

Greek Culture and Alexander the Great

Chapters 4-4 and 4-5



Greek Religion

- Polytheistic
- Necessary to well-being of state and daily life
- 12 primary gods/goddesses
 - Zeus – chief god
 - Athena – wisdom
 - Apollo – light and poetry
- Spirits go to Hades after death regardless
- Rituals (ceremonies or rites) involving prayers and sacrifices
 - Give so gods will give to me in return

Olympic Games



- Held every four years starting in 776 B.C.E
- Honoring Zeus
- Men only
- Winner receives olive wreath and honors from hometown
- Events
 - Footraces
 - Wrestling
 - Boxing
 - Javelin
 - Discus
 - Long jump
 - Chariot racing
- Ended in C.E. 393 by Roman emperor



Olympic video

optional

Greek Drama

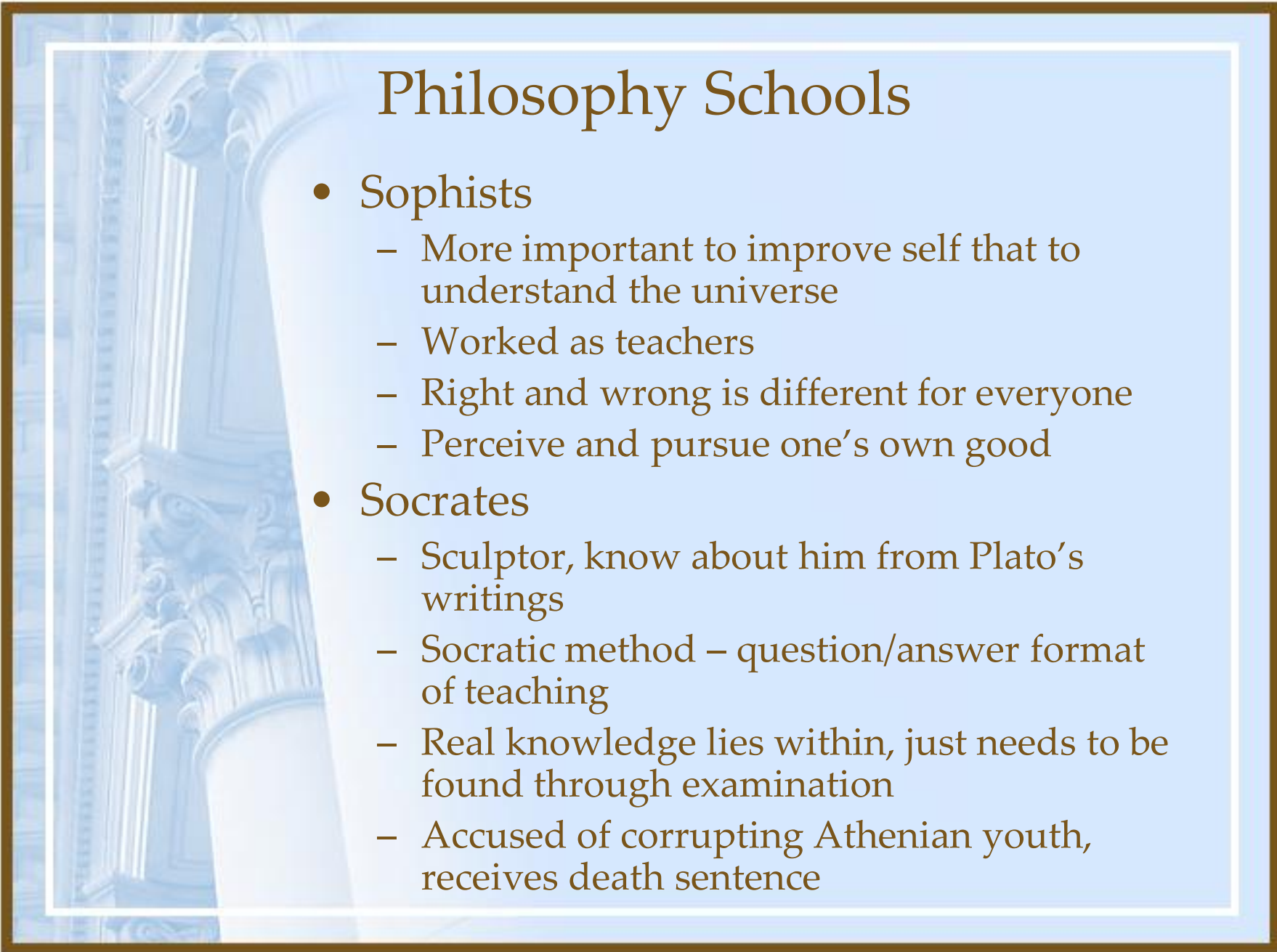


- First type: Tragedies
 - Usually sets of 3 plays with common theme
 - Universal themes
 - Good vs. Evil
 - Rights of the individual in society
 - Nature of divine forces
 - Nature of human beings
- Second type: Comedies
 - Used to criticize politicians and intellectuals
 - Object: to make a point while entertaining the audience

Greek Philosophy

- Philosophy – organized system of thought
 - Early Greek philosophers wanted to explain the universe on the basis of unifying principles
 - Four main schools of thought at this time in Greek history



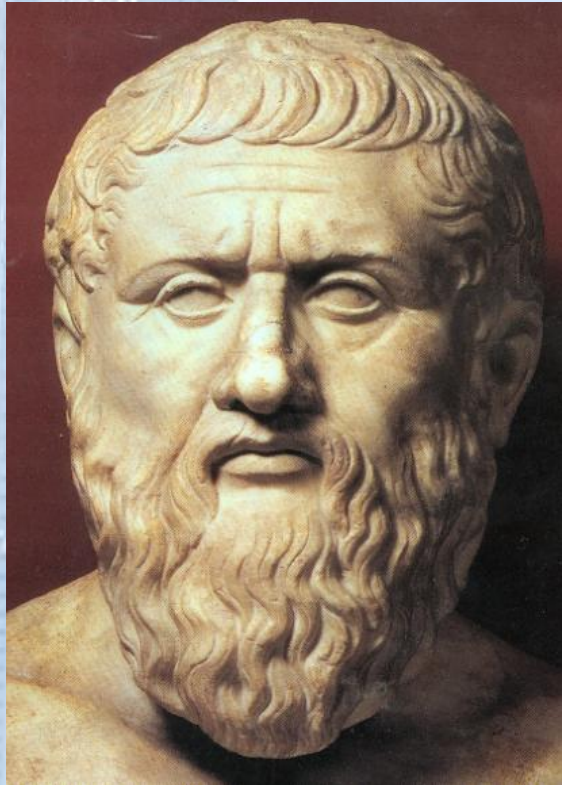


Philosophy Schools

- Sophists
 - More important to improve self than to understand the universe
 - Worked as teachers
 - Right and wrong is different for everyone
 - Perceive and pursue one's own good
- Socrates
 - Sculptor, know about him from Plato's writings
 - Socratic method – question/answer format of teaching
 - Real knowledge lies within, just needs to be found through examination
 - Accused of corrupting Athenian youth, receives death sentence

Philosophy Schools, cont.

- Plato



- Socrates' student, greatest philosopher of Western Civ.
- Establishes school known as the Academy
- How do we know what is real?
- Higher world of forms exists
- *The Republic*: distrusts democracy, states individuals must live in just, rational state for good life
 - *3 Classes of society: Philosopher-kings, Warriors, and the Masses*
 - *Equal access to education and position for men and women*

Philosophy Schools, cont.

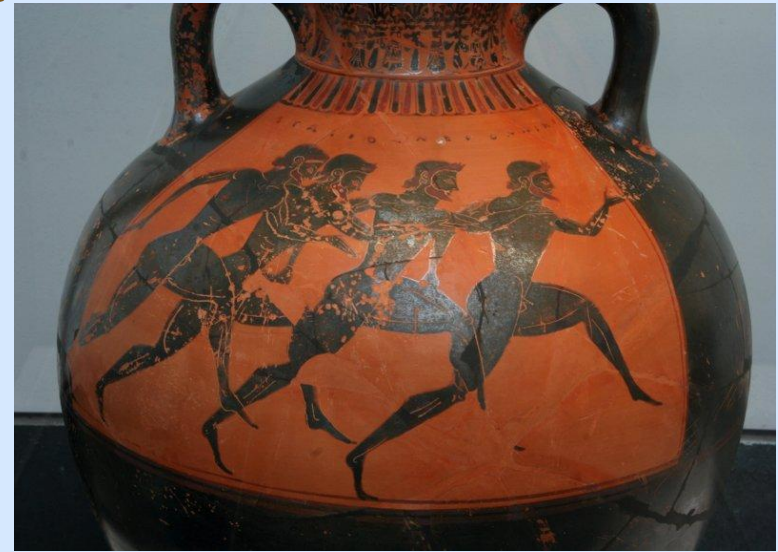


- Aristotle
 - Went to the Academy
 - Analyzed and classified information based on observation and investigation
 - Wrote about many wide-ranging subjects
 - *Politics*: wants effective form of govt, looked at many different states and concluded there were 3 good forms of govt
 - *Monarchy*
 - *Aristocracy*
 - *Constitutional government*

Greek Art



Athena: goddess of wisdom



- Art was concerned with expressing eternal ideals
- Human beings are shown as objects of beauty
- Sculpture shows ideal beauty

Greek Architecture



- Most important form: temple
- Central rooms in temples housed statues of deities and offerings
- Rooms surrounded by columns
- Best example: Parthenon, dedicated to Athena in Athens (bottom photo)

Alexander the Great



- Great military leader
- Brave fighter willing to lead men into battle
- Inspired his army to follow him and expand his empire east and west
- History:
 - Father Philip II builds up Macedonia
 - Crushes Greeks, forces them to cooperate with Macedonia
 - Inherits throne at 20



Persia and other obstacles

- Begins to carry out Philip's dream of invading the Persian Empire
 - 334 B.C.E. - enters Asia Minor
 - 333 B.C.E. - Frees Greek cities in Ionia
 - 332 B.C.E. - controls Syria, Palestine, Egypt
 - 331 B.C.E. - Battle of Gaugamela, resulting in the takeover of Persia
 - 331-329 B.C.E. - pushes east to modern-day Pakistan
 - 326 B.C.E. - Invades India, turns back home
 - June 323 B.C.E. - dies in Babylon

Empire of Alexander the Great, c. 323 B.C.E.



Greatest Extent of Empire 



Alexander the Great videos

optional

The Hellenistic Era

- Empire breaks apart after Alexander dies, eventually becomes 4 kingdoms
- Alexander had promoted cultural fusion
 - Soldiers marrying local women
 - However, fusion in govt (Persian officials) did not last after his death
- New cities created by Alexander and followers
- Greeks were encouraged to move to Middle East and beyond
- Greek culture, language, art was spread throughout the empire, and the Greeks also absorbed aspects of native cultures



Hellenistic Culture

- Library at Alexandria, Egypt
- Greek architecture used in new cities
- More emotional, realistic human sculpture
- Science
- Philosophy
 - Epicureanism (Epicurus)
 - Happiness is the goal of life
 - Separated from society
 - Stoicism (Zeno)
 - Happiness is found when you have found inner peace by living in harmony with the will of God
 - Bear whatever life offered
 - Very popular in Roman Empire