

PHIL 204

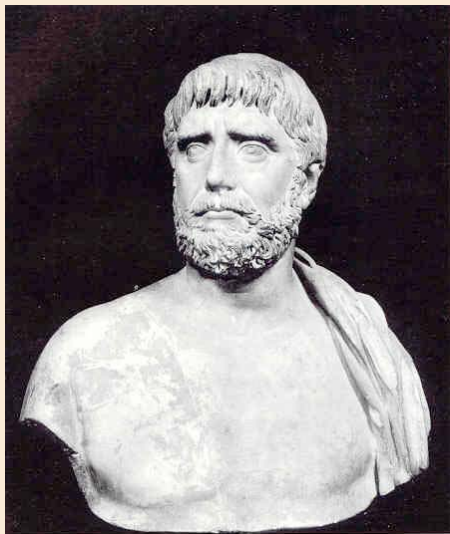
Greek Philosophy

Lecture 1

Greece in the Archaic Age

political structure in 750-490 BCE





THALES c.585BCE

Thales

Material Monism:

Everything is made of / from water

Panpsychism / Pantheism:

**The soul is the principle of motion
Magnets and amber cause motion**

Therefore magnets have souls

Thales

God, the divine mind, fills the world:

Divine power moves and penetrates moisture
(Everything is made of water)

Therefore all things are full of gods

Cosmology:

The earth rests on water.



ANAXIMANDER c.550BCE

Anaximander

Monism:

Everything is made from (but not of) the unlimited.

An Explanation:

Opposites separate off from the one (= the unlimited).

The unlimited steers everything

Over time equilibrium is maintained between opposites.

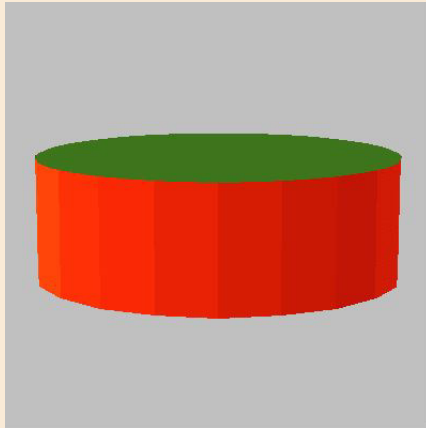
Anaximander

The first recorded words of Greek philosophy:

**“... they pay penalty and retribution to each other for their
injustice according to the assessment of time.”**

Anaximander

Cosmology: The Shape of the World



A Drum With Width=3xHeight

See [Henry Mendell's Web Page](#)

Anaximander

The first application of The Principle of Sufficient Reason:

Every fact has an explanation.

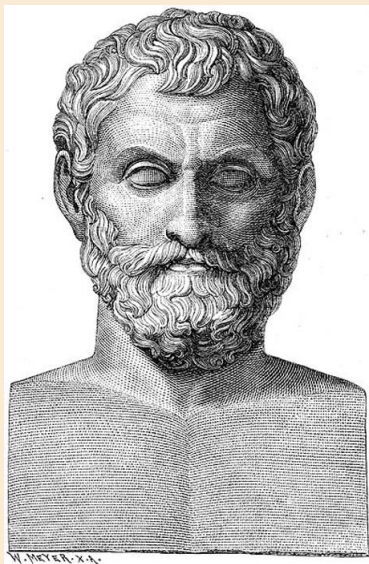
The position of the earth:

The earth would move in one direction rather than another if and only if there were a reason for it to do so.

But there is no reason - it is “equally related to the extremes”.

And the earth cannot move in two directions at once

Therefore the earth stays where it is.



ANAXIMENES c.525BCE

Anaximenes

Material Monism:

Everything is made of / from air.

Air is the unlimited single source of everything.

Physical explanation:

Everything is produced from air by condensation and rarefaction.

Hotness and coldness are properties of things associated with rarefaction and condensation.

Anaximenes

Cosmology:

The earth is flat - it floats on air - condensed air floating on rarefied air.

The soul and the gods are air.

Air controls holds together and controls everything.

Presocratic natural philosophers proposed accounts of the universe

which tended to be:

Materialistic: Explained everything in terms of the properties of some basic material stuff - eg water or air.

Physicalistic: Did not appeal to a mind or minds to account for the phenomena they were interested in.

Naturalistic: Did not appeal to unfamiliar 'super natural' beings / properties to account for familiar phenomena.

Reductionistic: Reduce the number of basic stuffs to a minimum.

Monistic: Reduce the number of basic stuffs to one.