Parmenides [from Wikipedia.org]

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Parmenides** | |
| [A statue of a person with a beard  Description automatically generated](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Busto_di_Parmenide.jpg)  Bust of Parmenides discovered at [Velia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Velia), thought to have been partially modeled on a [Metrodorus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Metrodorus_of_Lampsacus_(the_younger)) bust. | |
| **Born** | c. late 6th century BC  [Elea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Velia), [Magna Graecia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magna_Graecia) |
| **Died** | c. 5th century BC |
|  | |
| **Era** | [Pre-Socratic philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pre-Socratic_philosophy) |
| **Region** | [Western philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_philosophy) |
| [**School**](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_schools_of_philosophy) | [Eleatic school](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleatic_school) |
| **Main interests** | [Ontology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ontology), [poetry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Poetry), [cosmology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmology) |
| **Notable ideas** | [Monism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monism), [truth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aletheia)/[opinion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doxa) distinction |

**Parmenides of Elea** ([/pɑːrˈmɛnɪdiːz ... ˈɛliə/](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Help:IPA/English); [Greek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_language): Παρμενίδης ὁ Ἐλεάτης; fl. late sixth or early fifth century BC) was a [pre-Socratic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pre-Socratic_philosophy) [Greek](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Greece) [philosopher](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosopher) from [Elea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Velia) in [Magna Graecia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magna_Graecia).

Parmenides was born in the [Greek colony](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greek_colony) of [Elea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Velia), from a wealthy and illustrious family.[[a]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-1) His dates are uncertain; according to [doxographer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doxography) [Diogenes Laërtius](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diogenes_La%C3%ABrtius), he flourished just before 500 BC,[[b]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-2) which would put his year of birth near 540 BC, but in the [dialogue](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dialogue) [*Parmenides*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides_(dialogue)) [Plato](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato) has him visiting [Athens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athens) at the age of 65, when [Socrates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socrates) was a young man, c. 450 BC,[[c]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-3) which, if true, suggests a year of birth of c. 515 BC.[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTECurd20043%E2%80%938-4) He is thought to have been in his prime (or "[floruit](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Floruit)") around 475 BC.[[2]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTEFreeman1946140-5)

The single known work by Parmenides is a poem whose original title is unknown but which is often referred to as [*On Nature*](http://philoctetes.free.fr/parmenidesunicode.htm)*.* Only fragments of it survive. In his poem, Parmenides prescribes two views of [reality](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reality). The first, the Way of "[Aletheia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aletheia)" or truth, describes how all reality is one, [change](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Change_(philosophy)) is impossible, and existence is timeless and uniform. The second view, the way of "[Doxa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doxa)", or opinion, describes the world of appearances, in which one's sensory faculties lead to conceptions which are false and deceitful.

Parmenides has been considered the founder of [ontology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ontology) and has, through his influence on [Plato](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato), influenced the whole history of [Western philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Western_philosophy).[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTEPalmer2020-6) He is also considered to be the founder of the [Eleatic school](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleatic_school) of [philosophy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy), which also included [Zeno of Elea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zeno_of_Elea) and [Melissus of Samos](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melissus_of_Samos). [Zeno's paradoxes of motion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zeno_paradox) were developed to defend Parmenides' views. In contemporary philosophy, Parmenides' work has remained relevant in debates about the [philosophy of time](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philosophy_of_time).

**Biography**

[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Parmenides&action=edit&section=1)]

Parmenides was born in [Elea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Velia) (called Velia in Roman times), a city located in [Magna Graecia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Magna_Graecia). [Diogenes Laertius](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diogenes_Laertius) says that his father was Pires, and that he belonged to a rich and noble family.[[4]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-7) Laertius transmits two divergent sources regarding the teacher of the philosopher. One, dependent on [Sotion](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sotion), indicates that he was first a student of [Xenophanes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xenophanes),[[5]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-8) but did not follow him, and later became associated with a [Pythagorean](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pythagorean_school), Aminias, whom he preferred as his teacher. Another tradition, dependent on [Theophrastus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theophrastus), indicates that he was a disciple of [Anaximander](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anaximander).[[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-9)

**Chronology**

[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Parmenides&action=edit&section=2)]

Everything related to the chronology of Parmenides—the dates of his birth and death, and the period of his philosophical activity—is uncertain.[[*citation needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed)]

**Date of birth**

[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Parmenides&action=edit&section=3)]

All conjectures regarding Parmenides' date of birth are based on two ancient sources. One comes from [Apollodorus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apollodorus_of_Athens) and is transmitted to us by Diogenes Laertius: this source marks the [Olympiad](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olympiad) 69th (between 504 BC and 500 BC) as the moment of maturity, placing his birth 40 years earlier (544 BC – 540 BC).[[7]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-10) The other is [Plato](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato), in his dialogue [*Parmenides*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides_(dialogue)). There Plato composes a situation in which Parmenides, 65, and [Zeno](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zeno_of_Elea), 40, travel to [Athens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Athens) to attend the [Panathenaic Games](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Panathenaic_Games). On that occasion they meet [Socrates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socrates), who was still very young according to the Platonic text.[[8]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-11)

The inaccuracy of the dating from Apollodorus is well known, who chooses the date of a historical event to make it coincide with the maturity (the [*floruit*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Floruit)) of a philosopher, a maturity that he invariably reached at forty years of age. He tries to always match the maturity of a philosopher with the birth of his alleged disciple. In this case Apollodorus, according to [Burnet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Burnet_(classicist)), based his date of the foundation of Elea (540 BC) to chronologically locate the maturity of [Xenophanes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xenophanes) and thus the birth of his supposed disciple, Parmenides.[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-Burnet169-12) Knowing this, Burnet and later classicists like [Cornford](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Francis_Macdonald_Cornford), [Raven](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Raven), [Guthrie](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Keith_Chambers_Guthrie), and [Schofield](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Malcolm_Schofield) preferred to base the calculations on the Platonic dialogue. According to the latter, the fact that Plato adds so much detail regarding ages in his text is a sign that he writes with chronological precision. Plato says that Socrates was very young, and this is interpreted to mean that he was less than twenty years old. We know the year of Socrates' death (399 BC) and his age—he was about seventy years old–making the date of his birth 469 BC. The Panathenaic games were held every four years, and of those held during Socrates' youth (454, 450, 446), the most likely is that of 450 BC, when Socrates was nineteen years old. Thus, if at this meeting Parmenides was about sixty-five years old, his birth occurred around 515 BC.[[9]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-Burnet169-12)[[10]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-Corn1-13)[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-guth15-14)[[12]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-15)[[13]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-16)[[14]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-17)[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-Cor2023-18)

However, neither Raven nor Schofield, who follows the former, finds a dating based on a late Platonic dialogue entirely satisfactory. Other scholars directly prefer not to use the Platonic testimony and propose other dates. According to a scholar of the [Platonic dialogues](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Platonic_dialogues), R. Hirzel, [Conrado Eggers Lan](https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Conrado_Eggers_Lan) indicates that the historical has no value for Plato.[[16]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-19) The fact that the meeting between Socrates and Parmenides is mentioned in the dialogues *Theaetetus* (183e) and *Sophist* (217c) only indicates that it is referring to the same fictional event, and this is possible because both the *Theaetetus* and the *Sophist* are considered after the *Parmenides*. In *Soph.* 217c the [dialectic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dialectic) procedure of Socrates is attributed to Parmenides, which would confirm that this is nothing more than a reference to the fictitious dramatic situation of the dialogue.[[17]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-20) Eggers Lan proposes a correction of the traditional date of the foundation of Elea. Based on [Herodotus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herodotus) I, 163–167, which indicates that the [Phocians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phocia), after defeating the [Carthaginians](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Carthage) in naval battle, founded Elea, and adding the reference to [Thucydides](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thucydides) I, 13, where it is indicated that such a battle occurred in the time of [Cambyses II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cambyses_II), the foundation of Elea can be placed between 530 BC and 522 BC So Parmenides could not have been born before 530 BC or after 520 BC, given that it predates [Empedocles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empedocles).[[18]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-21) This last dating procedure is not infallible either, because it has been questioned that the fact that links the passages of Herodotus and Thucydides is the same.[[19]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-22) [Nestor Luis Cordero](https://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nestor_Luis_Cordero) also rejects the chronology based on the Platonic text, and the historical reality of the encounter, in favor of the traditional date of Apollodorus. He follows the traditional datum of the founding of Elea in 545 BC, pointing to it not only as [*terminus post quem*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Terminus_post_quem), but as a possible date of Parmenides' birth, from which he concludes that his parents were part of the founding contingent of the city and that he was a contemporary of [Heraclitus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heraclitus).[[15]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-Cor2023-18) The evidence suggests that Parmenides could not have written much after the death of Heraclitus.[[*citation needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed)]

**Timeline relative to other Presocratics**

[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Parmenides&action=edit&section=4)]

Beyond the speculations and inaccuracies about his date of birth, some specialists have turned their attention to certain passages of his work to specify the relationship of Parmenides with other thinkers. It was thought to find in his poem certain controversial allusions to the doctrine of [Anaximenes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anaximenes_of_Miletus) and the [Pythagoreans](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pythagoreans) (fragment B 8, verse 24, and frag. B 4), and also against [Heraclitus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Heraclitus) (frag .B 6, vv.8–9), while [Empedocles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empedocles) and [Anaxagoras](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anaxagoras) frequently refer to Parmenides.[[20]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-23)

The reference to Heraclitus has been debated. Bernays's thesis[[21]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-24) that Parmenides attacks Heraclitus, to which Diels, Kranz, Gomperz, Burnet and others adhered, was discussed by Reinhardt,[[22]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-25) whom Jaeger followed.[[23]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-26)

Guthrie finds it surprising that Heraclitus would not have censured Parmenides if he had known him, as he did with [Xenophanes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xenophanes) and [Pythagoras](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pythagoras). His conclusion, however, does not arise from this consideration, but points out that, due to the importance of his thought, Parmenides splits the history of pre-Socratic philosophy in two; therefore his position with respect to other thinkers is easy to determine. From this point of view, the philosophy of Heraclitus seems to him pre-Parmenidean, while those of Empedocles, Anaxagoras and [Democritus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democritus) are post-Parmenidean.[[11]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-guth15-14)

**Anecdotes**

[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Parmenides&action=edit&section=5)]

[Plutarch](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plutarch), [Strabo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Strabo) and [Diogenes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Diogenes_Laertius)—following the testimony of [Speusippus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Speusippus)—agree that Parmenides participated in the government of his city, organizing it and giving it a code of admirable laws.[[24]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-27)

[A stone with writing on it

Description automatically generated](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Detail_Parmenides_bust.png)Detail of the pedestal found in Velia. Greek inscriptions were made only in capital letters, and without spaces. Read as follows: **ΠΑ[ ]ΜΕΝΕΙΔΗΣ ΠΥΡΗΤΟΣ**  
**ΟΥΛΙΑΔΗΣ ΦΥΣΙΚΟΣ**

**Archaeological discovery**

[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Parmenides&action=edit&section=6)]

In 1969, the plinth of a statue dated to the 1st century AD was excavated in [Velia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Velia). On the plinth were four words: ΠΑ[Ρ]ΜΕΝΕΙΔΗΣ ΠΥΡΗΤΟΣ ΟΥΛΙΑΔΗΣ ΦΥΣΙΚΟΣ.[[25]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-28) The first two clearly read "Parmenides, son of Pires." The fourth word φυσικός (*fysikós*, "physicist") was commonly used to designate philosophers who devoted themselves to the observation of nature. On the other hand, there is no agreement on the meaning of the third (οὐλιάδης, *ouliadēs*): it can simply mean "a native of Elea" (the name "Velia" is in Greek Οὐέλια),[[26]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-29) or "belonging to the Οὐλιος" (*Ulios*), that is, to a [medical school](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Medical_school) ( the patron of which was [Apollo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apollo) Ulius).[[27]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-30) If this last hypothesis were true, then Parmenides would be, in addition to being a legislator, a doctor.[[28]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-31) The hypothesis is reinforced by the ideas contained in fragment 18 of his poem, which contains [anatomical](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anatomy) and [physiological](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Physiology) observations.[[29]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-32) However, other specialists believe that the only certainty we can extract from the discovery is that of the social importance of Parmenides in the life of his city, already indicated by the testimonies that indicate his activity as a legislator.[[30]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-33)

**Visit to Athens**

[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Parmenides&action=edit&section=7)]

[Plato](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plato), in his dialogue [*Parmenides*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides_(dialogue)), relates that, accompanied by his disciple [Zeno of Elea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zeno_of_Elea), Parmenides visited [Athens](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ancient_Athens) when he was approximately sixty-five years old and that, on that occasion, [Socrates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socrates), then a young man, conversed with him.[[31]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-34) [Athenaeus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Athenaeus) of [Naucratis](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naucratis) had noted that, although the ages make a dialogue between Parmenides and Socrates hardly possible, the fact that Parmenides has sustained arguments similar to those sustained in the [Platonic dialogue](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Platonic_dialogue) is something that seems impossible.[[32]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-35) Most modern classicists consider the visit to Athens and the meeting and conversation with Socrates to be fictitious. Allusions to this visit in other Platonic works are only references to the same fictitious dialogue and not to a historical fact.[[33]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-36)

***On Nature***

[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Parmenides&action=edit&section=8)]

Parmenides' sole work, which has only survived in fragments, is a poem in [dactylic hexameter](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dactylic_hexameter), later titled *On Nature*. Approximately 160 verses remain today from an original total that was probably near 800.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTEPalmer2020-6) The poem was originally divided into three parts: an introductory [proem](https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/proem) that contains an allegorical narrative which explains the purpose of the work, a former section known as "The Way of Truth" ([*aletheia*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aletheia), ἀλήθεια), and a latter section known as "The Way of Appearance/Opinion" ([*doxa*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Doxa), δόξα). Despite the poem's fragmentary nature, the general plan of both the proem and the first part, "The Way of Truth" have been ascertained by modern scholars, thanks to large excerpts made by [Sextus Empiricus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sextus_Empiricus)[[d]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-37) and [Simplicius of Cilicia](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Simplicius_of_Cilicia).[[e]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-38)[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTEPalmer2020-6) Unfortunately, the second part, "The Way of Opinion", which is supposed to have been much longer than the first, only survives in small fragments and prose paraphrases.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTEPalmer2020-6)

**Introduction**

[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Parmenides&action=edit&section=9)]

The introductory proem describes the narrator's journey to receive a revelation from an unnamed goddess on the nature of reality.[[34]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTECurd2004I.3-39) The remainder of the work is then presented as the spoken revelation of the goddess without any accompanying narrative.[[34]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTECurd2004I.3-39)

The narrative of the poet's journey includes a variety of allegorical symbols, such as a speeding chariot with glowing axles, horses, the House of Night, Gates of the paths of Night and Day, and maidens who are "the daughters of the Sun"[[35]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTEKirkRavenSchofield1983243-40) who escort the poet from the ordinary daytime world to a strange destination, outside our human paths.[[36]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTEFurley19731%E2%80%9315-41) The allegorical themes in the poem have attracted a variety of different interpretations, including comparisons to [Homer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Homer) and [Hesiod](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hesiod), and attempts to relate the journey towards either [illumination](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Divine_illumination) or darkness, but there is little scholarly consensus about any interpretation, and the surviving evidence from the poem itself, as well as any other literary use of allegory from the same time period, may be too sparse to ever determine any of the intended symbolism with certainty.[[34]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTECurd2004I.3-39)

***The Way of Truth***

[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Parmenides&action=edit&section=10)]

In the *Way of Truth*, an estimated 90% of which has survived,[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTEPalmer2020-6) Parmenides distinguishes between the unity of nature and its variety, insisting in the *Way of Truth* upon the reality of its unity, which is therefore the object of knowledge, and upon the unreality of its variety, which is therefore the object, not of knowledge, but of opinion.[[*citation needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed)] This contrasts with the argument in the section called "the way of opinion", which discusses that which is illusory.[[*citation needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed)]

***The Way of Opinion***

[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Parmenides&action=edit&section=11)]

In the significantly longer, but far worse preserved latter section of the poem, *Way of Opinion*, Parmenides propounds a theory of the world of seeming and its development, pointing out, however, that, in accordance with the principles already laid down, these cosmological speculations do not pretend to anything more than mere appearance. The structure of the cosmos is a fundamental binary principle that governs the manifestations of all the particulars: "the Aether fire of flame" (B 8.56), which is gentle, mild, soft, thin and clear, and self-identical, and the other is "ignorant night", body thick and heavy.[[37]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTEGuthrie197961%E2%80%9362-42)[[f]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-43) [Cosmology](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cosmology) originally comprised the greater part of his poem, explaining the world's origins and operations.[[g]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-44) Some idea of the [sphericity of the Earth](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Spherical_Earth) also seems to have been known to Parmenides.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTEPalmer2020-6)[[h]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-45)

**Legacy**

[[edit](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Parmenides&action=edit&section=12)]

As the first of the [Eleatics](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eleatics), Parmenides is generally credited with being the philosopher who first defined ontology as a separate discipline distinct from theology.[[3]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTEPalmer2020-6) His most important pupil was [Zeno](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zeno_of_Elea), who appears alongside him in Plato's *Parmenides* where they debate [dialectic](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dialectic) with [Socrates](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Socrates).[[i]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-46) The pluralist theories of [Empedocles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Empedocles) and [Anaxagoras](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anaxagoras) and the atomist [Leucippus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Leucippus), and [Democritus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Democritus) have also been seen as a potential response to Parmenides' arguments and conclusions.[[38]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-FOOTNOTESedley1998-47) Parmenides is also mentioned in Plato's [*Sophist*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sophist_(dialogue))[[j]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-48) and [*Theaetetus*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Theaetetus_(Plato))*.*[[k]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-49) Later Hellenistic doxographers also considered Parmenides to have been a pupil of [Xenophanes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Xenophanes).[[l]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-50) [Eusebius of Caesarea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eusebius_of_Caesarea), quoting [Aristocles of Messene](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aristocles_of_Messene), says that Parmenides was part of a line of skeptical philosophy that culminated in [Pyrrhonism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pyrrhonism) for he, by the root, rejects the validity of perception through the senses whilst, at any rate, it is first through our five forms of senses that we become aware of things and then by faculty of reasoning.[[m]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parmenides#cite_note-51) Parmenides' proto-[monism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Monism) of [the One](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_One_(Neoplatonism)) also influenced [Plotinus](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plotinus) and [Neoplatonism](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neoplatonism).[[*citation needed*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Citation_needed)]