

THE SELF

from Various Philosophical Perspectives

Chapter 1 Lesson 1

UNDERSTANDING THE SELF

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PHILOSOPHY

- study of the fundamental nature of knowledge, reality, and existence, especially in an academic discipline.
- a particular theory that someone has about how to live or how to deal with a particular situation.



THE PRE-SOCRATICS

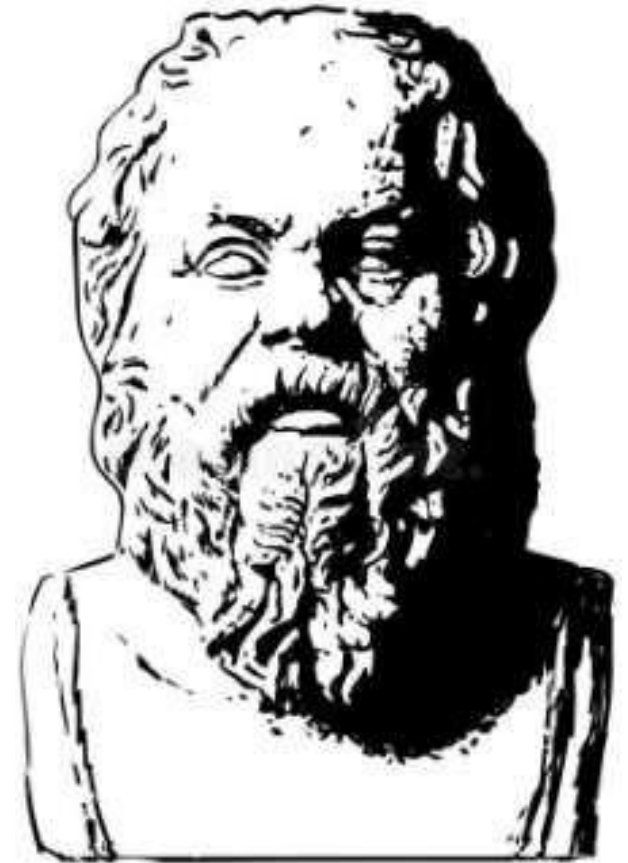
Pre-Socratics(Thales, Pythagoras, Parmenides, Heraclitus, Empedocles, etc.) were concerned with answering questions such as

- **what is the world really made up of?**
- **why is the world the way it is?**
- **what explains the changes that happen?**



SOCRATES

- concerned with the problem of the self
- “the true task of the philosopher is to know oneself”
- “the unexamined life is not worth living”

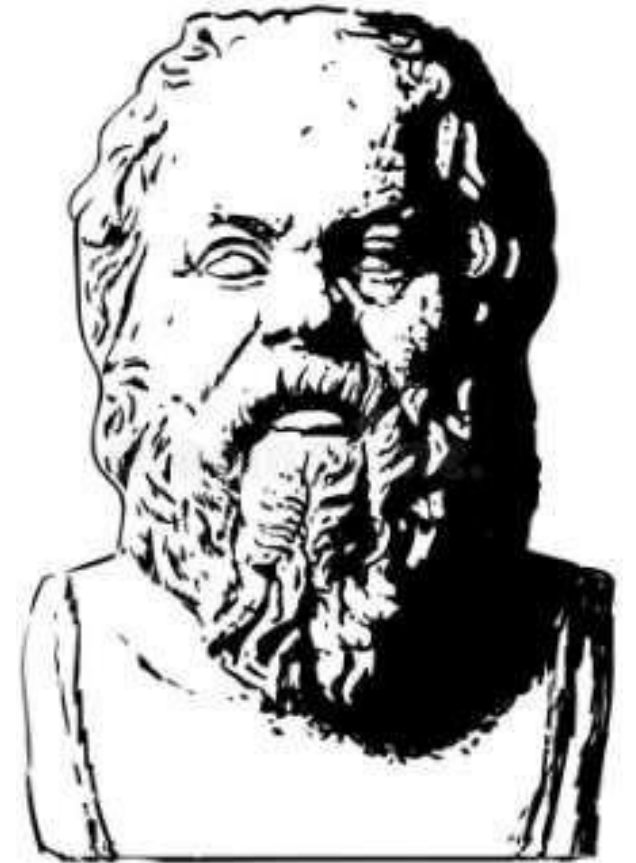


SOCRATES

- ‘the worst thing that can happen to anyone is to live but die inside’
- “every person is dualistic”

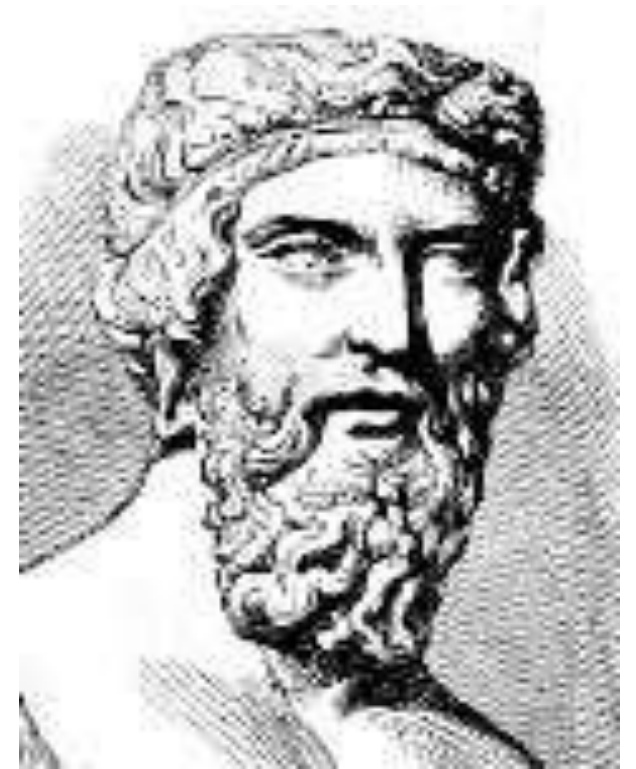
man = body + soul

- imperfect/permanent (body)
- perfect & permanent (soul)



PLATO

- **3 Components to the soul**
 - **rational soul – reason & intellect to govern affairs**
 - **spirited soul – emotions should be kept at bay**
 - **appetitive soul – basic desires (food, drink, sleep, sexual needs, etc.)**
- **when these are attained, the human person's soul becomes just & virtuous**



Question of Interest

- WHAT HAPPENS TO A PERSON WHOSE 3 COMPONENTS OF THE SOUL ARE IMBALANCED?



(ST.) AUGUSTINE

- ‘spirit of man’ in medieval philosophy
- Following view of Plato but adds Christianity
- man is of a bifurcated nature
- part of man dwells in the world and yearns to be with the Divine
- Other part is capable of reaching immortality
- body – dies on earth; soul – lives eternally in spiritual bliss with “God” (#lifegoalz)



Questions of Interest

- DO YOU BELIEVE IN THE CONCEPT OF THE SOUL COMING TO HEAVEN AFTER DEATH?
- WHAT MAKES US PEOPLE DIFFERENT FROM ANIMALS?



(ST) THOMAS AQUINAS

- man = matter + form
- matter(*hyle*)– “common stuff that makes up everything in the universe”
- form (*morphe*) – “essence of a substance or thing”; (what makes it what it is)
- the body of the human is similar to animals/objects, but what makes a human is his essence



MODERN PHILOSOPHY



Rene DESCARTES

- Father of Modern Philosophy
- human person = body + mind
- “I think, therefore I am”
- the body is a machine attached to the mind
- it's the mind that makes the man



David HUME

- disagrees with all the other aforementioned philosophers
- “one can only know what comes from the senses & experiences” (*he is an empiricist*)
- you know that other people are humans not because you have seen their soul, but because you see them, hear them, feel them etc.



David HUME

- “the self is nothing but a bundle of impressions”
- impressions
 - basic objects of our experience/sensation



Immanuel KANT

- Agreed with HUME that everything starts with perception/sensation of impressions
- there is a MIND that regulates these impressions
- “time, space, etc. are ideas that one cannot find in the world, but is built in our minds
- “apparatus of the mind”



Gilbert RYLE

- denies the internal, non-physical self
- “what truly matters is the behavior that a person manifests in his day-to-day life.”



MERLEAU-PONTY

- a phenomenologist who says the mind- body bifurcation is an invalid problem
- mind and body are inseparable
- “one’s body is his opening toward his existence to the world”
- the living body, his thoughts, emotions, and experiences are all one.

