



PHIL 204

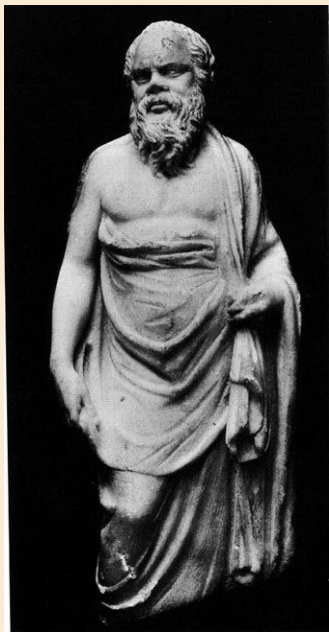
Greek Philosophy

Lecture 3

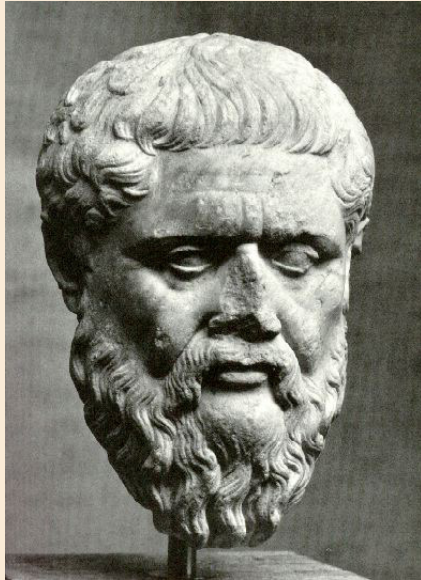
Greece in the Archaic Age

political structure in 750-490 BCE





Socrates 469-399 BCE



Plato 427-347 BCE

The *Phaedo*

- (A) Setting the Scene: Socrates prepares for his death.
- (B) A Paradox: The philosopher welcomes death
but suicide is not permissible.
- (C) Why is suicide not permissible?
 - (i) We are in prison, or guardhouse, and not
permitted to leave.
 - (ii) We are the property of the gods.

(D) Why does the philosopher look forward to death?

Death, appropriately prepared for, takes us to better and wiser gods and perhaps to our ancestors.

The *Phaedo* is mainly concerned with justifying (D).

What is Death?

Death is the separation of the soul from the body.

(1) The relation of the soul to the body:

(A) The influence of the body on the soul:

(i) Soul is superior to the body.

(ii) Bodily pleasures are despised by the philosopher.

(B) The soul and knowledge:

(i) The body the hinders acquisition of knowledge.

(ii) True being is revealed only to the soul in thought

[Reading] ‘Then must not existence be revealed to her
in thought if at all.’

A better translation:

‘But isn’t it in reasoning, if anywhere at all, that we
come to be clear about something of the things that are.’

(iii) Only the soul has access to absolute standards,
e.g:

Absolute Justice

Absolute Beauty

Absolute Good

Absolute Equality

These are not perceived by the senses.

(2) So there is at least some hope that with death
we will achieve a better state.

Arguments for the Immortality of the Soul:

(3) *The Cyclical Argument:*

(A) Opposites are generated out of opposites

‘All things which have opposites are generated out of their opposites’.

Lesser \longrightarrow Greater \longrightarrow Lesser

Hot \longrightarrow Cold \longrightarrow Hot

Wakefulness \longrightarrow Sleep \longrightarrow Wakefulness

Death \longrightarrow Life \longrightarrow Death

(B) These cycles go on eternally.

Proof: If they did not, everything would come to a stop.

Therefore the soul is eternal.

(4) *The Recollection Argument:*

(A) All coming to know is recollection

Proof:

The 'teaching' a slave in the *Meno*

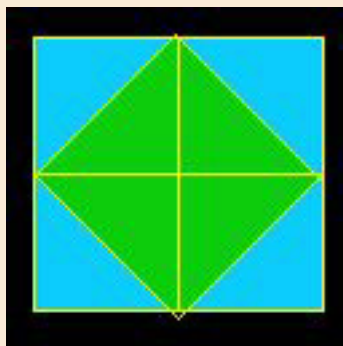
(B) Recollection = being reminded by something
of something that is like it or of something
that is not like it.

E.g. a lyre reminds us of a lover

A picture reminds us of a lover

(C) Our recognition of equality and inequality etc.
must be recollection

(D) We do not perceive equality through the
bodily senses.



(E) Therefore we acquired knowledge of it either

(i) Before birth - and then forgot it at birth, or

(ii) At birth - and did not forget it, or

(iii) At birth - and forgot it at birth.

(F)(iii) Is not coherent. We would have to have
and not have knowledge at the same time.

(ii) is clearly false [not argued for].

Therefore the soul existed before birth.

Socrates claims that:

- (3) Proves the existence of the soul before birth.
- (4) Proves that if the soul exists before birth it exists after death.

Therefore the soul exists after death.

(5) *The Affinity Argument:*

The soul is like the objects that it properly knows

These objects are simple - they are Forms

So the soul is simple

So so cannot disperse into parts

What the soul knows is unseen and unchanging

Therefore the soul is unseen and unchanging

The body is seen and changing

The body is Appearance

The soul is Reality

The soul is Divine

The body is Mortal

Corollaries

Purified souls of philosophers entirely leave the body at death and pass invisible into true Hades.

Souls polluted by the body remain as ghosts.

Evil souls transmigrate into to the appropriate animals.

The philosopher must seeks to detach his soul from the pleasures and pains of body.