

**Post Aristotle – rise  
of faith based  
philosophies**

**spirit of the times**

# **spirit of the times**

**Socrates, Plato, Aristotle sought to explain truth, virtue, and happiness in universal terms.**

# **spirit of the times**

**Socrates, Plato, Aristotle sought to explain truth, virtue, and happiness in universal terms.**

**virtue = reason (Socrates and Plato)**

**happiness through reason and learning (Aristotle)**

# **spirit of the times**

**Socrates, Plato, Aristotle sought to explain truth, virtue, and happiness in universal terms.**

**virtue = reason (Socrates and Plato)**

**happiness through reason and learning (Aristotle)**

**None of this comes naturally to societies**

# **spirit of the times**

**Socrates, Plato, Aristotle sought to explain truth, virtue, and happiness in universal terms.**

**virtue = reason (Socrates and Plato)**

**happiness through reason and learning (Aristotle)**

**None of this comes naturally to societies**

**The decline of the Greeks, philosophy shifts to more pragmatic definitions of happiness**

# **spirit of the times**

**Socrates, Plato, Aristotle sought to explain truth, virtue, and happiness in universal terms.**

**virtue = reason (Socrates and Plato)**

**happiness through reason and learning (Aristotle)**

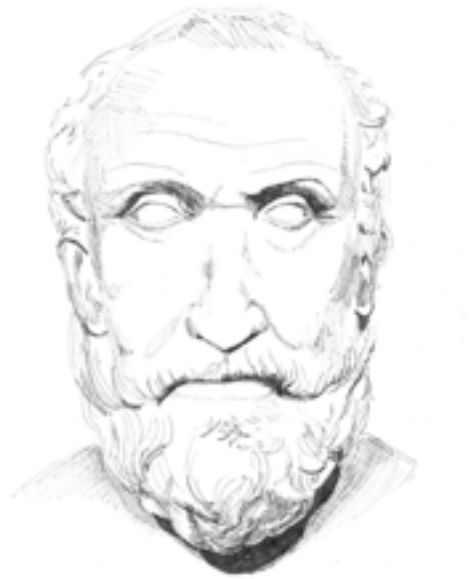
**None of this comes naturally to societies**

**The decline of the Greeks, philosophy shifts to more pragmatic definitions of happiness**

**embrace philosophies that addressed the problems of everyday living**

**Rise of the Roman Empire reinforced philosophies that promoted the state (or at least kept the citizenry placated)**

# **Skepticism**



**Pyrrho**

**influenced by the Sophists**

**contrast to dogmatism**

**no matter what you believe it could turn out to be false**

**took the extreme: avoid the despair of being wrong by not believing in anything at all**

**instead of truth, we have appearances (sensations) and convention (traditions)**



# **Epicureanism**

**admitted slaves and women**

**philosophy based on choice, the atoms making up  
humans are able to move freely (swerve).**

**focus on this life being the good one (tranquility).**

**We are all made of stars (soul atoms)**

**sensations faithful representations of physical world...  
perceptions on the other hand...**

**minimalist philosophy:**

**"I am thrilled with pleasure in the body when I  
live on bread and water, and I spit on luxurious  
pleasures, not for their own sake, but because  
of the inconveniences that follow them"**

**pleasure comes from the simple things and a reasoned, balanced  
life**

# The Cynic tradition

renunciation of philosophies that intellectualized truth

embraced the **ascetic** lifestyle shunning wealth and power (**attempts to shame society**)



**Antisthenes:** student of Socrates; actions more than words

**back to nature philosophy**— a life free from wants, passions and societal conventions. Pursuing these leads to loss of individual freedom

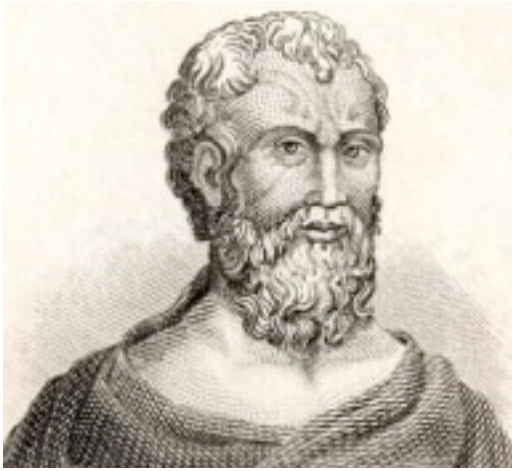
argued against Platonic forms: cup but not cupness

**Diogenes:** humans striving for convention lose connection with nature

**Plato:** man = featherless biped; plucked a chicken

**Crates & Hipparchia:** renounced wealth, shunned society's ideas of gender exhibitionists; wife as equal

# the Stoics



**Zeno of Citium**  
student of Crates

**happiness ≠ pleasure**

Everything moves according to a divine plan. To live in accordance with that reason (nature) is the ultimate virtue

**acceptance of suffering is most admirable**

**“Every man is an actor in a play, in which God has assigned the parts; it is our duty to perform our part worthily, whatever it may be...”**

**physics** is revival of Heraclitus: fire then air, then water, then earth

**materialist**, body–body dualism (soul as physical substance);  
**truth revealed through the senses**

rejection of determinism by assent to **fate**: complex amalgam of past events and mental dispositions

**(seeds of cognitive psychology; individual differences)**



# Neoplatonism

Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, Stoic, and Judaism  
in this tradition focus on personal salvation



Philo

interestingly, a catalyst for Christianity

also **Plotinus**: scholar most credited with preserving and interpreting works of Plato for future generations  
the **Good** as basin from which intellect (*nous*) overflows... further away the **souls**... further still **matter** (evil)

**forms = concepts in mind of God**

**taken from Plato: distrust of senses and the body; senses keep us from God**

**to know God we must reject senses. God only reveals himself to those open to receive him.**

# **the rise of the Christian influence**

**philosophy & faith**

**St. Paul**

**early influential proponent of Christianity**

**reinforced dualism of the Platonic tradition**

**life and after-life**

**body as prison denying enlightenment**

**philosophical questions of free will?**

**reconcile free will with all-knowing, all-being, all-doing deity**





**originally a Skeptic**

*later accepted a religion that denied personal accountability*

## ***Confessions***

discovers Neo-Platonism and converts to Christianity

early attempts to reconcile faith with logic, rhetoric, geometry, astronomy... later in life placed faith above all others.

**St. Augustine**

**City of God: two cities—earthly & heavenly** (Faustian trade-off)

transcendental philosophy - soul is able to transcend

true happiness and virtue can not be found in life. Goal, prepare to know God.

**introspection / phenomenology:** inner world more vast and important than the material world.

**"what cannot be doubted" (the fact that I doubt)**

**works set-up guiding principles for increasingly powerful Church**



# **in the East (Arabic and Islamic tradition)**

**as Islam spreads into the Mediterranean makes contact  
with remnants of the Alexander's Empire**

**heavily influenced by Aristotle**

**Islamic scholars spent centuries integrating works with Qur'an  
centers in Baghdad, Cairo, and Moorish Spain**



**Al Kindi**

**introduces philosophy to Arabic world**

**truths of philosophy are supported by revelation**

*philosophy is a systematic whole whose roots lie in  
logic and whose peak is rational theology*



# other players...



## **Abu Zaid Al-Balkhi**

distinguished between neuroses and psychoses  
"use rational therapies to cure anxiety, fear,  
aggression, depression, obsession"  
**psychosomatic disorders**

## **Avicenna**

**humans and animals share the five senses that bound to earth**

**humans also have seven internal senses  
that facilitate reasoning**

**psychology therapies: music for the sad, shock  
placebo effect**



# Alhazen (Abu Ali al-Hasan ibn al-Haytham)

*everything in the world ... emits rays in every direction, which fill the whole world*



sight based wholly on external light; necessity of rational thinker in perception

## Averroës

writings based on logic and reason at a time where fundamentalist Islam was on the rise

recognized importance of retina in vision

in order for the human mind to comprehend something, the active mind must be connected with the passive mind



human thought can not be a result of sensation alone but imagination must also coincide in order to objectively understand something

# Alhazen (Abu Ali al-Hasan ibn al-Haytham)

*everything in the world ... emits rays in every direction, which fill the whole world*

wrote the first book on **physical optics** using experimentation

sight based **wholly on external light**; necessity of **rational thinker in perception**



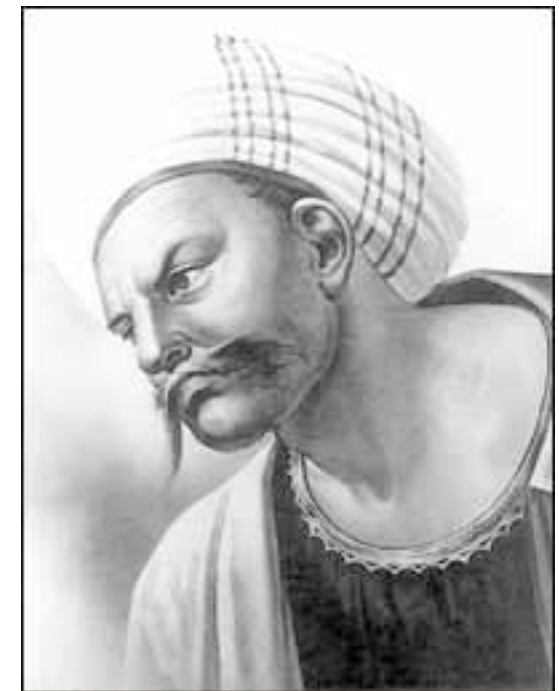
## Averroës

writings based on logic and reason at a time where fundamentalist Islam was on the rise

recognized importance of retina in vision

in order for the human mind to comprehend something, the active mind must be connected with the passive mind

human thought can not be a result of sensation alone but imagination must also coincide in order to objectively understand something



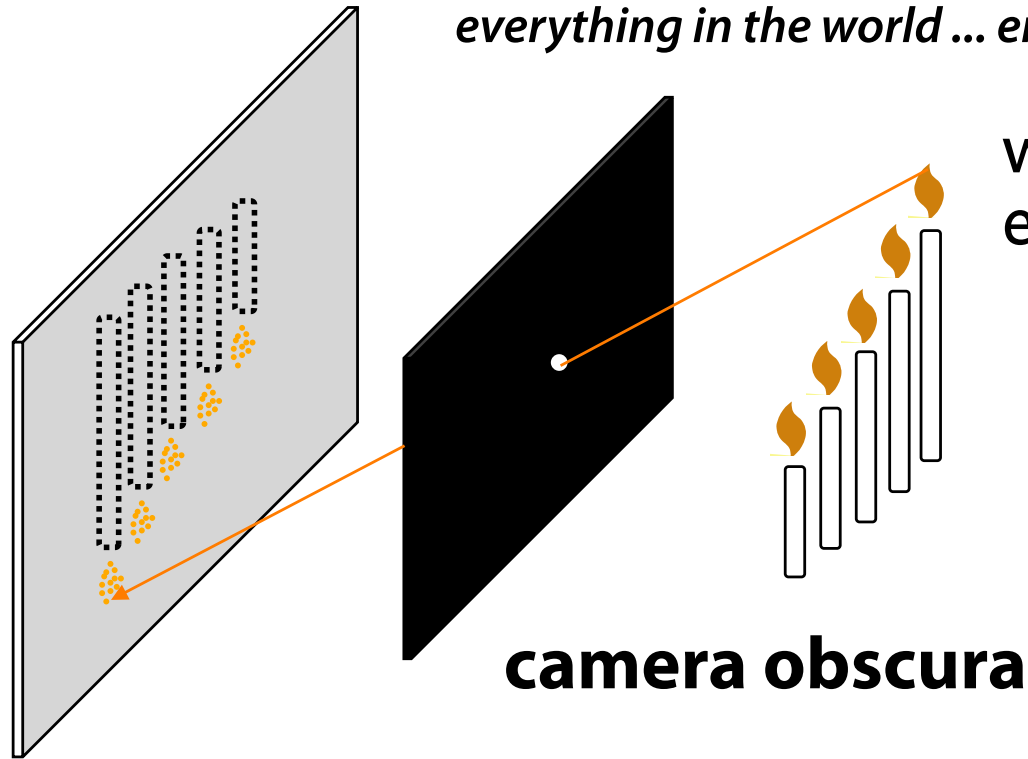
# Alhazen (Abu Ali al-Hasan ibn al-Haytham)

*everything in the world ... emits rays in every direction, which fill the whole world*



wrote the first book on **physical optics** using experimentation

sight based **wholly on external light**; necessity of **rational thinker in perception**



**camera obscura**

## Averroës

writings based on logic and reason at a time where fundamentalist Islam was on the rise

recognized importance of retina in vision

in order for the human mind to comprehend something, the active mind must be connected with the passive mind



human thought can not be a result of sensation alone but imagination must also coincide in order to objectively understand something