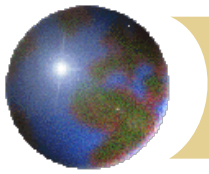


# *Chapter 1*

## *Greco-Roman Period*



# *Ancient Greece*

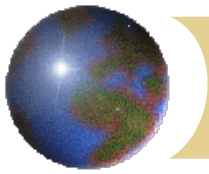
## Three periods:

### 1. Archaic

- Before the Archaic period, it was the Greek Dark Ages, characterized by ignorance, injustices, and various kinds of misery

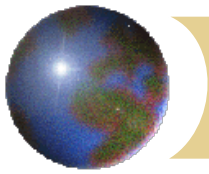
### 2. Classical

### 3. Hellenistic



## *Archaic Period*

- ✚ About 9<sup>th</sup> cent BC to 5<sup>th</sup> cent BC
- ✚ City-states formed
  - ▣ Constantly at war with one another
  - ▣ Ruled by tyrants
  - ▣ Persians were their common enemy
- ✚ Poets: Homer, Hesiod and Sappho



# *Homer* (8<sup>th</sup> century BC)

## ⊕ The Iliad

- ⊕ Epic

- ⊕ One of the oldest extant (existing) works in Western literature

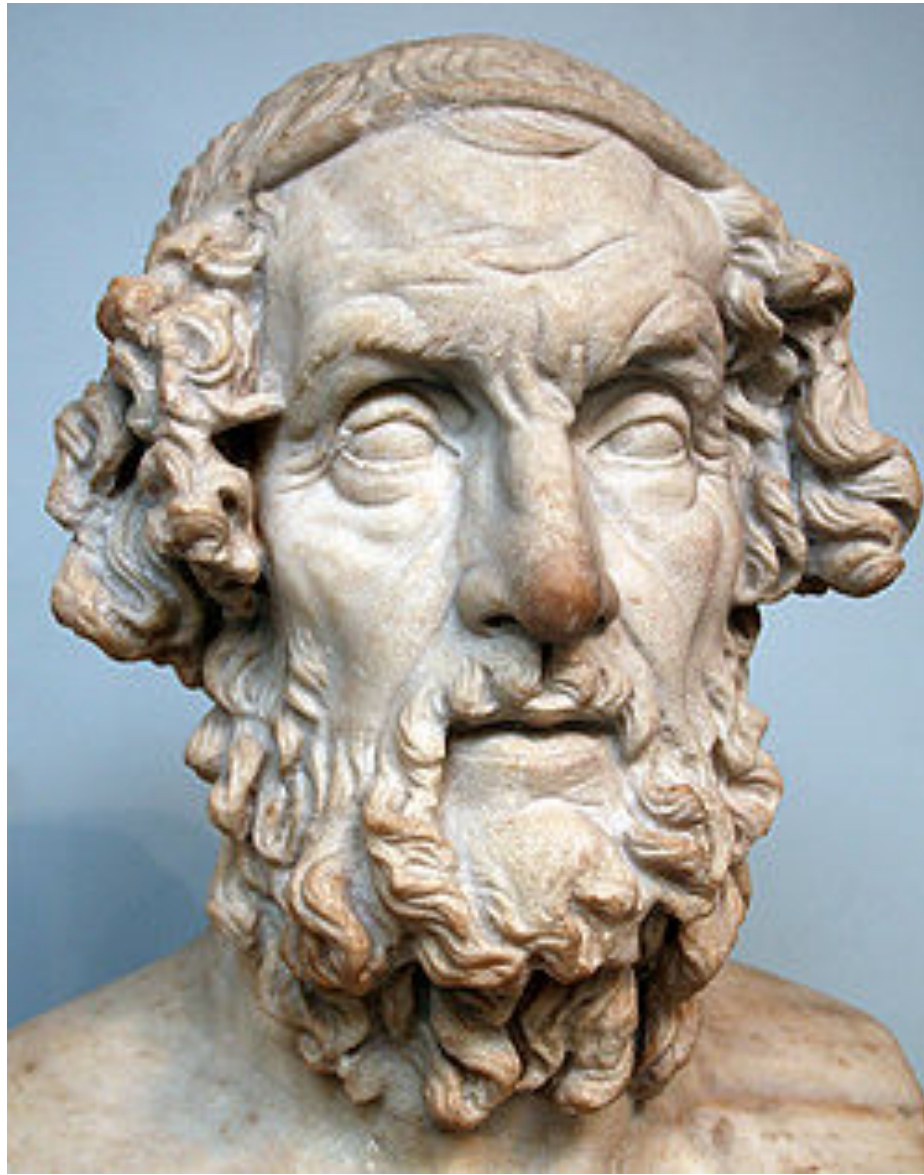
- ⊕ Set against the Trojan War

- ⊕ Deals mainly with the fighting between Agamemnon and Achilles

## ⊕ The Odyssey

- ⊕ Sequel of The Iliad

- ⊕ Depicts the journey of Odysseus or Ulysses back home to Ithaca, after the fall of Troy

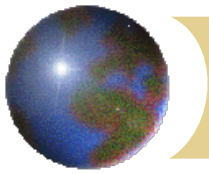


**Roman copy of a Greek bust of Homer  
(1<sup>st</sup> century BC–2<sup>nd</sup> century BC)**



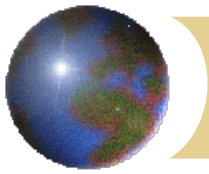
**"Achilles tending  
the Wounded  
Patroclus"**

**Painting  
attributed to  
Sosias, c. 500 BC**



# *The Iliad* on digital media

- ✚ Good audio-books are available on YouTube for those interested in the book
- ✚ Search YouTube for “Homer’s Iliad” uploaded by “johnnmb76” for a History Channel video
- ✚ The 1956 movie “Helen of Troy” is also available on YouTube
- ✚ Brad Pitt’s 2004 “epic war film” “Troy” is also a must-watch. Get a DVD.

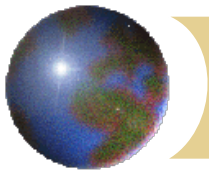


# *Classical Period*

⊕ 5<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century

⊕ Athens

- ⊕ Athens emerged as the most powerful of the Greek city-states
- ⊕ Ruled by the famous ruler, Pericles
- ⊕ Tremendous flowering of the arts and letters
- ⊕ Disciplines such as political thought, aesthetics, physics, ethics, linguistics, biology, logic and mathematics developed



# *Rise of Philosophy*

## ⊕ Pre-Socratic philosophers (6<sup>th</sup> century BC)

⊕ Thales of Miletus

⊕ Anaximander

⊕ Xenophanes of Colophon

⊕ Pythagoras

⊕ Heraclitus

⊕ Parmenides

⊕ Zeno of Elea

⊕ Sophists

⊕ Socrates, Plato, Aristotle



## **Bust of Socrates**

Roman copy from a Greek original of the late Hellenistic era, 1<sup>st</sup> c BC



## **Bust of Plato**

mid-1<sup>st</sup> century AD copy from a 4<sup>th</sup> century BC original statue by Silanion (Vatican Museums, Rome)

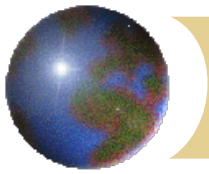


## **Bust of Aristotle**

Roman copy after a Greek  
bronze original by Lysippos from  
330 BC



**"The School of Athens: by Raphael, 1510-11**



# *Classical Drama*

## ⊕ Tragedy

⊕ Emerged in Athens in the late 6<sup>th</sup> century BC

⊕ As a part of religious festival Dionysia

- Dionysus is the god of wine and ecstasy
- Known as Bacchus among the Romans

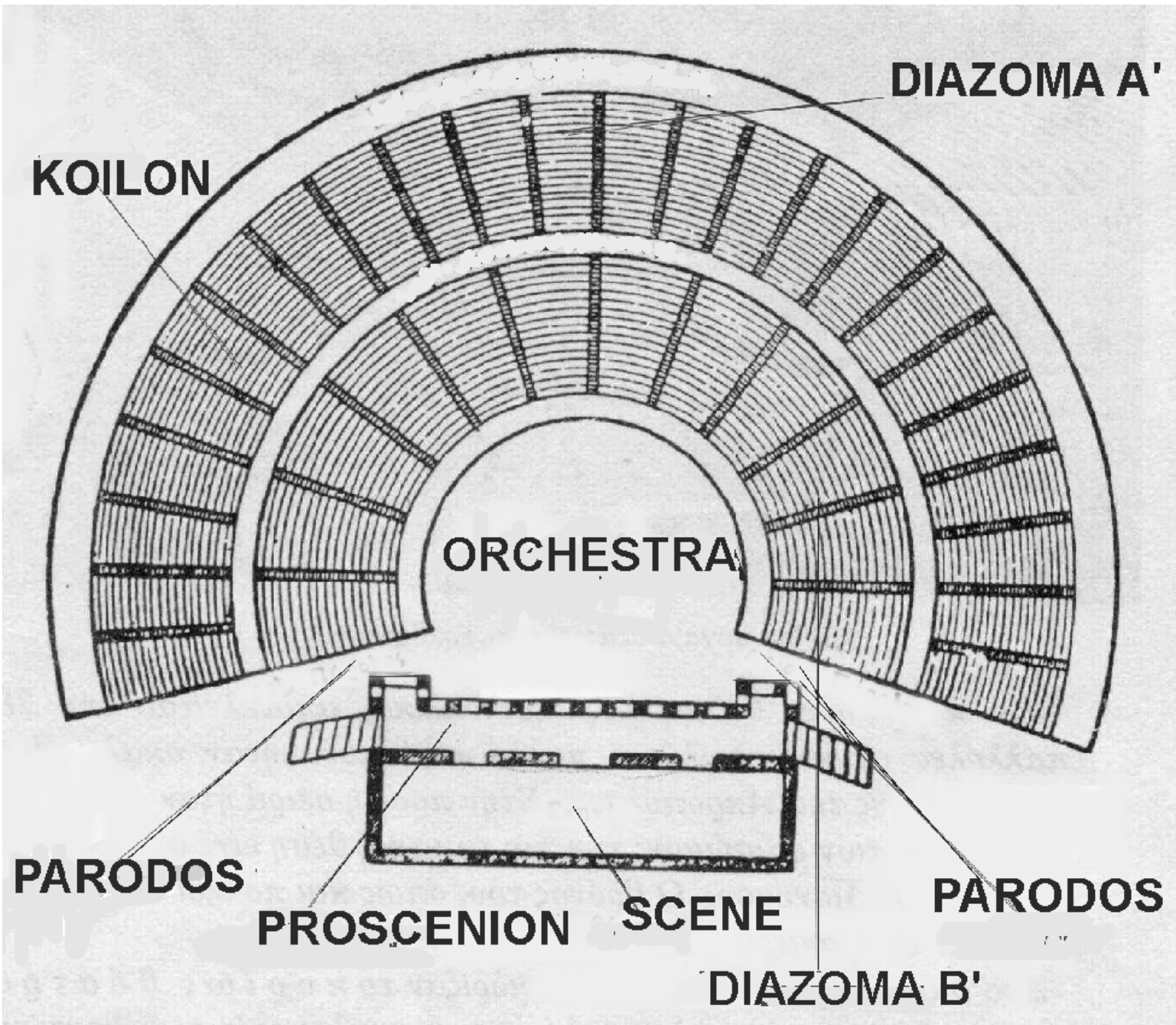
## ⊕ Comedy

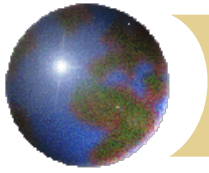
⊕ Developed later in association with the “satyr play”

⊕ Usually based on mythological subjects

# *Greek Theatre*

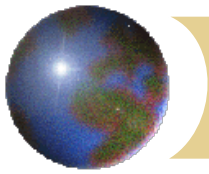
- ✚ **Koilon or Theatron:** the seats for the audience were arranged like a horseshoe in rising tiers.
- ✚ **Orchestra:** circular area at ground level.
- ✚ **Thymele:** an altar in the center of the orchestra to Dionysus on which sacrifices were made.
- ✚ **Scene or Skene:** the scene building on the side of the orchestra that had a backdrop with doors for entrances and exits.
- ✚ **Proscenion or Proscenium:** the level area in front of the skene for action of the play.
- ✚ **Diazoma:** the passages dividing the seating tiers





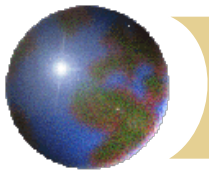
# *Greek Tragedy: Structure*

- 1. Prologue:** An expository (rather than dramatic) introduction section that gives the background to the play
- 2. Parados:** Chorus enters, chanting an ode that gives more background to the story.
- 3. Episodes and Stasimon:** Action is contained in the 5 episodes. The choral odes are called stasima.
- 4. Exodus:** The concluding scene. It includes the deus ex machina, in which a god is brought in to intervene in the action.



# *The Tragedians*

- ✚ Three great tragedians: Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides
- ✚ At the beginning, only one actor in a tragedy who interacted with the Chorus
- ✚ Aeschylus
  - ▣ Introduced the second actor and thus brought variety into drama (says Aristotle in Poetics)
  - ▣ Chorus has less importance
  - ▣ Made costumes more elaborate
- ✚ Sophocles introduced the third actor
  - ▣ No more than three actors were there in Greek tragedy

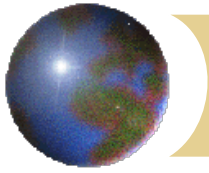


# *Aeschylus*

- ⊕ Father of tragedy
- ⊕ In the competitions held at the festival of Dionysia, Aeschylus always won the first prize
- ⊕ Believed to have written 70 to 90 plays; only a few have survived
- ⊕ His plays had a strong moral and religious basis
- ⊕ Most famous work is the trilogy *The Oresteia*
- ⊕ Another important play *The Persians*
- ⊕ *Prometheus Bound* attributed to him



**"Orestes at Delphi" circa 345 BC, British Museum, London**



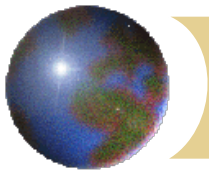
# The Oresteia

 A trilogy

 Agamemnon

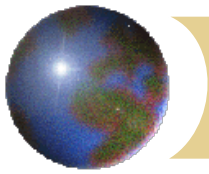
 The Libation Bearers

 The Eumenides



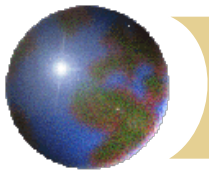
# The Oresteia

- ✚ Story of the Greek hero Agamemnon, who is killed by his wife Clytemnestra and her lover Aegisthus
- ✚ Clytemnestra is the twin sister of Helen of Troy
- ✚ Helen and Clytemnestra were born of the “double egg” laid by Leda, the swan, who was raped by Zeus
- ✚ Agamemnon’s children Orestes and Electra take revenge upon her
- ✚ Orestes kills Clytemnestra, his mother
- ✚ Orestes is haunted by the Eumenides, as a punishment for committing matricide



# *Sophocles*

- ✚ Also won prizes in dramatic competitions
- ✚ Believed to have written over a hundred plays; most of them lost.
- ✚ Initially imitated Aeschylus, but later developed a style of his own.
- ✚ Characters are more developed and individualistic than those of Aeschylus
- ✚ Theban Trilogy: Oedipus Rex (Oedipus the King), Oedipus at Colonus and Antigone

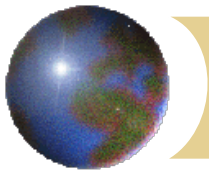


## *Oedipus Tyrannus* (in Latin, *Oedipus Rex*)

- ✚ When Oedipus is born to Laius and Jocasta, the King and Queen of Thebes, the Delphic Oracle prophesizes that he will kill his father and marry his mother
- ✚ Oedipus's parents sent the child to be killed, but he is brought up by a childless couple
- ✚ Oedipus eventually comes to know of the prophecy
- ✚ One day, he quarrels with a man and kills him, without knowing that he is his father, Laius
- ✚ By solving the riddle of the sphinx, Oedipus becomes the King of Thebes, marries the widowed queen, Jocasta, and has children by her
- ✚ When the truth is revealed by another prophecy, Jocasta kills herself and Oedipus blinds himself

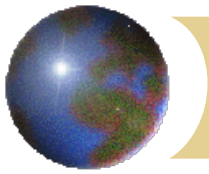


**Charles François Jalabert, Antigone Leads Oedipus Out of Thebes (1849)**



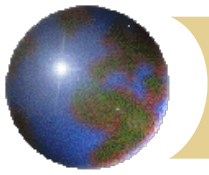
# *Oedipus Rex* on YouTube

- ✚ Search for “Sophocles Oedipus Rex 1957” for a dramatic performance of the play filmed by the famed British actor/director Sir Tyrone Guthrie
- ✚ Find a complete movie at “COMPLETE RARE FILM of Oedipus the King”
- ✚ And “Oedipus Rex - The Short Version! (Animated)” is an interesting introduction.



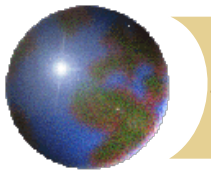
# *Antigone*

- ✚ Antigone is the story of Oedipus and Jocasta's daughter
- ✚ She has a tough decision to make – to let her brother's body remain unburied outside the city walls, exposed to the wild animals, or to bury him and face death
- ✚ She chooses to bury him and then commits suicide



# *Euripides*

- ✚ Author of over ninety plays
- ✚ Took the major step of depicting mythical heroes as ordinary people with inner lives and motives
- ✚ In his intellectual daring, Euripides is often compared to Socrates. (Neither of them cared much for accepted conventions and advocated unconventional and new ideas)
- ✚ Comic poets like Aristophanes lampooned Euripides as well as Socrates in their plays.
- ✚ Euripides's most famous play is *Medea*

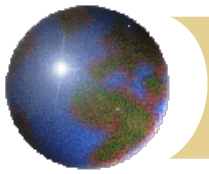


# *Medea*

- ✚ The story of Medea's revenge on her husband Jason who has left her for another woman
- ✚ Medea kills her husband's bride as well as her father
- ✚ To torment Jason further she kills her own sons



**"Medea" (1862)**  
**by Eugène Delacroix**  
**at Musée des Beaux-Arts**



# *Aristophanes*

- ✚ 5<sup>th</sup> century BC

- ✚ Stalwart of comedy, which came to be known as Old Comedy, in contrast with the New Comedy of Menander

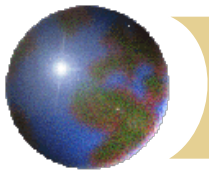
- ✚ The Clouds

  - ✚ Cruelly caricatured Socrates, which led to the philosopher's trial and death according to Plato

- ✚ The Frogs

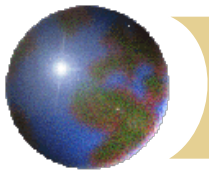
  - ✚ Here, Dionysus himself, dressed in an absurd fashion, goes to Hades to bring back Euripides from death

  - ✚ There is a famous scene in the play between Aeschylus and Euripides, regarding who is the better poet.



# *Menander*

- ⊕ 4<sup>th</sup> century BC
- ⊕ Associated with New Comedy
- ⊕ more generalized situations and stock characters
  - ⊕ In contrast to Old Comedy of Aristophanes, which satirized real individuals and local issues
- ⊕ Menander's New Comedy eventually led to the development of Comedy of Manners



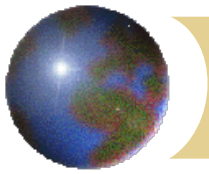
# *Pindar*

- ⊕ 5<sup>th</sup> cent BC poet, at the beginning of the Classical Period
- ⊕ Odes
  - ⊕ Encomiastic
  - ⊕ Accompanied by music and dance
  - ⊕ Bold and formal language
  - ⊕ Three types of stanzas in each ode, based on choral dance positions: strophe, anti-strophe and epode
- ⊕ A major group of Pindar's odes are the "Victory Odes"
  - ⊕ Celebrate the achievements of participants in competitions such as the Olympic Games
- ⊕ A variation of the Pindaric Ode, called Irregular Ode, was developed by Abraham Cowley



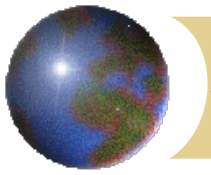
**Bust of Pindar**

**Roman copy after a Greek  
original of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC**



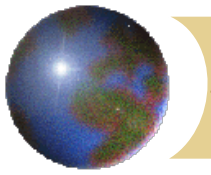
# *Plato (c. 428 BC-c. 348 BC)*

- ✚ Born of an aristocratic family in the island of Aegina near Athens in 428 BC
- ✚ Real name was Aristocles, which means “broad-shouldered”
- ✚ Received excellent education, which aroused in him a respect for tradition and a keen political sensibility
- ✚ By the age of 20, like all young men of Athens, Plato came under the influence of Socrates



# *Initiation to Philosophy*

- ✚ The Peloponnesian War ended and the oligarchic rule of the Thirty Tyrants began
- ✚ Socrates was critical of Athenian politics; refused to be involved in the corrupt politics
- ✚ Young Plato's political ambitions were thwarted
  - ✚ by the influence of Socrates and
  - ✚ by the bitter experience of the Thirty Tyrants' rule
- ✚ Plato now turned completely to philosophy
- ✚ Time of moral and political degeneracy
- ✚ Poetry was "mis"used by lesser poets and painters
- ✚ Decline in national character and standards of public life
- ✚ Plato spoke in a highly rational tone, like a social reformer

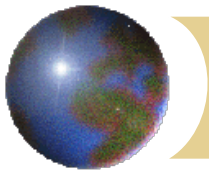


## *The Academy*

- ✚ After the death of Socrates in 399 BC, Plato left Athens and travelled to Italy, Sicily and Egypt
- ✚ Later, he returned to Athens
- ✚ In 387 B.C. Plato, along with the mathematician Thaetetus, founded the philosophical school, the Academy
- ✚ The Academy became very famous due to the Neoplatonists, and functioned until A.D. 526, when it was closed down by emperor Justinian for its pagan orientations
- ✚ At Plato's Academy, subjects like mathematics, philosophy, astronomy, biology and political theory were taught
- ✚ At the gate of the academy was written: "Let no one without mathematics (geometry) enter."
- ✚ Aristotle was a student at the Academy, and later teacher

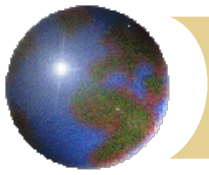


**"Plato's Academy", Roman mosaic of the 1st century BC**



# *The Dialogues*

- ✚ Much of Plato's philosophy is in the form of dialogues, usually between Socrates and someone else
  - ✚ Called Socratic Dialogues
  - ✚ Deal with some moral or philosophical problem
- ✚ 36 Dialogues, including
  - ✚ Republic, Protagoras, Apology, Gorgias, Ion, Phaedrus
- ✚ Republic is a vindication of the idea that good life is possible only in an ideal state. And the aim of a good life is justice.
- ✚ Never wrote a single work on poetry. His ideas on poetry have to be extracted from various Dialogues

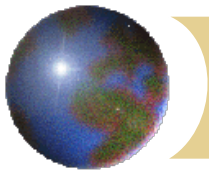


# *Aristotle (384 BC-322 BC)*

- ✚ Aristotle was born of a well-to-do family in the Macedonian town of Stagira in 384 BC
- ✚ His father, Nicomachus, was a physician
- ✚ In 367, when Aristotle was seventeen, his uncle sent him to Athens to study at Plato's Academy
  - ✚ Spent 20 years there, as a pupil and as teacher
- ✚ After Plato's death in c. 348, the Academy was headed by his nephew Speusippus, who often diverged from Plato's teachings
- ✚ This was also the time when the Athenians looked upon the Macedonians with resentment, as foreign invaders
- ✚ Due to all these reasons, Aristotle left the Academy

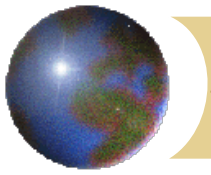


**"Aristotle", from a wall painting in Rome**



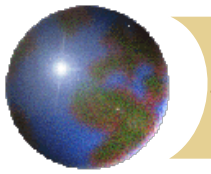
## *Life away from Athens*

- ✚ Joined the philosophical circle of Hermeias in Assos, in Asia Minor, where Hermeias was the tyrant
- ✚ Aristotle married Hermeias's niece, Pythias, with whom he had a daughter, also named Pythias
- ✚ When Hermeias was killed by the Persians, Aristotle moved to the island of Lesbos in the eastern Aegean
- ✚ Joined another former Academic, Theophrastus in biological studies
- ✚ Theophrastus remained associated with him until Aristotle's death
- ✚ Philip of Macedon invited Aristotle to serve as tutor to his thirteen-year-old son Alexander.



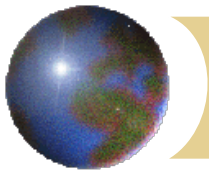
## *Lyceum and After*

- ✦ Back in Athens, founded his own school, Lyceum
- ✦ Spent 12-13 prodigious years at Lyceum
- ✦ Most of his great works written during this period
- ✦ Under his direction, his students and associates carried out research on philosophical and scientific topics
- ✦ After the death of Pythias, Aristotle developed an attachment to Herpyllis, with whom he had a son, Nichomachus
- ✦ In 323 BC, Alexander died
- ✦ Aristotle once again left Athens and took refuge in his mother's birthplace, Chalcis
- ✦ He died in 322 at the age of sixty-two



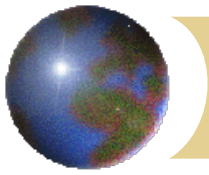
# *Aristotle's Works*

- ✚ Almost all of Aristotle's work was lost to the West after the fall of the Roman Empire in the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD
- ✚ What the Westerners know of Aristotle today was left to them by Arab philosophers such as Averroes in the twelfth century
- ✚ The works known in Aristotle's own lifetime were some 27 dialogues modelled on those of Plato, but these are now lost
- ✚ Surviving works include Poetics, Rhetoric and Nichomachean Ethics
- ✚ Poetics
  - ▣ Written for serious students in the manner of notes for lectures
  - ▣ First edited by Andronicus in the first century BC



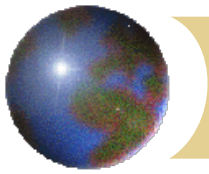
# *Hellenistic Period*

- ✚ The period is from the time of Alexander the Great
  - ✚ Alexander died in 323 BC
  - ✚ Alexander's successors established Greek cities and kingdoms in Asia and Africa
- ✚ Upto the Roman annexation of Greece in 146 BC (2<sup>nd</sup> cent.)
  - ✚ After this, "Roman period" in Greece
- ✚ Conquests of Alexander the Great during this period spanned the Persian Empire and reached as far as India
- ✚ Greek culture and thought spread outside the nation into the other regions of the Mediterranean
- ✚ Rise of Roman Empire during this period
  - ✚ Rise of Roman Classicism



## *Early Roman History*

- ✚ In Rome, monarchy was overthrown and replaced by the republic in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BC
  - ✚ Republic is the rule by elected representatives
- ✚ 1<sup>st</sup> cent. BC: Transitional period, Republic was transforming into an Empire
- ✚ Caesar, Pompey and Crassus formed First Triumvirate
- ✚ Julius Caesar rose to being dictator (equivalent of emperor)
- ✚ On the Ides of March, that means the 15<sup>th</sup> of March, 44 BC, Julius Caesar was assassinated by the republicans (people who supported the republic against the empire)
- ✚ Civil War broke out between republicans and Caesar's supporters



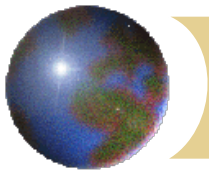
# *The Roman Empire*

- ✚ In the Civil War, republicans were defeated
- ✚ Antony, Octavian and Lepidus formed the Second Triumvirate
- ✚ Another Civil War broke out between Octavian and the combined forces of Mark Antony and his beloved, Cleopatra of Egypt
  - ✚ This was the Battle of Actium of 31 BC, the final war of the Roman Republic
  - ✚ Antony and Cleopatra died
- ✚ Octavius Caesar won and became the first emperor of Rome. And he took the title Augustus Caesar



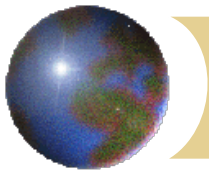
## **Augustus Caesar**

Marble statue discovered  
at Prima Porta, near Rome



# *Augustus Caesar (63 BC-AD 14)*

- ✚ The first Emperor of Rome
- ✚ Defeated Mark Antony and boasted on his deathbed that he turned Rome from clay to marble
- ✚ Height of Roman empire's wealth & political security
- ✚ His greatest achievement was Pax Romana, or Roman Peace
- ✚ Patron of arts and letters
- ✚ Classical poets Virgil, Horace, Ovid lived during his reign



# *Roman Classicism*

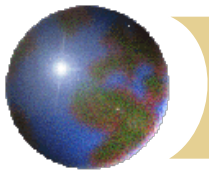
- ✚ In the classical period, Romans were profoundly influenced by Greek philosophy, culture and literature
- ✚ Stoic philosophy
  - ✚ Stoicism reached Rome in the Hellenistic period
  - ✚ Duty, discipline, political involvement
  - ✚ Roman advocates: Virgil, Horace, Seneca
- ✚ Epicureanism
  - ✚ Pleasures of everyday life
  - ✚ As in the expression "Carpe Diem"
  - ✚ Roman Epicureans: Lucretius, Catullus, Virgil, Horace
- ✚ Skepticism
  - ✚ Loss of belief in higher values
  - ✚ Beauty is fleeting
- ✚ Roman Classicism influenced European Renaissance



**Ancient Roman theatre in Cordoba,  
built during the reign of Augustus Caesar**

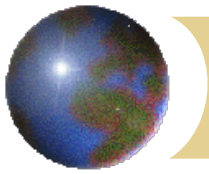
**Colosseum, originally Flavian amphitheatre, built after the time of Augustus Caesar, in AD 70-80**





## *Virgil (70 BC-19 BC)*

- ✚ Pastoral poetry: Eclogues (or Bucolics) & Georgics
- ✚ The Aeneid
  - ▣ Epic modelled after Homer's Iliad and Odyssey
  - ▣ Follows the Trojan refugee Aeneas as he struggles to fulfill his destiny and arrive on the shores of Italy, thus founding the city of Rome
  - ▣ Makes use of the symbolism of the Augustan regime
  - ▣ Strong associations between Augustus and Aeneas, the one as founder and the other as re-founder of Rome
- ✚ Virgil's work had profound influence on Western literature
  - ▣ In Dante's Divine Comedy, Virgil appears as Dante's guide through hell and purgatory



## *Horace (65-08 BC)*

✚ Roman classicist who lived in the first century BC

✚ Odes

▣ Homostrophic (same stanza throughout the ode)

▣ Calm, meditative, colloquial

✚ Satires

▣ Speaker is an urbane, witty, tolerant man of the world

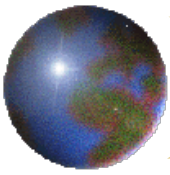
▣ Moved to wry amusement than moral indignation

▣ Aimed "to laugh people out of their follies"

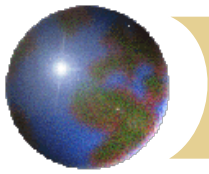
▣ Uses a relaxed, informal language

✚ Epistles (Letters)

▣ Ars Poetica (Epistle to Piso)



**Horace, Virgil and Varius at the House of Maecenas.**  
**Oil painting by 19<sup>th</sup> century French artist Charles François Jalabert**



# *Ovid (43 BC-c. AD 17)*

- ✚ Witty, sophisticated love poems

- ✚ Ars Amatoria (The Art of Love)

  - ☒ Scientific, didactic work on how to find and keep a lover

  - ☒ Humorous satirical style

- ✚ Metamorphoses

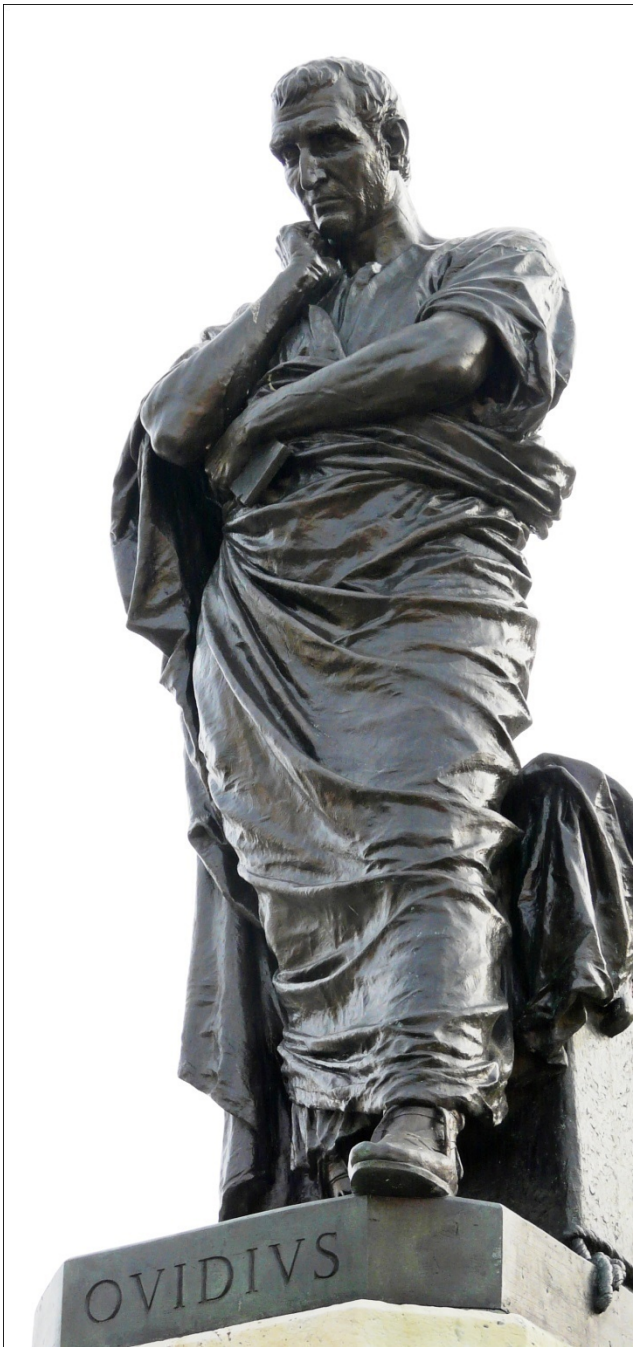
  - ☒ Narrative poem beginning with the creation of the world and ending in Ovid's time

  - ☒ Adventures and love affairs of deities, heroes

  - ☒ Over 200 tales taken from Greek and Roman mythology

  - ☒ The greatest source of mythology for Renaissance writers

- ✚ Augustus Caesar banished Ovid to an isolated island and he died in exile



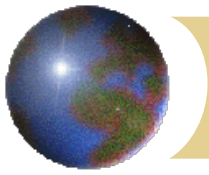
**Statue of Roman poet Ovid  
in Rome**

# *Seneca the Younger (c. 4 BC-AD 65)*

- ✚ Roman statesman, dramatist, poet and Stoic philosopher
- ✚ Emperor Nero's teacher and confidant
  - ✚ It is legendary that Nero played the fiddle while Rome burnt
- ✚ Seneca committed forced suicide at Nero's orders
- ✚ Upheld the principles of Stoicism, Cynicism & Epicureanism
- ✚ Tragedies of Blood
  - ✚ Intense, violent melodramas in rhetorical language
  - ✚ Famous: Thyestes (the story of the rivalry between twin brothers, Atreus and Thyestes, over the throne of Mycenae; Atreus kills Thyestes's two sons and tricks him into eating their bodies)
- ✚ Also wrote philosophical essays, letters, a satire
- ✚ Senecan revenge tragedies rediscovered by Italian humanists in the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century; became the models for tragedy on the Renaissance stage

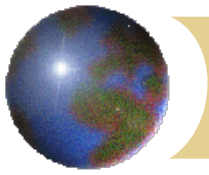


**A sculpture of Seneca  
the Younger in Spain**



## *Plautus* (c. 254 BC-184 BC)

- ✚ Wrote comedies that are versions of Greek New Comedy
- ✚ Stock characters: young men in love with slave girls, mistaken identities, cunning servants, deceived masters
- ✚ Amphitryon
  - ▣ Mythological story of Jupiter fathering Hercules
- ✚ Menaechmi
  - ▣ Two long separated brothers find each other after great confusion
- ✚ Rediscovered in the Renaissance, Plautine plots furnished the basis for hundreds of comedies in every European language
  - ▣ English Restoration Comedy is Plautine in form and spirit



## *Terence* (c. 195 BC-159 BC)

- ✚ Younger contemporary of Plautus, who wrote comedies that are the earliest intact works of Roman literature
- ✚ Slave who was later freed
- ✚ More refined style of expression
- ✚ Plays are Latin versions of Greek plots
- ✚ All his 6 comedies have survived
- ✚ Most famous play: *The Eunuchs*