he established a school. Plotinus spoke on Pythagorean and Platonic wisdom and on asceticism; such was the impression, made upon his hearers, that some of them gave their fortunes to the poor, set their slaves free, and devoted themselves, to lives of study and ascetic piety. At the age of 60, with the permission of the Roman emperor, Gallienus, Plotinus planned to establish a communistic commonwealth on the model of *The Republic*, by Plato, but the project failed, because of the opposition of Gallienus's counselors. Plotinus continued to teach and write, until his death. His works comprise, 54 treatises in Greek, called the *Enneads*, 6 groups of 9 books each, an arrangement, probably made, by his student, Porphyry (A.D. 232-c. 304), who edited his writings.

Plotinus's system was based, chiefly on, Plato's theory of Ideas, but whereas, Plato assumed archetypal Ideas to be the link between the supreme deity and the world of matter, Plotinus accepted a doctrine of emanation. This doctrine supposes, the constant transmission of powers from the Absolute Being, or the One, to the creation, through several agencies, the first, of which, is *nous*, or pure intelligence, whence flows, the soul of the world; from this, in turn, flow the souls of humans and animals, and finally, matter. Human beings, thus belong, to two worlds, that of the senses, and that, of pure intelligence. Inasmuch, as matter is the cause of all evil, the object of life, should be, to escape the material world of the senses, and hence, people should abandon, all earthly interests for those of intellectual meditation; by purification and by the exercise of thought, people can gradually, lift themselves to an intuition of the *nous*, and ultimately, to a complete and ecstatic union with the One -- that is, God. Plotinus claimed to have experienced, this divine ecstasy, on several occasions, during his life.

Proclus (410?-85), the last important ancient Greek philosopher and the most influential representative of the Athenian school of Neoplatonism. Born in Constantinople, he studied in Alexandria, Egypt, with the Greek philosopher,

Olympiodorus (flourished 5th century A.D.), and later, joined the Academy in Athens, eventually becoming director, or *diadochus* (“successor” to Plato, who founded the academy in 387 B.C.). Under the influence of the philosopher, Iamblichus, the Athenian school was characterized by elaborate metaphysical speculation and a belief in paganism and magic. Proclus gave systematic form to this tradition. Despite his opposition to Christianity, he made an important contribution, to both Eastern and Western medieval Christian theology, through his influence on the 6th-century theologian, known as the Pseudo-Dionysius.

Like the great 3rd-century, Neoplatonist philosopher, Plotinus, Proclus taught the existence of an ultimate, indescribable reality, the One, from which, lesser realities, including humanity and the material universe, are produced by a process of emanation. According to this tradition, the task of philosophy, is to transcend the limitations of the human senses and intellect, and thus, to point the way to a mystical reunion of the individual, with the One. This “negative theology” is, in essence a religious interpretation of Plato’s thought.

Aside from his commentaries on Plato’s works, the most important of Proclus’s surviving works are *Elements of Theology* (trans. 1789) and *Platonic Theology*.

Protagoras (480?-411? B.C.), Greek philosopher, born in Abdera, Thrace. About 445 B.C., he went to Athens, where he became a friend of the statesman, Pericles and won great fame as a teacher and philosopher. Protagoras was the first thinker to call himself a Sophist and to teach for pay, receiving large sums from his pupils. He gave instruction in grammar, rhetoric, and the interpretation of poetry. His chief works, of which, only a few fragments have survived, were entitled, *Truth* and *On the Gods*. The basis of his speculation was the doctrine, that nothing is absolutely good or bad, true or false, and that, each individual, is therefore, his or her own, final authority; this belief is summed up in his saying: “Man is the measure of all things.” Charged with impiety, Protagoras fled into exile; he drowned on his way to Sicily. Two celebrated dialogues, the *Theaetetus* and the *Protagoras* by *Plato*, refuted the *doctrines* of Protagoras.

Pyrrho (circa 360-c. 272 B.C.), ancient Greek philosopher, who introduced pure skepticism into Greek philosophy, founding the school known as Pyrrhonism, and who, is thus, considered the founder of philosophical skepticism. He was born in Elis and studied with the Greek philosopher, Anaxarchus (flourished about 350 B.C., a disciple of the Greek philosopher, Democritus. Pyrrho accompanied Alexander the Great on his expedition to the East, and became acquainted with the teachings of the Persian magi and the Indian, Brahmins. Much of Pyrrho’s long life was spent in seclusion. He did not put his doctrines into writing, and they are known, chiefly, from the works of his follower, Timon of Philus (flourished about 280 B.C.), a philosopher and writer of satires. Pyrrho taught, that the real nature of things, can never be truly comprehended, and hence, objective knowledge is impossible to attain. He held, that the correct attitude for the philosopher, is imperturbability and complete suspension of judgment, and that, in this attitude lies freedom from passion, calmness of mind, and tranquility of soul, which constitute the highest human qualities.

Pythagoras (582?-500? B.C.), Greek philosopher and mathematician, whose doctrines strongly influenced Plato.

Born on the island of Samos, Pythagoras, was instructed in the teachings of the early Ionian philosophers, Thales, Anaximander, and Anaximenes. Pythagoras is said to have been driven from Samos, by his disgust for the tyranny of Polycrates. About 530 B.C., Pythagoras settled in Crotona, a Greek colony, in southern Italy, where he founded a movement with religious, political, and philosophical aims, known as Pythagoreanism. The philosophy of Pythagoras, is known, only through the work of his disciples.

Basic Doctrines

The Pythagoreans adhered to certain mysteries, similar in many respects, to the Orphic mysteries. Obedience and silence, abstinence from food, 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. Pythagoras, himself, was said to have claimed, that he had been, Euphorbus, a warrior in the Trojan War, and that, he had been permitted to bring, into his earthly life, the memory of all his previous existences.

Theory of Numbers

Among the extensive mathematical investigations, carried on by the Pythagoreans, were their studies of odd and even numbers and of prime and square numbers. From this arithmetical standpoint, they cultivated the concept of number, which became for them, the ultimate principle of all proportion, order, and harmony, in the universe. Through such studies, they established a scientific foundation for mathematics. In geometry, the great discovery of the school, was the hypotenuse theorem, or Pythagorean theorem, which states, that the square of the hypotenuse of a right triangle, is equal to the sum of the squares of the other two sides.

Astronomy

The astronomy of the Pythagoreans marked an important advance scientific thought, for they were the first to consider the earth as a globe, revolving with the other planets around a central fire. They explained the harmonious arrangement of things, as that of bodies in a single, all-inclusive sphere of reality, moving according to a numerical scheme. Because the Pythagoreans thought that the heavenly bodies are separated from one another, by intervals, corresponding to the harmonic lengths of strings, they held, that the movement of the spheres, gives rise to a musical sound -- the "harmony of the spheres."

Republic, The, philosophic work, written by Plato, in the form of a dialogue, an inquiry into the nature of justice and the organization of a perfect society. The work is a lengthy exposition of the ideas, underlying Plato's earlier dialogues and is an attempt to unite rational, ethical, and religious principles.

According to Socrates, the principal speaker in *The Republic*, an ideal state, would consist of three classes. The philosopher-kings, would exercise political power, in the service, of justice and wisdom; the soldiers, would protect the state, as a means of acquiring honor; and the civilian population, would provide for the material needs, of society. A large part of *The Republic*, is devoted to a detailed presentation of the rigorous intellectual training of future rulers. This section, also contains, a fundamental analysis of metaphysical and scientific thought. The government of the state, acts to enforce the virtue, and consequently, the true happiness, of the individual citizen, and an orderly and productive public life, is the result. Criticizing the doctrines, of atheism and materialism, Plato reaffirmed his idealistic position and asserted his belief, in the moral government of the universe and the immortality of the soul.

Rousseau, Jean Jacques (1712-78). Swiss-French thinker, born in Geneva. He has been enormously influential in political philosophy, educational theory, and the romantic movement. In *The Social Contract* (1762), he viewed governments as being expressions of the people's "general will," or rational men's choice for the common good. He emphasized man's natural goodness.

Russell, Bertrand (1872-1970). English philosopher and logician influential as an agnostic and a pacifist. Early work with Alfred North Whitehead gave birth to modern logic; they coauthored *Principia Mathematica*. He changed his views several times but always sought to establish philosophy, especially epistemology, as a science.

Saadia Ben Joseph (882-942), major Jewish philosopher and scholar, and a head (Hebrew *gaon*, "eminence") of the rabbinical academy at Sura, Babylonia (now Iraq).

Saadia was born in Dilaz in Al Fayyum district in Egypt. He spent time in Palestine and Syria before settling (922) in Babylonia, where he became a central protagonist in a dispute between Babylonian and Palestinian authorities, over the fixing of the calendar. In 928, Saadia was appointed, head of the rabbinical academy at Sura. He remained controversial, defending rabbinic tradition, against the schismatic Karaites, and was deposed, as a result of a controversy with the exilarch (head of the Jewish community), but was later, reinstated. Saadia was a prolific author, in the fields of law, liturgical poetry, grammar, biblical exegesis, and philosophical theology. He also, made an Arabic translation, with commentary, of the Pentateuch and other books of the Bible. His classic, *Book of Opinions and Beliefs* (933), seeks to provide, a rational underpinning for, and defense of, Jewish law and tradition.

Santatana, George (1863-1952). Spanish-born American philosopher and poet; a student of William James. He attempted to reconcile Platonism and materialism, studied how reason works, and found "animal faith," or impulse, to be the basis of reason and belief. Among his works are *The Sense of Beauty* and *The Life of Reason*.

Satre, Jean-Paul (1905-80). French philosopher, novelist, and dramatist; one of the founders of existentialism. He was a Marxist through much of his life. He held that man is "condemned to be free" and to bear the responsibility of making free choices. His

primary philosophical work was *Being and Nothingless*.

Schopenhauer, Arthur (1788-1860). German post-Kantian philosopher who held that although irrational will is the driving force in human affairs, it is doomed not to be satisfied. He believed that only art and contemplation could offer escape from determinism and pessimism. He strongly influenced Nietzsche, Freud, Tolstoy, Proust, and Thomas Mann. He wrote *The World as Will and Representation*.

Scotus, John Duns (c. 1266-1308). Scottish-born Scholastic philosopher who tried to integrate Aristotelian ideas into Christian theology. He emphasized that all things depend not just on God's intellect but on divine will as well. He wrote *On The First Principle*.

Smith, Adam (1723-1790). Scottish philosopher and economist. The author of *The Wealth of Nations*, he believed that if government left the marketplace to its own devices, and "invisible hand" would guarantee that the results would benefit the populace. He has had enormous influence on economists into the present day.

Socrates (470?-399? B.C.), Greek philosopher, who profoundly affected Western philosophy through his influence on Plato. Born in Athens, the son of Sophroniscus, a sculptor, and Phaenarete, a midwife, he received the regular elementary education in literature, music, and gymnastics. Later, he familiarized himself with the rhetoric and dialectics of the Sophists, the speculation of the Ionian philosophers, and the general culture of Periclean Athens. Initially, Socrates followed the craft of his father; according to a former tradition, he executed a statue group of the three Graces, which stood, at the entrance to the Acropolis, until the 2nd century A.D. In the Peloponnesian War with Sparta, he served as an infantryman with conspicuous bravery, at the battles of Potidaea in 432-430 B.C., Delium in 424 B.C., and Amphipolis in 422 B.C. Socrates believed in the superiority of argument over writing, and therefore, spent the greater part of his mature life, in the marketplace and public places of Athens, engaging in dialogue and argument, with anyone who would listen, or who would, submit to interrogation. Socrates, was reportedly, unattractive in appearance and short of stature, but was also, extremely hardy and self-controlled. He enjoyed life, immensely, and achieved social popularity, because of his ready wit and a keen sense of humor, that was completely, devoid of satire or cynicism. He was a homosexual.

Attitude Toward Politics

Socrates was obedient to the laws of Athens, but, he generally, steered clear of politics, restrained, by what, he believed to be divine warning. He believed, that he had received a call to pursue philosophy and could serve his country best, by devoting himself to teaching, and by persuading the Athenians to engage in self-examination and in tending to their souls. He wrote no books and established no regular school of philosophy. All that is known, with certainty, about his personality and his way of thinking, is derived from the works of two of his distinguished scholars: Plato, who at times, ascribed his own views to the master, and the historian, Xenophon, a prosaic writer, who probably, failed to understand many of Socrates'

doctrines. Plato portrayed Socrates, as hiding behind an ironical profession of ignorance, known as, Socratic irony, and possessing a mental acuity and resourcefulness, that enabled him to penetrate argument with great facility.

Teachings

Socrates's contribution to philosophy, was essentially ethical, in character. Belief, in a purely objective understanding, of such concepts as justice, love, and virtue, and the self-knowledge, that he inculcated, were the basis of his teachings. He believed, that all vice, is the result of ignorance, and that no person, is willingly bad; correspondingly, virtue is knowledge, and those who know the right, will act rightly. His logic, placed particular emphasis, on rational argument and the quest for general definition, as evidenced, in the writings of his younger contemporary and pupil, Plato, and of Plato's pupil, Aristotle. Through the writings of these philosophers, Socrates, profoundly affected, the entire subsequent course, of Western speculative thought.

Another thinker, befriended and influenced by Socrates was, Antisthenes, the founder of the Cynic school of philosophy. Socrates, was also, the teacher of Aristippus, who founded the Cyrenaic philosophy of experience and pleasure, from which developed the more lofty philosophy, of Epicurus. To such Stoics, as the Greek philosopher, Epictetus, the Roman philosopher, Seneca the Elder, and the Roman emperor, Marcus Aurelius, Socrates appeared, as the very embodiment and guide of the higher life.

The Trial

Although, a patriot and a man of deep religious conviction, Socrates, was nonetheless, regarded with suspicion, by many of his contemporaries, who disliked his attitude toward the Athenian state and the established religion. He was charged, in 399 B.C., with neglecting the gods of the state and introducing new divinities, a reference to the *daemonion*, or mystical inner voice, to which, Socrates, often referred. He, was also, charged with corrupting the morals of the young, leading them away from the principles of democracy; and he was wrongly identified, with the Sophists, possibly because, he had been ridiculed by the comic poet, Aristophanes, in his play, *The Clouds*, as the master of a "thinking-shop," where young men were taught to make the worse reason appear, the better reason.

Plato's *Apology*, gives the substance of the defense made by Socrates at his trial; it was a bold vindication of his whole life. He was condemned to die, although the vote was carried, by only, a small majority. When, according to Athenian legal practice, Socrates made an ironic counterproposition, to the court's death sentence, proposing, only to pay, a small fine, because of his value to the state, as a man with a philosophic mission, the jury was so angered by this offer, that it voted, by an increased majority, for the death penalty.

Socrates's friends planned his escape from prison, but he preferred to comply with the law and die for his cause. His last day, was spent with his friends and admirers, and in the evening, he calmly fulfilled his sentence, by drinking a cup of hemlock, according to a customary procedure of execution. Plato described the trial and death of Socrates in

the *Apology*, the *Crito*, and the *Phaedo*.

Seven Wise Men of Greece, also known as, the Seven Sages, Greek sages of the 7th and 6th centuries, B.C., were active in science, philosophy, and politics. Although their identities, do not agree in all accounts, the seven sages, usually appear as, Bias of Priene (flourished 6th century B.C.), Chilon of Sparta (flourished 6th century B.C.), Cleobulus of Lindus (flourished 6th century B.C.), Periander of Corinth (died 585 B.C.), Pittacus of Mitylene (650?-570? B.C.), Solon of Athens, and Thales of Miletus.

Spinoza, Benedict (Baruch) (1623-77). Dutch-born philosopher expelled from the Amsterdam Jewish community for heresy in 1656; he was attacked by Christian theologians 14 years later. In *Ethics*, he presents his own views in a mathematical system of deductive reasoning. A proponent of monism, he held - in contrast to Descartes - that mind and body are aspects of a single substance, which he called God or nature.

Thales (625?-546? B.C.), Greek philosopher, born in Miletus, Asia Minor. He was the founder of Greek philosophy, and was considered, one of the Seven Wise Men of Greece. Thales became famed, for his knowledge of astronomy, after predicting the eclipse of the sun, that occurred on May 28, 585 B.C. He is, also said, to have introduced geometry in Greece. According to Thales, 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. Thales left no writings; knowledge of him, is derived from an account in Aristotle's, *Metaphysics*.

Unamuno, Miguel de (1864-1936). The major Spanish philosophical thinker of his time. He criticized philosophical abstractions such as "man" for ignoring concrete men. He held that reason by itself is virtually useless and cannot reveal the basic fact of human immortality. He wrote *The Tragic Sense of Life in Men and Nations*.

Theophrastus (circa 372-287 B.C.), Greek philosopher, born in Eressos (modern Eresos), on the island of Lesbos (Lesvos). He studied in Athens with Aristotle, whose devoted pupil, he became. When Aristotle retired to Chalcis (Khalkis) in 323 B.C., Theophrastus succeeded him as head of the Peripatetic school in the Lyceum. Theophrastus lectured at the Lyceum for 35 years, during which time, the school enjoyed great success; at one point, it had more than 2,000 pupils.

Theophrastus wrote about logic, politics, poetry, metaphysics, and every other area of study of his time; many of his treatises, however, are lost. He did much to popularize science. His *History of Plants* (trans. 1916) and *Etiology of Plants*, presented the first thorough treatment of the science of botany and remained the definitive works on the subject, through the Middle Ages. Also extant, are portions of his *History of Physics*; nine scientific treatises including, *On Stones*, *On Fire*, and *On Winds*; and his book of 30 ethical sketches, called, *Characters* (trans. 1870), each one pithily depicting, a certain personality type, such as the loquacious man, the mean man, and the boastful

man. The form and style of characters were imitated by many writers of the 17th and 18th centuries, notably the French essayist, Jean de La Bruyere and the English authors, Sir Thomas Overbury and Samuel Butler.

Valentinus, (flourished 2nd century A.D.), religious philosopher, founder of one of the most important sects of Gnosticism.

Valentinus was born in Egypt and educated in Alexandria. He settled in Rome, during the reign (136-40), of Pope Hyginus and taught there for more than 20 years, gaining a reputation for eloquence and forceful intelligence and attracting a large following. According to the theologian Tertullian, Valentinus broke with the Christian Church and left Rome after being passed over for the office of bishop. He continued to develop his doctrines, possibly in Cyprus. His followers elaborated his teachings and evolved into two schools, one centered in Italy, the other in Alexandria.

The primary sources for Valentinus's doctrines are fragmentary quotations contained in the works of his orthodox Christian opponents and a Coptic text, the Gospel of Truth, found at Nag Hammadi in Egypt and believed to be a translation of an original work by Valentinus. His system reflects the influence of Platonism and of Eastern dualistic religion, as well as of Christianity. He postulated a spiritual realm (*pleroma*), consisting of a succession of aeons (Greek, "emanations") that evolved out of an original divine being. The aeon Sophia (Greek, "wisdom") produced a demiurge (identified with the God of the Old Testament), who created the essentially evil material universe, in which, human souls, originally of the spiritual realm, are imprisoned. The aeon Christ united himself with the man, Jesus, to bring redeeming knowledge (*gnosis*) of the divine realm to humanity. Only the most spiritual human beings, the Gnostics themselves, are fully able to receive this revelation, and thereby, return after death, to the spiritual realm.

Other Christians, can only attain, the realm of the demiurge, and pagans, engrossed in material existence, are doomed to eternal damnation.

Voltaire, assumed name of Francois Marie Arouet (1694-1778), French writer and philosopher, who was one of the leaders of the Enlightenment.

Voltaire was born in Paris, November 21, 1694, the son of a notary. He was educated by the Jesuits at the College Louis-le-Grand.

Early Brilliance

Voltaire quickly chose literature as a career. He began moving in aristocratic circles, and soon became known, in Paris salons, as a brilliant and sarcastic wit. A number of his writings, particularly a lampoon, accusing the French regent, Philippe II, duc d'Orleans, of heinous crimes, resulted in his imprisonment in the Bastille. During his 11-month detention, Voltaire completed his first tragedy, *OEdipe*, which was based upon the *OEdipus tyrannus* of the ancient Greek dramatist, Sophocles, and commenced an epic poem on Henry IV, of France. *OEdipe* was given its initial performance at the

Theatre-Francais in 1718 and received with great enthusiasm. The work on Henry IV, was printed anonymously, in Geneva, under the title of *Poeme de la ligue* (Poem of the League, 1723). In his first philosophical poem, *Le pour et le contre* (For and Against), Voltaire gave eloquent expression, to both, his anti-Christian views and his rationalist, deist creed.

A quarrel with a member of an illustrious French family, the chevalier de Rohan, resulted in Voltaire's second incarceration in the Bastille, from which, he was released, within two weeks, on his promise to quit France and proceed to England. Accordingly, he spent about two years in London. Voltaire soon mastered the English language, and in order to prepare the British public for an enlarged edition of his *Poeme de la ligue*, he wrote, in English, two remarkable essays, one on epic poetry and the other on the history of civil wars in France. For a few years, the Catholic, autocratic French government, prevented the publication of the enlarged edition of *Poeme de la ligue*, which was retitled, *La Henriade* (The Henriad). The government, finally allowed, the poem to be published in 1728. This work, an eloquent defense of religious toleration, achieved an almost, unprecedented success, not only, in Voltaire's native France, but throughout all of the continent of Europe, as well.

Popularity at Court

In 1728, Voltaire returned to France. During the next four years, he resided in Paris and devoted, most of his time, to literary composition. The chief work, of this period, is the *Lettres anglaises ou philosophiques* (English or Philosophical Letters, 1734). A covert attack, upon the political and ecclesiastical institutions of France, this work brought Voltaire into conflict with the authorities, and he was, once more, forced to quit Paris. He found refuge, at the Chateau de Cirey, in the independent duchy of Lorraine. There, he formed an intimate relationship, with the aristocratic and learned, Gabrielle Emilie Le Tonnelier de Breteuil, marquise du Chatelet, who exerted a strong intellectual influence upon him.

Voltaire's sojourn at Cirey, in companionship with the marquise du Chatelet, was a period of intense literary activity. In addition to an imposing number of plays, he wrote the, *Elements de la philosophie de Newton* (Elements of the Philosophy of Newton), and produced novels, tales, satires, and light verses.

Voltaire's stay at Cirey, was not without interruptions. He often traveled to Paris and to Versailles, where, through the influence of the marquise de Pompadour, the famous mistress of Louis XV, he became a court favorite. He was the first appointed, historiographer, of France, and then a gentleman of the king's bedchamber; finally, in 1746, he was elected to the French Academy. His, *Poeme de Fontenot* (1745), describing a battle, won by the French, over the English during the War of the Austrian Succession, and his, *Precis du siecle de Louis XV* (Epitome of the Age of Louis XV), in addition to his dramas, *La princesse de Navarre* and *Le triomphe de Trajan*, were the outcome of Voltaire's connection, with the court of Louis XV.

Following the death of Madame du Chatelet, in 1749, Voltaire, finally accepted a long-

standing invitation, from Frederick II of Prussia, to become a permanent resident, at the Prussian court. He journeyed to Berlin, in 1750, but did not remain there, more than two years, because his acidulous wit, clashed with the king's autocratic temper, and led, to frequent disputes. While at Berlin, he completed his, *Siecle de Louis XIV*, a historical study of the period of Louis XIV (1638-1715).

Attacks on Religion

For some years, Voltaire led a migratory existence, but he finally settled, in 1758, at Ferney, where he spent the remaining 20 years, of his life. In the interval between his return from Berlin and his establishment at Ferney, he completed his most ambitious work, the *Essai sur l'histoire generale et sur les moeurs et l'esprit des nations* (Essay on General History and on the Customs and the Character of Nations, 1756). In this work, a study of human progress, Voltaire decries supernaturalism and denounces religion and the power of the clergy, although he makes evident, his own belief, in the existence of God.

After settling in Ferney, Voltaire wrote several philosophical poems, such as, *Le desastre de Lisbonne* (The Lisbon Disaster, 1756); a number of satirical and philosophical novels, of which, the most brilliant is *Candide* (1759); the tragedy, *Tancrede* (1760); and the *Dictionnaire philosophique* (1764). Feeling secure, in his sequestered retreat, he sent forth hundreds of short squibs and broadsides, satirizing abuses, that he desired to expose. Those who suffered persecution, because of their beliefs, found in Voltaire, an eloquent and powerful defender. The flavor of Voltaire's activities, could be summarized, in the phrase, he often used: *écrasons l'infame* ("let us crush the infamous one"). With this phrase, he referred, to any form of religion, that persecutes non-adherents, or that, constitutes fanaticism. For Christianity, he would substitute deism, a purely rational religion. *Candide*, in which, Voltaire analyzes the problem of evil in the world, depicts the woes, heaped upon the world, in the name of religion. He died in Paris, May 30, 1778.

Criticism

Voltaire's contradictions of character, are reflected, in his writings, as well as, in the impressions of others. He seemed able to defend, either side in any debate, and to some of his contemporaries, he appeared, dis-trustful, avaricious, and sardonic; others considered him, generous, enthusiastic, and sentimental. Essentially, he rejected, everything irrational and incomprehensible, and called upon his contemporaries, to act against intolerance, tyranny and superstition. His morality, was founded, on a belief in freedom of thought and respect for all individuals, and he maintained, that literature, should be useful and concerned, with the problems of the day. These views, made Voltaire, a central figure in the 18th-century philosophical movement, typified by the writers, of the famous French *Encyclopedie*. Because he pleaded for a socially involved type of literature, Voltaire is considered, a forerunner, of such, 20th-century writers as, Jean Paul Sartre and other French existentialists.

All of Voltaire's works contain memorable passages, distinguished by elegance,

perspicuity, and wit. His poetic and dramatic works, however, are marred often, by, too great, a concentration on historical matter and philosophical propaganda. His other writings include the tragedies, *Brutus* (1730), *Zaire* (1732), *Alzire* (1736), *Mahomet* (1741), and *Merope* (1743); the philosophical romance, *Zadig* (1747); the philosophical poem, *Discours sur l'homme* (Discourse on Man, 1738); and the historical study, *Charles XII* (1730).

Whitehead, Alfred North (1861-1947). British philosopher and mathematician who worked with Bertrand Russell. He tried to integrate twentieth-century physics into a metaphysics of nature.

William of Ockham (Occam) (c. 1285-1349). Franciscan monk and important English theologian and philosopher. In his nominalism, he opposed much of the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas and of medieval Aristotelianism; he also rejected the pope's power in the secular realm.

Wittenstein, Ludwig (1889-1951). Austrian-born philosopher who spent the last 20 years of his life in England. He was one of the most influential philosophers of the century, mainly through his emphasis on the importance of the study of language. His *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* influenced analytic philosophy. His later views emphasized that philosophic problems are often caused by linguistic confusions.

Xenocrates (396-314 B.C.), Greek philosopher and student of Plato, who was head of the Greek, or Platonic, Academy. Born in Athens, he was named, in 339 B.C., to succeed, Speusippus, as head of the academy, an office he held, until his death. Xenocrates' writings, apparently influenced by Plato, survive, only in fragments. His contributions to philosophy include, several important tripartite classifications. Philosophy, for example, he divided into the fields of logic or dialectic, physics, and ethics. Reality, he claimed, consists of objects of perception, knowledge, and opinion. Xenocrates, is regarded by some, as the first to posit distinctions, between mind, body, and soul. Another of his doctrines, posits the evolution of all reality, from the interaction of two opposing principles, the "One" and the "indeterminate dyad." Whereas, the One, establishes unity, rest, and good; the dyad, contributes multiplicity, motion, and evil.

Xenophanes, (flourished late 6th and early 5th century B.C.), Greek poet, philosopher, and religious reformer, born in Colophon, Asia Minor. He left Colophon, in 545 B.C., to be a wandering poet and minstrel in Greece and Sicily. In 536 B.C., according to tradition, he settled permanently, in the Phoenician colony of Elea, in southern Italy. There, reputedly, he founded the Eleatic school, the philosophical concepts, of which, were later broadened and systematized by his disciple, the Greek philosopher, Parmenides. In his writings, Xenophanes, cleverly satirized, the polytheistic beliefs of earlier Greek poets and of his own contemporaries. He ridiculed their deities, as gods, created in the image of the mortals, who worshiped them. In a famous passage, he asserted, that if oxen could paint and sculpt, they would depict gods, who resembled oxen. Humans, he felt, should reject polytheistic anthropomorphism and recognize instead, a single non-human deity, underlying and unifying, all worldly phenomena. In

other works, he ridiculed the doctrine of transmigration of souls and deplored Greek pre-occupation, with athleticism and luxurious living, at the expense of wisdom. Only fragments, of his poems, have survived.

Zeno of Citium, (flourished late 4th and early 3rd century B.C.), Greek philosopher, founder of Stoicism. He was born in Citium, Cyprus. Little is known of his early life, except that his contemporaries referred to him, as a Phoenician. He was a student of the 4th century B.C. Cynic philosopher, Crates of Thebes and of the Platonist, Xenocrates. About 300 B.C., Zeno founded, his own school of philosophy, known as, Stoicism. The name of the school was derived from *Stoa Poikile* ("painted porch"), the name given to the public portico, where the master taught his disciples. Moral obligation, self-control, and living in harmony, with nature, were some of the principles of practical ethics, with which, Zeno, was chiefly concerned. He taught, in Athens, for more than 50 years, and was publicly honored, for his upright manner of living. It is said, however, that he refused the offer of Athenian citizenship, out of loyalty to his native, Cyprus. Zeno left no written accounts of his teachings, but they were transmitted by his many disciples.

Zeno of Elea, (flourished 5th century B.C.), Greek mathematician and philosopher of the Eleatic school, known for his philosophical paradoxes.

Zeno was born in Elea, in southwestern Italy. He became a favorite disciple of the Greek philosopher, Parmenides and accompanied him to Athens, at the age of about 40. In Athens, Zeno taught philosophy for some years, concentrating on the Eleatic system of metaphysics. The Athenian statesmen, Pericles and Callias (flourished 5th century B.C.), studied under him. Zeno, later returned, to Elea and, according to traditional accounts, joined a conspiracy, to rid his native town of the tyrant, Nearchus; the conspiracy failed, and Zeno, was severely tortured, but he refused to betray his accomplices. Further circumstances, of his life, are not known.

Only a few fragments of Zeno's works remain, but the writings of Plato and Aristotle, provide textual references to Zeno's writings. Philosophically, Zeno, accepted Parmenides' belief, that the universe, or being, is a single, undifferentiated substance, a oneness, although it may appear diversified, to the senses. Zeno's intention, was to discredit the senses, which he sought to do, through a brilliant series of arguments, or paradoxes, on time and space, that have remained complex intellectual puzzles, to this day. A typical paradox, asserts that, a runner cannot reach a goal because, in order to do so, he must traverse a distance; but he cannot traverse that distance, without first, traversing half of it, and so on, ad infinitum. Because an infinite number of bisections exist in a spatial distance, one cannot travel any distance, in finite time; however short, the distance or great, the speed. This argument, like several others of Zeno, is intended to demonstrate, the logical impossibility of motion. In that, the senses lead us to believe in the existence of motion; the senses, are illusory; and therefore, no obstacle, to accepting the otherwise, implausible, theories of Parmenides. Zeno is noted, not only, for his paradoxes, but for inventing the type of philosophical argument, they exemplify. Thus, Aristotle named him, the inventor of dialectical reasoning.

Footnote:

Plato and Socrates made no bones about their homosexuality.

Source:

Bryan Magee, One in Twenty: a study of homosexuality in men and women (New York: Stein and Day, 1966. P.46).

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