Ancient Philosophy

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Missed first session…

15 February

Introduction (continued)

- Discussion of *Theoria* (Aristotle):
  - ⇨ Discovery of logos & theoria ➔ foundation of new cities.
  - ⇨ ° need of constitutions (reflection on political systems).
    - ➢ E.g.: if a city founds a new one, it's common sense they copy the same legislations BUT they will reflect upon it ➔ ° logos.
- The state itself is an organisation of social structures:
  - ⇨ Nomos (law) [= positive, manmade] vs. physis (nature).
  - ⇨ Question of the 5th century BC: is it manmade or is it just nature?
  - ⇨ Based on logos: thought can be the base of structures.
- 6th century BC: ° sophoi (= wise persons) – people, 'experts' who could explain everything.
  - ⇨ Long-time referring to 7 wise men e.g. *why doesn't my olive grow fruit?*
    - ➢ First philosophers, because they apply 'logos' in their explanation of nature.
  - ⇨ Typical for this period: explanation is based on **one archè** (= base principle), which is always conceived as material.
    - ➢ E.g.: Thales ➔ everything is water.

      ⇔ Aristotle: if everything is water, this is not sufficient to explain everything. How could we explain that water turns into rock? We need a principal of modification.

      e.g.: Anaximander: *apeiron* = undetermined principal.
- Text: style changed ⇔ Hesiodos namely:
  - ⇨ Nature developing itself; no reference is to external forces (Gods) needed.
  - ⇨ Although the worldview (representations of how the World looks like) stays the same.
    - ➢ Strange: the explanation towards the end is brought closer to everyday experience.

Heracleitos & Parmenides[1]

I. Heracleitos

- Lived in a time with a lot of tension between the Greeks & the Persians.
  - ⇨ He's called 'the dark one'.
  - ⇨ Perceived as an oracle leaving you with riddles.
  - ⇨ Very austere & hostile towards common people.
- Text Sextus:
  - ⇨ First sentence: no modesty!
  - ⇨ What Heracleitos means with logos isn't something abstract.
  - ⇨ Before Plato there isn't anything immaterial.
  - ⇨ So what Heraclitus means with 'logos' is very hard to grasp, but it has to be something **material**!
- We take a step back:
  - ⇨ Logos = correspondence of the structure of the world (= reality) & the structure of our mind.
    - ➢ E.g.: Heracleitos: "because we have fire on our mind, we can understand fire in the world."
- Fragment 50: **All things are one**.
  - ⇨ Material monist (one archè, but more complex than the 7 sophoi).
  - ⇨ Main claim, other fragments will 'explain' it.

(1) Panta rhei: everything is in a **constant flux** ➔ mobilism (model of the universe = change).

(2) Unity / **harmony of opposites**:

- ⇨ 'harmonia' = carpenter's term; namely making a solid joint.
- ⇨ Two meanings:
  a. Bringing things together that naturally fit e.g. gluing wood to wood.
  b. Forcing things together that are not a natural match (= Heracleitos' meaning).
    - ➢ Forced together by logos so that it generates tension between different things which are trying to destroy one another.
- ⇨ The harmony can only exist by the forces which are forced to an equilibrium that can always shift. (cp.: psychoanalysis: we are an equilibrium of different forces…)
- ⇨ The bow & the string.

[1] Parmenides will dominate ancient philosophy from 6th century BC till 6th century AD.

- Fragment 13: bringing together of opposites can be done in a relative account!
  - ⇨ E.g.: warm glass of water for a sick person can be cool.[2]
  - ⇨ Depends on angle e.g. my writing is crooked, but on a right line.
    - ➢ Writing can be described in opposite terms.
- Fragment 111: existence of difference between 2 states, makes our choice worthy en the other to be avoided.
  - ⇨ E.g.: you can't have the valley if you don't have the mountain (or no day without night).
- Fragment 60: no longer on a relativistic account, but just about the identity of opposites in the same time to the same aspect of the same thing.
- 5 stages from a relativistic account towards identical relation = Van Riels interpretation.
- Beauty of the cosmos (= well-ordered jewel).
  = sum of forces that are hostile to each other, but in the end brought to identity.
  - ⇨ *Polemos pantõn pater*: War is the Father of Everything; harmony in the sense everything fights everything.

(3) **Fire** is the principle of everything.

- ⇨ Knowing we need a material principle, we look for the best candidate, i.e. fire:
  - ➢ Paradigm of change.
  - ➢ Contrary forces: giving & taking life.

💣 Problem: contradiction?! Permanent flux vs. everything is fire…

- ⇨ Mobilism presupposes a vast, steady universe… (?!)

II. <u>Parmenides from Elea</u>

- Some bibliographical notes:
  - ⇨ Didn't know Heracleitos: contacts weren't common in the Ancient World.
  - ⇨ South of Italy = 'Far West': place where everything goes.
  - ⇨ Enormous emphasis on *being* (participle of to be, but it is verbal, not a noun!)
  - ⇨ Omnipresent in Ancient Philosophy !!
- 115 verses of his poem remained (we believe we have the main part)
  - ⇨ 5th century AD (Simplicius).
  - ⇨ 2 parts in this poem:
    (1) The way of Truth (there is no change/mobility, only permanence).
    (2) The way of Seeming ➔ *why?* (some kind of cosmology).

[2] You can only understand illness by comparing it to health.

- Strange! Compare it with at first giving an explanation why ghosts doesn't exist, and then telling a ghost story…

💣 Mythologizing account, whereas philosophers just got rid of the 'mythological weight'.

⇨ Some kind of pleasant presentation of his thoughts? Mythical experience?

- Story of Parmenides: revelation (darkness ➔ light) where the Goddess will tell the way of Truth.
  - ⇨ You will have to choose between:
    - That which is.
    - That which is not. (this option = a deadlock)
  - ⇨ This means it will stay impossible to talk about something that is not, because we've chosen the other option…

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- Parmenides: it is or it is not.
  - ⇨ In a sense that we are discussing that which is, is no far that it is ➔ **qua being**.
  - ⇨ We <u>don't have an abstract notion of being</u> ➔ period without ontology.
- Fragment 6: there's a 3th way: way of the 2 headed namely combining which is and which is not. According to Parmenides this is unconceivable!
  - ⇨ Example: where does eggs come from?
    - The chicken ➔ is the chicken the egg, because the egg is going to be a chicken?
    - Two-headed people would say the egg and the chicken are the same thing, but this isn't what Parmenides thinks: it is or it is not.
- Second principle: don't trust your senses, what you see.
  - ⇨ Philosopher knows for the first time in history that he can't trust the senses.
  - ⇨ Illustration (fragment 7): you must follow your reason!
  - ⇨ The egg is and the chicken is ➔ **qua being**, all things are identical.
    - E.g.: qua being also the chicken and a human are identical.

💣 Qua being: all things coincide.

- Everything is one, in the sense that it is every time identical, namely an eternal, universal, non-changeable being ➔ through reason we acquire this principal.
- Parmenides presents **5 deductions** from his main premise: if it is, what can we conclude?[3]
  1. If that which is, is, it **can't perish** and it **can't come to be**; for if it were coming to be, where should it come from?

[3] Eon = participle of to be = 'being' according to Parmenides namely a thing that is. Comprehending this concept as 'being' itself, something natural ➔ this is what Heidegger will say, it isn't a Platonic abstract thought.

- E.g.: child being born: being 'A' produces being 'B'…
- A is qua being the same as B; in the sensible world it just seems like A produces B.
- Change is something we have to leave out.

2. The being of that-which-is must be **one principle**, there are no differences qua being.
   - One thing is and another thing is also.
3. That-which-is must be **motionless**: there are no transitions and it must be limited.
   - If it were to be unlimited: it boundaries would expand.
4. Perfection/completion: specifically Greek conception namely **perfection** that goes together with **limitation**.
   - If you have something that is perfect, it has to be limited.
   - E.g.: mission of an army is perfect, if they've conquered the whole hostile nation.
   - Presupposes the existence of boundaries.
   - Advancing towards the limits is advancing towards perfection
   - E.g.: happiness = accepting boundaries + fulfilling this pre-limited boundaries.

- Compare with Heidegger: a pot is a pot and can contain something thanks to its shape.
  ⇨ Sein-Zum-Tode: allows us to fill our life up.
- 'The same thing can be told as can be':
  ⇨ If you grasp something by thoughts, it is.
  ⇨ You can only think about things that are (≠ idealism).[4]

5. If all of this is as we described, being must be **spherical**.
   - Being is here determined as surrounded by non-being, which becomes very problematic…

- Aristotle (De Caelo) = critic on Parmenides.[5]
  ⇨ Parmenides only conceived of the world as substantially perceptible, although we can't trust the senses ➔ his view stays material!
  ⇨ Parmenides saw something that could work, but he failed as he hasn't got an abstract conceptualisation.
  ⇨ Parmenides denies physics: what he does is something prior to nature, i.e. metaphysics.
  - Under disguise of physics ➔ he destroys physics! (principal = change, Aristotle)

  ⇨ If Parmenides would have done metaphysics, he would be right, but the 5th point show he stays in a material conception…

[4] Although Hegel will claim Parmenides already saw his (Hegel's) idealistic thoughts.
[5] Note: Melissus = the teacher of Parmenides (of whom we know even less).

⇨ 2 main problems:

(1) Physics vs. metaphysics.

(2) Categorical mistake: no immaterial conceptualisation.

- After his theory of Truth with the Goddess, Parmenides starts developing a cosmology as a mixture of light and darkness (+ light vs. heavy).
  - ⇨ Basic cosmology in those times.
  - ⇨ No idea why he proposes his theory on this subject though…
- How can later generations come out of this block?
  - ⇨ Throw the theory away? IMPOSSIBLE!
  - ⇨ They'll have to deal with the question '*Is it trustworthy?'*

(1) Everything they've said is true, but maybe being isn't 1 thing.

- ➢ Pluralism (cp.: the sphere exploded) = material universe with multiple principles.

(2) Plato & Aristotle: rupture/gap between being & non-being needs to be nuanced.

- ➢ Plato: *otherness* namely relative being.
- ➢ Aristotle: needs an account to explain change: *potentiality* (= not yet being).

Pluralists

- Main element of Parmenides' weight stays the same:
  1. Being cannot be produced by non-being.
  2. There is no possibility of having empty space (within the universe).
  3. Unity cannot bring forth plurality. ➔ **mainly this point is at stake**
  4. Motion cannot just be taken for granted.

  = presuppositions imposed on tradition by Parmenides

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- The weight of Parmenides:
  1. No coming to be.
  2. No void.
  3. No transition from unity to plurality.
  4. Motion needs to be explained?! It's the exception.
  - ⇨ Next generation will take this for granted, but will start with **plurality** instead of unity.

💣 Figure of speech: Parmenides is like a bomb that explodes; the pluralists are the scars of this bombshell.

Pluralists (continued)

Empedocles (Sicilian) & Anaxagores (West Coast of present Turkey): both lived on a different edge of Greece, so we suppose they didn't know each other.

I. Empedocles

- Bibliographical notes:
  - ⇨ Mysterious dead: he jumped in the Etna.
  - ⇨ Surrounded by mystical tales.
  - ⇨ Wrote 2 titles: On Nature & Purifications (it seems this would be a chapter of On Nature).
  - ⇨ 1999 Museum of Strasbourg: they found a mummy in the basement and its dead mask consisted of verses by Empedocles (dead mask was made by papyrus, covered with gold).
    - ➢ Spectacular finding! 'Empédocle de Strasbourg'
- First work = philosophical clarification (= rational!), while 'Purifications' is more mystical about the first great error of mankind, i.e. eating meat.
  - ⇨ Watch out with these classifications of texts, it may just confirm your presuppositions.
- Still a mixture of mythical suppositions, that underline a rational cosmology.

(1) There is no coming to be and no perishing (fr. 11, cf. Parmenides).

(2) No void: fragment 13 (cp.: Parmenides' sphere):

- ⇨ Fragment 3: reaction against Parmenides: we must trust our senses!
  - ➢ Not one sense over all others.
  - ➢ Do not follow only the way of knowledge like Parmenides proposed.
  - ➢ Some kind of graduation between senses (fr. 101a).
- We see death & birth: anticipating of primary elements, i.e. irreducible to one another.
  - ⇨ A limited set of elements that explain what's going on.
  - ⇨ Senses teach us there's perishing & coming to be; this can be explained by combination and anticipation of atomic, indestructible elements: earth, fire, water & air.
    - ➢ Cp.: limited set of colours from a painter.

💣 Elements (> Greek: stoicheia) which meant letters from the alphabet.

- Empedocles refers to 4 Gods for his elements… (fr. 6)
  - ⇨ Still mythical description.
  - ⇨ Reference to divine appearance in nature, but not in the sense they're external forces. The gods are nature.
  - ⇨ These principals are **material**!! (pre-Socratic)

- For Empedocles e.g. water is indivisible (not 1 H and 2 O): water in a bucket is the same as in a cup or in a spoon; the proper characteristic stays the same.
  - ⇨ Our chemistry would be different, but not totally, because if you compare the 4 elements of Empedocles with the table of Mendeljev; you'll see it's the same basic notion.
    ⇔ Aristotle will account for a principle of modification e.g. water when heated becomes air, but the underlying matter stays the same.
- Nothing in the universe is empty:
  - ⇨ Everything is filled with 4 elements.
  - ⇨ Empedocles: transition between edges of my body and the outside = 4 elements.
    - ➢ E.g.: the air around me is not only air; it's full of 4 elements but within proportion.
- Matrix:

	Dry	Wet
Cold	Earth	Water
Hot	Fire	Air

  - ⇨ Some kind of 'atomism' (> Greek: *atomos* = indivisible) namely **qualitative** (= what really matters, allow for existence of the elements), but also **quantitative** (proportion).
  - ⇨ 4 elements are chosen by luck (Van Riels opinion), but in later generations no one could give a better account for elements although some desperately tried to find a 5th element.
- 'like knows like' cf. fragment 109 ➔ element of fire in our eyes gives us perception of fire.
- How did the 4 elements come together? The plurality of the 4 elements is in motion!
  - ⇨ First time in history a philosopher accounts for **change**.
- 2 principles of change:
  (1) Love (*philia*) – Power of Attraction (Aphrodite).
  (2) Strife (*neikos*, hatred) – God of hatred.
  - ⇨ Opposition between these Gods will form the universe.
  - ⇨ 2 divinities alternate: (= cyclical process!)
    - ➢ Love dominating = one enormous spherical mixture of elements.
    - ➢ Hatred dominating = layers in which every element occupies a separate place.
- What Empedocles says: one world is in a process towards separation/dissipation.
  ⇔ Aristotle: Love & Strife have to be material, so why are they separate from the 4 main elements?
- Annoying: why does Empedocles need 2 principles of change?
  - ⇨ Absence of Love might as well explain the falling apart of things?

- ⇨ 2 opposing principles produce the same result (coming together/separation of elements).
- ⇨ Feeling: principle explains too much.
- ⇨ 3th objection of Aristotle: Strive produces coming together as all earth goes to a layer of earth… just like Love results in dissipation: everything becomes a chaotic mixture.

II. Anaxagoras

- Bibliographical notes:
  - ⇨ Accused of impiety and then left Athens (he said that the celestial bodies are nothing but some burning stones…)
  - ⇨ Remained in the East, didn't know Empedocles.
- Similar ideas as Empedocles about the senses:
  - ⇨ You need to take senses seriously: you must look through them and understand correctly what they teach you.
- What are the elements?
  - ⇨ Can't accept reduction to only 4 elements.
  - ⇨ Everything in the whole universe is due to its own principle: everything is in everything.
  - ⇨ '**spermata**': little 'seeds' that are in everything!
  - ⇨ Anaxagoras as a **non-reductionist**.

25 February

- What we see: first step in analysing what's there ➔ senses must be trusted, but not per se.
- Infinite multiply of anything (= elementary parts) ➔ they are irreducible!
- Aristotle says that Empedocles has to be followed (more plausible), because Anaxagoras doesn't really explain anything.
  - ⇨ E.g.: why is there wood? Because there is wood… (in terms of 'spermata')
  - ⇨ You're just reduplicating the problem to a world of principles from the real world.
  - ⇨ Cf. Paradox of Zeno: however small the division is, there will always be a position between being & non-being ➔ there is **no** void!
- Even though the system of seeds is less plausible than Empedocles, Anaxagoras' account for change is more plausible namely 1 motion '**Nous**' (= intellect).
  - ⇨ There's a mind that's sovereign (*autokrator*) pure & unmixed; it is in everything but doesn't mix up with the rest (some kind of asocial seed).
  - ⇨ Is the ruling force, decides what will happen.

- °some kind of dualism?? [mind: this intellect stays of material nature!]

- In the beginning: everything was everywhere.
  - ⇨ Then: the 'Nous' came and brought order.
- If you say that the first notion of change is the mind, you'll think it's some kind of predesigned universe.
  - ⇔ Anaxagoras saw it as a setting in motion of the world, that keeps turning without a goal.
- Plato's criticism (text): Anaxagoras answers questions with a biological explanation, not with real reasons etc.
  - ⇨ Talking about physiological causes, not reasons.
  - ⇨ E.g.: I kill someone because synapses in my brains send signals etc.
  - ⇨ Promising system, but in fact he isn't doing anything with 'Mind'.
- Plato's view (excursus, cf. infra): real cause = necessary condition, '*that without which a thing would not exist*'.
  - ⇨ Ultimately: the principle that governs the universe is the 'Good', instantiated by some kind of Mind.

III. Democritus

- Bibliographical notes:
  - ⇨ In fact after Socrates, but pre-socratic (thoughts has to be classified like that).
  - ⇨ We have very little, but the largest amount of texts we have is about ethics.
  - ⇨ His cosmology (~ quantitative atomism) is reason why he's well-known though.
  - ⇨ Writings of his teacher, Leucippus went lost…
  - ⇨ Both wrote a work titled '*Diakosmos*' (= World Order).
- Extremely speculative! Not at all experimental…
  - ⇨ Again trying to deal with the weight of Parmenides.
- There is a combination of elementary constituents (= small portions of matter, that are quantitative) no coming-to-be or perishing.
  - ⇨ If there are only magnitudes, there won't be any room for us ➔ Democritus will have to accept a void (an empty space).
  - ⇨ This is no cosmology as such: this is **logic**: because if you start discussing about magnitudes, they'll have to be somewhere and as a consequence there must be emptiness (space between atoms).
  - ⇨ 2nd reason why you need a void: atoms are moving.

- Definition of non-being:
  - ⇨ Fragment Simplicius shows Democritus is trying to establish a new vocabulary (e.g. *ouden* = **not**hing & *den* = atoms, 'hing')
  - ⇨ Basic distinction between being and non-being
    - ➢ Within the atoms (compact structures) there's no void.

29 February

- Distinctions between the atoms:
  - (1) Rhythm = shape ➔ in themselves, qua material, they are identical, but in shapes they differ (with different qualities).
  - (2) Order (*diathigè* = touching, contact) ➔ e.g. letters of the alphabet: AN ≠ NA.
  - (3) Position (*tropè* = turning) ➔ e.g. N ≠ Z: same lines, different position.

💣 Those 3 things are the only differences between atoms; all atoms are constituted by the same amount of 'bulk'.

- ⇨ E.g.: what makes water is not something like an elementary particle of 'water', it's just the shape, order and position of the atoms. (They could also form rock if they differ at these 3 things).

- How to explain **motion?**
  - ⇨ There is no cause for motion! Atoms are always at movement.
  - ⇨ Paradigm shift: motion becomes the model, rest is to explained; namely fragile constellation of atoms that cling together.
  - ⇨ Movement of atoms is for a reason and by <u>necessity</u>: Universe in a **whirl**.
- For the first time in history: ° discussion about the existence of plural worlds as it's very probable that there are other worlds as ours (coming together of atoms).

  ⇔ teleology can't accept this: there's only one world as everything is designed for a specific goal. (Aristotle)
- Where are the **qualities**? [hot, cold, wet, dry]
  - ⇨ Final text: '*by convention*' are e.g. hot/cold, sweet/bitter.
  - ⇨ True structure of reality ≠ what we experience (cp.: Parmenides).
  - ⇨ Qualitative apprehension is derived from the existence of atoms.
    - ➢ If we recognize things, it's because there's **contact** between our senses and atoms.
    - ➢ e.g.: eating ➔ pizza in my mouth ➔ tasting.
  - ⇨ How does this work for seeing? Very small atomic structures evaporate from the things we see, travel through the void and touch the atoms in my eyes.
    - ➢ This is called *apporhoè*: offspring / reduplication of atomic structures.

- Perception = mixture of something that was already there (e.g. in my eye) & something that comes to my senses.
  - ⇨ Therefore: there are individual differences e.g. colour (grey ⇔ blue).
  - ⇨ Cp.: in modern terms, 'by convention' becomes **subjective**.
  - ⇨ Cp.: physis vs. nomos.
    - ➢ Third element needed for contact: a **transparent** medium. (e.g. not a dark room)

IV. Pythagoras (early 5th century BC)

- Historical situation
  - ⇨ Enormous problem: vast majority of doctrines ascribed to Pythagoras are not his. It are mostly later attributions, involving later doctrines.
    - ➢ E.g.: *Timaeus Locus*, a fictive person, who's constructing a doctrine in Pythagorian tradition, but who's inspired by Plato's Timaeus (~ On Nature).
  - ⇨ 1st & 2nd century AD: a lot of people who are acting like Pythagoras (writing in ancient Dorian language) namely the so-called neo-Pythagoreans.
- Bibliographical:
  - ⇨ Emphasis on mathematics.
  - ⇨ Doctrine of the **soul** as the place of the personality.

    ⇔ in Homeric times, the soul was often compared with your final breath (it left the body), while the body remained on the battlefield.
    - ➢ Pythagoras as the first to say the soul is who you are!
    - ➢ Soul as immortal and involved in an eternal chain of reincarnation.[6]

3 March

- Conclusion Pythagoras:
  - ⇨ Principle of the soul.
  - ⇨ Mathematisiation of the world.

[6] Pythagoras believed you could reincarnate in beans, that's why it was a taboo to eat them.

Socrates

I. Prologue: The Sophists (5th century)

- The ambition to explain human behaviour (especially at the social level).
  - ⇨ ° different domains apart from explaining nature.
  - ⇨ Cf. nomos vs. physis ➔ debate about 'what is prior?'
    - ➢ Mere fact of founding a city is referring to nomos (convention prior to nature).
- Sophists = new class of 'professionals' (mind: neutral name!)
  - ⇨ Wandering around in the Greek world, asking money in exchange for education.
  - ⇨ Teaching children from the Athenic elite how to speak in front of an audience.
    - ➢ Skills of a good rhetorician, doesn't matter if you tell the truth; you must 'win' your case.
  - ⇨ Goes together with change in the Ancient World.
    - ➢ Democracy is flourishing; stand up for what you belief!
- Paradox: there are sophists who defend the position of nature…
  - ⇨ E.g. **Giorgias**: 'Word is Power' ➔ in speech you can manipulate people.
    - ➢ 'On Nature' = non-being, as playing an adversary for the Parmenidian Tradition.
    - ➢ Seems to be a play, in which he shows his skills for arguing. = ratio vs. *oratio*.
- 430: Athenians are defeated by the Spartans…
  - ⇨ Anti-democratic intermezzo from 405 till 401 (= the reign of the '30', aristocrats taking power in favour of the Spartans).
  - ⇨ They blamed rhetoric for this defeat: the state should have focused on what's really important…
- **Euripides**, influenced by the sophists for his tragedies:
  - ⇨ E.g.: '*Hecuba*': by nomos (convention) we believe in Gods.
    - ➢ We divinised Demeter, because we worship grain; cp. Dionysos / wine.
    - ➢ The world is turned upside down: whatever is belonging to human nature, is ordered by convention…

⇔ Hippias: 'It's by Nature!'

- Problem of the sophist: two ways that don't coincide:
  (1) Representation of you position ➔ convincing people!
  (2) Being truthful ➔ doesn't count for sophists…

- **Protagoras**: the ‘mayor’ sophist
  - ⇨ *Homo mensura:* humanity is the measure of all things, those who are **hos** they are.
    - ➢ ‘hos’ had two meanings namely: how & that.
  - ⇨ Van Riel: Protagoras is playing on this ambiguity.
    - (1) **How**: relativism namely I have my truth, so do you.
    - (2) **That**: stronger claim namely existence is depending on the answer on the question whether humanity sees it like that or not.
      - ➢ Link between existence & perceptibility. Existence of things is due to the fact they present themselves to humans.
  - ⇨ About the Gods: I know nothing: they don’t reveal them to humans, so I do not know. (this doesn’t mean they can’t exist!!)
  - ⇨ Text Plato: link between Heracleitos & Protagoras:
    - ➢ Permanent flux, no steadiness in nature, no <u>true</u> nature of things.
    - ➢ Perception can’t be the basis for knowledge according to Plato.
    - ➢ Relativism is self-refuting.

II. <u>Bibliographical notes</u>

- Dealing with Socrates is extremely difficult, because he didn’t write a thing…
- He is perceived as the ideal of a philosopher throughout the Ancient Time.
- Sun of a sculptor & midwife [vroedvrouw].
- Very difficult person to deal with, he was very critical about everything men ‘knew’.
- Being seen as a good ‘x’ = like a Homeric hero: life must be shining forth through generations… vs. being a good ‘x’ = what Socrates says, it depends on a good insight.
- Capital Punishment:
  - ⇨ Impiety: ‘daimonion’, something that tells Socrates what to do…
  - ⇨ Corrupting the youth: cf. Alcibiades.
- The information on Socrates is scare: 4 **main sources**, constituting ‘The Socratic Problem’:
  - (1) Plato ($4/5^{th}$): 2^{nd} generation, justification of the figure of Socrates + safeguarding truthful insights from Socrates. (objective?!)
  - (2) Xenophon: wrote an apology.
  - (3) Aristophanes (comedian).
  - (4) Aristotle

- **Xenophon**: rather conservative brand.
  - ⇨ Represents Socrates as a conservative thinker, giving moral advice on how to behave in this Aristocratic environment.
  - ⇨ 2nd work: *Memorabilia Socratis* (What you should retain of Socrates).
    - ➢ Referring to *daimonion* in other sense than Plato.
  - ⇨ Much younger than Socrates, started writing about him 30 years after his death.
    - ➢ Was away from Athens on campaign vs. Cyrus (Persians) and wrote *Anabasis*.
  - ⇨ Plato's Socrates is philosophical more interesting.
- **Aristophanes**: wrote *The Clouds* (423 BC).
  - ⇨ Laughing with the sophists: enlarges small character-elements of Socrates.
  - ⇨ As it's comedy, he enlarges Socrates and makes him a caricature.
    - ➢ Socrates as *Atopos* (literally: dis-placed).
- **Aristotle**: first book of metaphysics – what did my predecessors say about the 4 causes?
  - ⇨ Socrates: first to introduce morality (what is good?) + looking for definitions.
    - ➢ Evidence from Plato says the same!
  - ⇨ BUT: information from Aristotle comes from the Platonic School ➔ never knew Socrates in person.
  - ⇨ He confirms Plato's testimonies, but states that Plato is a strange Pythagorean dealing with numbers and doubling the world.
- **Plato**: consistent presentation of the figure Socrates and his philosophy.
  - ⇨ Metaphysical presentation of *ideas* is Plato's work, but Socrates is the one who was searching for universality.

III. <u>The daimonion</u>

- A strange event that became 'something' by referring to it (although it's not referred to often).
  - ⇨ Socrates (Plato) describes it as a (strange, ≠ divine (?)) voice that when it occurs says 'stop!' ➔ a force side in the voice that wants to prevent Socrates from making mistakes.
  - ⇨ In the Apology, while entering the court, this voice didn't occur, so Socrates knew facing his trial was a good thing to do.
    - ➢ Absence of the daimonion was also a message!
  - ⇨ Xenophon sees this as an external authority ➔ Socrates is seen as a moral guru.

- ⇨ Van Riel: preferring Platonic version because the daimonion itself is not part of the philosophical message.

- Accusation: it was not allowed to have a private link with some kind of private God.
  - ⇨ If it were to be the God Apollo for example, there wouldn't have been any problem.
  - ⇨ **Conclusion**: all sources are biased, but it becomes philosophical interesting if you leave out the whole person-question.

IV. The Socratic Philosophy

- **The Socratic Method**: gives birth to a person's opinions (= *maieutic*, cf. his mother's profession).
  - ⇨ In a discussion: always asking for sincerity (namely what you think, personal convictions) while he's taking position as anticipating to what they'll say.
    - ➢ **Unequal!**
  - ⇨ In the end: the interlocutor arrives at the point where he 'surrenders': he doesn't know anything.
  - ⇨ Cf. Socratic Irony: I know I don't know anything, but you as an expert are one step behind as you still think you have knowledge.
  - ⇨ Cf. *Elenchus* (= reflection): Your knowledge is based on nothing!
    - ➢ Socrates as the most wise person (oracle of Delphi) ➔ he admits his ignorance.
- Illustration: *Euthypro*, specialist in 'piety': killed his father because of impiety, but then Socrates asks what piety really means (towards his father vs. the Gods – does he really knows what the Gods want?).
- Core of wisdom: admitting that you don't know!
- **Socratic Dialogues** (Plato's first works) often end with an *aporia* namely an unsolved question: we don't know.
  - ⇨ The point: at least the question is open for debate!
  - ⇨ Looking for more than opinion: real, true definitions. E.g.: what is justice (in its own right)?
- *No one willingly errs* (kakos hekon oudeis)
  - ⇨ Whatever 'true' might be, if you know it, you will act upon it. (= intellectualism)
  - ⇨ This is **revolutionary**: in Homeric times children were taught to be seen as good.
    - ➢ E.g.: Achilles killed 10k people, but was seen as a hero (external way of being looked at).
      - ⇔ Socrates: it's about the internal state of being.
      - ⇔ Aristotle: go to jails, people knew they did wrong![7]

[7] Note: before Aristotle no distinction between practical & theoretical knowledge.

Plato

I. Introduction

- Bridging figure between the sophists and the formation of 'schools'.
- Culture of debate (> *agones*: games in which young Greeks were supposed to expel [physical cf. Olympic games and others])
  - ⇨ Plato: fighting tournaments <u>in</u> words.
- Inventor of the genre dialogue [exception: apology + letters].
- Physical beauty should go with moral intellect (also beauty inside).

II. Project & Problems

- Project: fight against mentality that lead to Capital Punishment for Socrates.
  - ⇨ 387: founded the Akademie, where young people could come to learn (e.g. philosophia: looking for real wisdom).
    ⇔ rivalry: Isocrates ➔ education in 'liberal arts', to be a well-educated citizen in the state (cp. Rhetoric).
- Problem with Dialogues: Plato never participates.
  - ⇨ Mostly: Socrates, but is he the spokesman of Plato?
  - ⇨ Permanent tension:
    - ➢ Quest for provocative answers (way philosophy is presented).
    - ➢ Behind the discussions there might be an overall explanation (but not systematised).
- Maybe the main problem is the question why Plato writes?
  - ⇨ Failure of writing (Phaedrus + letter): writing = *pharmacon* (drug):
    - ➢ Good: healing force as long as you take it in moderate proportion.
    - ➢ Bad: drugs.
  - ⇨ Basically in itself writing is not wrong: it's a poison
    - ➢ Your product = an orphan which you can't defend.
    - ➢ Once written down, people will forget.
  - ⇨ But criticising writing doesn't mean you want to live without. Cp.: acting against democracy in Europe isn't the same as standing out this democracy.
- Plato has unwritten doctrines, because they can't be explained through writing.

⇨ E.g.: *Aristoxenus* (gossiper) – lecture by Plato identifying the Good with the One (as written down by Aristotle).

⇨ School of Tubingen & Milan (Krämer, Szlezak & Reale): found the 'One' as opposed to 'Dyad' in the Dialogues.

⇔ Van Riel: this is methodological incorrect, because they view what's in the text from an interpretation starting with unwritten doctrines.

- Looking for what's not in the dialogues.

- Plato has spent his life with > 50 years in writing philosophy.
  - ⇨ Is there an evolution is his thoughts?
    - Some say no.
    - Some (Van Riel) say yes: genius is just in the capability to change your mind.
  - ⇨ Some kind of chronology (but this is fiction, cp. Star Wars) represented in dialogues.
  - ⇨ 30 AD: Thrasyllus decided to publish the dialogues.
    - Cp.: ancient tragedy: trilogies + 1 to lose tension (= tetralogy).
    - 16th/17th century: same order by Henri Estienne (Stephanus).
    - Slight changes in the different dialogues: the Laws = final work (absolutely sure!) + from this point we can relatively date the other dialogues: '**stylometry**'.
- 20th century discussion:
  - ⇨ Unitarians: there is no evolution in Plato's philosophy.
  - ⇨ Revisionists: there is a revision in the case of Parmenides, where he recounts his theory about the ideas, namely looking for a new ontology.
- What are the factors that make Plato the philosopher he is?

(1) Immaterial side of reality (place where knowledge is to be found).
- Justification for moral beliefs (knowing what's good = acting upon it).
- ° distinction between knowledge ⇔ thought.
- Intelligible world that is more 'real' than the sensible one.

(2) Less revolutionary (Pythagorean): theory of the soul as the place where personality resides.
- Immortality that makes moral growth possible.
- 'You are your soul' (it must be well-disposed in itself).

III. Political Philosophy

- Socrates' influence: *Ethical turn* (reaction vs. sophists) ➔ 1 person can be wise, but the State eliminated him…
  - ⇨ Link between wisdom & authority (ruling a State).

- ⇨ We need steady knowledge in the transmission of 'civic knowledge'.
  - ➢ Only possible if the state is led by people who know 'the good'.
- ⇨ Knowledge (intellectual world) vs. opinion (sensible world).

- Guarantee for good moral education = **a state**: you need to have your state in place, in order to change the constellation of the individual soul. ➔ State > individual!
  - ⇨ You need a good account of place of:
    - ➢ Theology
    - ➢ Poets (e.g. Homerus, as poetry was the tool to convert your ideas).
    - ➢ Souls in the afterlife.
  - ⇨ Comes together in **the Republic**.
- Republic: first question: <u>What is justice?</u>
  - ⇨ The right of the stronger?
  - ⇨ The law: obeying = just attitude vs. disobedience = injustice.
    - ➢ Cp.: *Thrasymachus:* we have to obey the laws, dictated by the stronger.
      ⇔ Socrates: justice should be intrinsically good, rather than serving one faction of the state.
  - ⇨ So real justice requires knowledge & special category of people.

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- Leadership: serving the common good for all, not their proper interests.
- When is a state going to be just? (= serving the common good)
  - ⇨ **Guardians** (phylakes): need a proper training.
    - ➢ Ideal: they need to be of moral excellence.

⇔ mostly in Ancient World: unequal births are taken for granted ➔ inegalitarianism. You'll be chosen to be a guardian if you are born with these certain skills.

⇔ Plato's examples e.g. Perikles: example of moral excellence, but his sons were 'pigs' so won't be allowed to be guardians (° social mobility).

- ➢ Searching for moral growth (teaching of liberal arts).
- ➢ Not allowed to have private properties (to avoid selfishness). E.g. households were also common: strong race-selection namely wanting the best state.
- ➢ Philosophers will be the rulers as they know what virtue is.

- ⇨ **Helpers** (epikairoi): also guardians, but lack training in 'dialectics'.
  - ➢ Have to defend the state against enemies, also need liberal arts ('civic education').
- ⇨ **Craftsmen**

💣 Each class will need all virtues, as all virtues are one.

- ⇨ E.g.: <u>understanding</u> (episteme, phronèsis, Sophia) presupposes you also have <u>courage</u> (andreia) and <u>temperance</u> (sophrosyne).
- ⇨ But each class has a 'leading principle', consider it like a turning wheel, whereas each time one virtue takes the top-position.

- Where to put the virtue of 'justice'?
  - ⇨ It allows you to look after the harmonious collaboration of the 3 virtues.
- Problem of this utopia: finding the right rulers (someone with capacity to lead all).
  - ⇨ E.g.: social experiments ➔ there seems to be something like 'natural leadership' in small communities. ➔ ≠ obeying, but recognizing.
  - ⇨ Plato: others will recognise leadership as they see it is the best way to arrange things.
  - ⇨ Problem is not the totalitarian view of ruling!
    - ➢ Craftsman share the virtue of understanding.
- Plato presupposes moral excellence can only exist within a state ⇔ contradicted by family ties.
  - ⇨ Later Plato seems to be aware of this problem, saying in later works that 'pre-state' societies can also have moral excellence.
- The **Politicas** (Statesmen): extravagant expectation imposed to the rulers of the state.
  - ⇨ In the Golden Age (lead by Chronos, a just leader) everyone was flourishing as the leader did what he ought to do.
  - ⇨ Age of Iron (lead by Zeus): shepherd-king is leading, but according to Socrates this type of leaders doesn't exist any longer!
    - ➢ Conclusion: you'll never find the leaders we are looking for in our time. So we'll need **<u>law</u>** as a stand-in for those kings.
  - ⇨ If we find such leader by accident, law has to be abolished; BUT right now: everyone has to obey law!
  - ⇨ Second-best way of establishing the ideal state = having laws obeyed by everyone.
    - ➢ Always about practical & theoretical knowledge ➔ no distinction!

IV. <u>Theory of Ideas</u>

- A clear account of what knowledge is like ➔ immaterial objects in an immaterial world.
- °enormous **barrier** between the world of the senses (opinion, something is always what it is & what it is not ➔ no purity) and the world of the ideas.

- ⇨ Intermediary between being & non-being.
- ⇨ No transition from things seen in the sensible world to things known in the intelligible world.
  - ➢ Tripartite distinction: being, non-being and a combination (= opinion).
  - ➢ Knowledge / being vs. opinion / being / non-being.

- Being (ideas) vs. becoming (sense objects): the world as we know it in material representation is not the real world.
  - ⇨ Don't over emphasize this distinction between '2 worlds' e.g. Plato talking about 'beyond the heavens' = metaphor because it's immaterial, when located it would have become material again.
  - ⇨ Platonism: only accept immaterial causes; this immaterial dimension was needed to explain order.
    - ➢ Change is limited to the material world.
- Participation & imitation:
  - ⇨ Example of the bed is just an example; Plato never repeats that it would be the representation of the idea 'bed'.
    - ➢ We won't need that many ideas e.g. 'inventing bicycle' = putting together existing things.

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- How to systematize the Ideas?
  - ⇨ There must be connections e.g. humanity ~ justice.
  - ⇨ Idea ~ unity: one single unique concept, presupposes that we know what unity is.
    - ➢ Cf. 'The Sophists': '*kaikonia*' (communion) is what we need, we can get this by accepting 5 'megista' (largest classes):
      - ✓ Being
      - ✓ Sameness & otherness
      - ✓ Motion & rest
    - ➢ Communion by all of the ideas, which can be classified under these ideas.
  - ⇨ Arguing for natural coherence of the ideas (more confusing than helping).
- Another notion: '**Goodness'** (= one common characteristic of all ideas).
  - ⇨ Ancient World: good = attractive, perfect, object of desire.

- ⇨ Analogy: role played by the sun in the sensible world and the good in the intelligible world because the sun is essential for whatever that happens, through her light, things can exist (otherwise no sensibility).
- ⇨ The good has the same operation: the ideas can only exist and can only be intelligible by the presence of the Good.

- Passage in the *Republic*: only place where the good is described namely '**beyond being**'.[8]
  - ⇨ Handbook Platonism: becoming => being => 'Good' where all ideas participate to the Good as founding principle.
  - ⇨ Van Riel: as Good is beyond being, it would be outside the system (and not knowable!)
    - ➢ What is beyond being, is constitutive for our knowledge, but itself not knowable.
    - ➢ Good isn't called an Idea in the passage.
    - ➢ Through the ideas, we have an access to the good, but that doesn't mean we'll ever reach the good.
    - ➢ The final clue to understanding the whole is the good, but we can only reach it indirect (by e.g. effects).
- Whatever you'll find in ontology, is to be 'good'; where to localize 'evil'?
  - ⇨ In tradition: made a dualist…
  - ⇨ Plato: by the absence of the good; evil has no existence on its own.
    - ➢ E.g.: volcanic eruption ➔ activity in itself is good, but evil happens by collision in the sensible world.
    - ➢ E.g.: virus ➔ does its job because your organism is doing what it ought to do (being ill = fighting against the virus).
    - ➢ E.g. cancer ➔ is a parasite on your good functioning body… it will die with you.
  - ⇨ Using the forces of the good, but evil doesn't exist in itself. (only in the sensible world! Higher up it doesn't exist…)
- **Demiurge** (Greek for craftsman): craftsman that brings about the universe.
  - ⇨ Task to order the universe, role is limited as there were already a model and a subtract.
    - ➢ Only thing he has to do is applying the model!
    - ➢ What he does is (efficient) causality.
    - ➢ Model = the ideas (normative scheme for the demiurge).
  - ⇨ Demiurge = intellect, but not its own master, because it has to listen to the metaphysical structures. (those won't work without the demiurge though)

[8] Also Philebus: good = beauty.

- How do we get to know the ideas?
  - ⇨ We are born with a set of ideas.
  - ⇨ Model: mathematical knowledge – you're never teached that 1 + 1 = 2, it's something you latent knew and it took an effort to 'remember' (= **anamnesis**, recollection).
    - ➢ ≠ remembrance, because 'ana' = bringing up again.
    - ➢ Knowledge is not coming from the exterior, but was already there.
  - ⇨ Cp.: Dialogue with *Meno*, an uneducated slave who also could solve mathematical questions.
  - ⇨ Recollection can be trained by a specific methodology: '**dialectics**' (= collision of opposite understandings, dialogue).
    - ➢ 2 main elements cf. Phaedrus:
      a. Defining things as they are.
      b. Cutting things cf. 'defining' = explain what is in the class & to put boundaries around what you are discussing.
    - ➢ Emphasis on natural joints.
- Self-criticism of the theory of Ideas?
  - ⇨ Cf. *Parmenides*: first part = criticism & second part = Parmenides saying what follows if the one is or if the one is not (=> very strange! Not a single interpreter knows what to think about it).
    - ➢ Neoplatonist takes this as a basis for his ontology.

(1) <u>Question of the extent of the world of ideas.</u>

- ➢ Handbook Platonism: every single object in the sensible world has an Idea.
- ➢ In fact: extremely limited (just, goodness, beauty…), apart from moral concepts the examples are scarce.
- ➢ Dialogue: if it's not participating to the intelligible world, you won't need an idea, but what doesn't?!
- ➢ Van Riel: it seems Plato isn't interested in cosmology and if he talks about nature; he reduces it to mathematical structures. (e.g. triangles)

(2) <u>Participation</u>: if one thing participates in an idea, and another thing also, doesn't the idea gets split?

- ➢ E.g. a large thing that participates in largeness ➔ how to explain that both are 'large'? you'll need a 3th structure (Parmenides) [this could go on ad infinite].
- ➢ "The Third Man"-argument (from Aristotle against Plato): man participates to the idea of man, but they'll need a third guy to explain their coherence.

(3) How do we know what ideas are?

- Aristotle: Plato just doubles the words and doesn't explain anything.
- We are just repeating our own words; if we would know ideas in themselves, we should look from above (like Gods).
- Even the intelligible world stays articulated in our concepts, definitions etc. from our involvement in the sensible world.

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- The place of human beings is a fixed place! Even those who are at 'the top' (= Godlike in so far it's humanly possible) are still people.
  - ⇨ Trespassing this barrier between men & God is *hybris*.
    - ⇔ Aristotle: we perform a divine activity and we become Gods (= thinking).
  - ⇨ Opposite of Anaxagoras: doubling the material world at the level of 'sperms' (material principles).

(4) Interpretations of the criticism:

- **Revisionists** saying that Plato rejects the theory of Ideas and establishes a new ontology. E.g.: *Philebus* – fourfold division of *principles* (genera) namely cause – unlimited – limit – mixed.
- **Theory of Principles** (Prinzipienlehre): the One & the Dyad (cf. unwritten doctrines).
  - ⇨ This hasn't to be opposed to the theory of Ideas; the discussion in the Philebus is about the most essential component of happiness (pleasure or thought). You can analyse the Ideas in the terms of 'genera'.
- **Unitarians**: there is no evolution in Plato; a genius doesn't change his mind. The criticism in Parmenides has the same statute of his criticism on writing. The terminology (e.g. participation, dialectics) stays in place, but you can see Plato trying to find new approaches towards the Ideas.
  - ⇨ He's still thinking about classification, but the emphasis is shifting to one over multiple things.
  - ⇨ Van Riel: Theory of Ideas stays in place.

V. Theory of the Soul

- The soul as the place where our **morality** resides and where **epistemological knowledge** is born.
  - ⇨ Cf. Pythagoras – the soul as principle of self-movement.
  - ⇨ Cf. Socrates – moral turn.

- Birth & rebirth is guided by moral progress made in life (goal = making this improvement).
  - ⇨ The misery now is due to our own (de)merit.
  - ⇨ Every choice made by the soul is a moral choice and lays the responsibility by the soul.
- Plato explains this with a 'myth', why?
  - ⇨ You can't really give a rational account.
  - ⇨ Myth = kind of assumption, not at whole rational; saying this is going to be the structural event.
- The soul is based on the constellation of a community:
  - ⇨ Logistikon: rational function of the soul – wisdom.
  - ⇨ Tumoeides: anger / spirited function – courage.[9]
  - ⇨ Epithumètikon: desire / longing function – temperance.
    - ➢ Example: a necrofile who is angry with himself for this desire; this can't be attributed to reason, nor to desire.

💣 This is vocabulary invented by Plato, later on they will refer to it as 'well-known' phenomena, but this wasn't what Plato was up to.

- ⇨ It's not about the possible conflict between the 3 functions; it's about the cooperation between thep. Cp.: justice in the State if 3 clases cooperate.
- ⇨ In this structure the body doesn't play any role yet. If something goes wrong; it's your own decision at the level of the soul.
- ⇨ Intellect is going to be the leader; if it fails, you're lost for moral excellance, virtue etc.

- What is at stake is an **internal constellation**! Not being seen as.
- Phaedo: discussion of Socrates with his friends in jail.
  - ⇨ Most extreme anti-corporal Plato.
  - ⇨ The body is a tomb for the soul
    - ➢ We need to purify the soul from <u>influence</u> of the body.
  - ⇨ Philosophy as preparing to die = detach yourself from the body, when it suggests what you'll have to do. The body in itself isn't bad, but it has a bad influence.
- Phaedrus: long myth about how our soul looks like (after discussing the constellation of the soul of the Gods). Although the configuration is the same: a chariot with two horses (one white & one black).[10]
  - ⇨ Chariot has wings: only material thing capable of escaping the material world.

[9] Thumos is smoke running through your body, making you angry [cf. Fumus].
[10] It's a reasonable and obvious guess this tripartite image is the same as described above.

- ⇨ Charioteers head is getting at the place of the supracelestial; however he stays at the borderline as both horses are always in conflict.
  ⇔ gods horses are always harmonious, so they can climb up without trouble.
- ⇨ We need to train our horses, but by this activity of continuous flight; our wings break and we fall down…
- ⇨ To get up again, we need to look at beautiful things in order to grow wings again.

- Republic X: Myth about the **afterlife**.
  - ⇨ A Pamphylian soldier called **Er**, who was laying death on the battlefield. He was given the privilege of going to the underworld and coming back to his body after 5 days.
  - ⇨ He came to a place, where a new decision was made:
    - ➢ You were so good: privilege to watch the ideas.
    - ➢ You were so bad: soul will be destroyed (cp.: too attached to the body, you would die with it).
    - ➢ Other souls: can pick a lot (with all positive and negative consequences!)
  - ⇨ We'll have to be prepared to make the right choice (suicide isn't the way to get to pick a new one quickly…)
  - ⇨ Finally, before entering the body again, everyone drinks form the '*Lèthe*', a river which makes us to forget everything.

VI. Cosmology & Ideology

- We need intellect (nous) as the real cause:
  - ⇨ Cf. Timaeus: a divine craftsman (= Demiourgos) handy enough to produce the world from a pre-existing substrate.
    - ➢ He isn't the source; he only looks to a pre-existing model (= forms, ideas that already were there).
    - ➢ Very limited task!
  - ⇨ A wetnurse / receptacle (= container): the Demiurge puts order into a container.
    - ➢ There is no concept of matter with Plato.
    - ➢ Existence of bodies is taken for granted.
  - ⇨ What he does is bringing metaphysical principles together with the sensible world.
    - ➢ Final rule: things must be good.
    - ➢ Platonic Gods can't go against the metaphysical principles but these principles can't exist without the Demiurge. (Gods are intermediates)

- The intelligible world serves as a model for the sensible world: but both can't exist without each other and can't emerge from themselves.
  - ⇨ Need for a 'Demiurge' (= craftsman, intellect).
- 3th century: 'Wetnurse' (= receptacle, *chora*) = the environment in which this takes place.
  - ⇨ Enormous problems with interpretation; Van Riel sees it as something non-material.
  - ⇨ No ontological place left for the Demiurge; point seems to be that only task for the intellect is to be the intermediary between both worlds.
- The forms & the good = metaphysical principles of Plato.
  - ⇨ Demiurge is something divine; Plato says that Gods can only be good.
  - ⇨ The divinity is thus bound by metaphysical principle of the Good.
- Remains strange, but in *Thimaeus* (& 4 other passages) Plato writes that there is no intellect without a soul.
  - ⇨ Intellect as such has no ontological place, as it can only exist in souls.
  - ⇨ Demiurge is some kind of metaphor, a symbolic figure that explains the Gods (V. Riel).
    ⇔ other people would say that there can be an intellect without a soul within the intelligible world, but can't come to be in the sensible world.
  - ⇨ The Demiurge can't quit, but in *Thimaeus* he does! Strange! A principle that quits.

Aristotle

I. Introduction

- First one after Plato to have had explicitly the idea of making a systematic philosophical work: a treatise on every specific scientific discipline, often inventing them himself (e.g. physics, biology, logic, psychology (souls), ethics, politics…
- His work has a strange history:
  - ⇨ We know he wrote dialogues, but none of them are left.
  - ⇨ What we have is a bunch of college notes, discovered by Sulla (Roman officer) while conquering Athens. Later on published and edited by Andronicus of Rhodes: some of them were to be published, but very often you'll see it's a mess.[11]
  - ⇨ Aristotle wasn't good at teaching: his examples are impossible to understand. He also used a peculiar Greek (abbreviations etc.)

[11] E.g.: often repetition, double reactions, page left out…

- Plato was a mathematician, starting from the intelligible world.

  ⇔ Aristotle was a biologist, father was a doctor living near the Bulgarian border, who often had to go to islands. Aristotle joined his old man and wrote books about all animals he observed: *Historia Animalum* (= eyewitness report).
- Aristotle is an **empiricist**: his interest is to understand nature in its appearance, next he can make a generalisation and not the other way around. ➔ need for <u>observation</u>.
  - ⇨ Cp.: F. Bacon: *Novum Organum* (1620).[12] This is a method of good thinking and all science must have observation and nothing but observation as its guide. Bacon is looking in a different way: with a mathematical glass (quantification + experiment) as a reaction to Aristotle.
  - ⇨ Aristotle's system is not experimental! His observations are brought to generalisations on a wrong base.
- Example: why don't snake have legs?
  - ⇨ Any animal with a heart (= pump) can only feed 4 limbs (wrong premise).
  - ⇨ Snakes have to crawl even though they have heart; there's no place to put limbs…
  - ⇨ Octopus has 3 hearts (lol).
- Aristotle on **quantification**: he doesn't accept the Platonic premise that the mathematical way is the key to understanding. There is a whole bunch of aspects; quantity is only one side of reality!

II. <u>Metaphysics</u>

- *Metaphysics*: treatise about what's behind physics.
  - ⇨ Aristotle describes **4 causes**.
  - ⇨ Predecessors reduced reality to a smaller amount of causes (matter + motion, later on).

(1) Material cause: Aristotelian matter (e.g.: potter ➔ clay as material).

(2) Formal cause: form, concept, idea which maker has before bringing it to material.

(3) Efficient cause: production, that which makes the constellation of matter and form.

(4) Final cause (> 'finis'): the purpose, aim or goal to which the whole process is dedicated.

- ⇨ Most important cause! You'll have a plan before looking to material, form etc.
- ⇨ 2nd in ranking: formal cause (= 'the idea').

- E.g.: bird bills: everything in nature is serving a purpose e.g. to crack a nut.
  - ⇨ Combination form – function – goal.

[12] Aristotelian Logic (5 books) is called *Organum*.

⇔ Darwin would say: the form is not made in order to serve a function, but by serving in a good way.

⇨ Aristotle lacks change in form, as form is eternal according to him.

⇨ Despite Darwin, we're still stiking to Aristotelian vocabulary e.g. genetic information.

- Aristotle describes nature and rises a set of 10 questions cf. *Logic*: 10 ways of speaking of things: **categories**: what is it, quantity, quality, relation, activity, passivity, having…

  ⇨ Structures in our logic.

  ⇨ Also a way of existing cf. way of thinking ~ way of being.

    ➢ = 'qua'-functor: we talk about things in so far they (…) .

- Strange hiarch between categories namely characteristics vs. bearer of characteristics.

  ⇨ Last group has only one category: *being* (ontologic distinction).

    ➢ 9 **accidents** (something additional) + **substance** (ousia, the fact of being).

      ⇔ Plato: being = separate forms which are purely intelligible.

  ⇨ Aristotle: individual things (= beings!) cf. Text p. 45.

    ➢ Ontology = ousiology (things that exist, about existence).

21 April

- Further questions:

  (1) Given the things are as they are, how to analyse them? = STATIC.

  (2) Given the established description, let's see how things can **change**! = DYNAMIC.

- **Form & Matter** (Morphè & Hylè).

  ⇨ *Hylè* means wood; Aristotle had to invent the term for matter.

    ➢ ***Hylemorphism***: everything is a combination of matter & form.

  ⇨ Matter nor form exist on their own; even if you extract word from the desk, it would still have a shape.

  ⇨ A form without matter can't exist, wouldn't be sensible.

  ⇨ Yet: how would pure matter look like?

    ➢ Cp.: Table of Mendeljev – are they pure matter? No, formal element accounts for difference between e.g. He & Ne.

    ➢ Matter will present itself as an element, but this does have a form.

- Alexander of Aprhodisias: '***Pure Matter***'

  ⇨ Cp.: limits ad infinitum in mathematics; you know where the graphic is going, but you know it will never reach the end.

- ⇨ Aristotle's prime matter: you know what pure matter should be, but you can't reach it as it doesn't exist.

- There are no forms separately from sensible reality (= Anti-Platonic!).
  - ⇨ Except in universals (cp.: our thought): we get to know things by abstracting the form from the constellation with matter.
  - ⇨ E.g.: how to get to know the desk?
    - ➢ Matter can't be pushed in your head…
    - ➢ Highlight the form in your individual mind.
  - ⇨ *to ti èn eihai* (= being what it was):
    - ➢ reason why forms are eternally identical.
    - ➢ What it was to be a cow, is identical to being what a cow is nowadays.
    - ➢ Pseudo-answer (!!)
- You need **observation**, but once it enters your mind as an universal, you're capable of recognising this idea.
  - ⇨ E.g.: pink elephant in a toddler book ➔ later on: recognising elephant in zoo.
- Matter can't be grasped directly, nor can you say what the form is, except for abstraction in our intellect.
  - ⇨ Matter is unknowable; you can only know forms.
  - ⇨ Substances per se are unknowable, as they are a combination of form & matter.
- '***Ousia***': that which it really is ➔ what we know if we abstract from the form (cp.: Plato's intelligible world).
  - ⇨ 'ousia' appears twice! Two different definitions!
    a. Individual substances (the things we find existing).
    b. What we know.
  - ⇨ 13th century: substance vs. essence as a solution.
  - ⇨ Aristotle's solution: ousia 1 (= substance) vs. ousia 2 (essence) [cf. text].
- Cohesion form – function – goal
  - ⇨ A form is designed to achieve a certain function.
  - ⇨ A form is always adjusted to a goal ➔ 'final cause'.
    - ➢ **Universal teleology**!
      a. Artefacts: made for a certain goal.
      b. Nature: there is no chance in nature!

- E.g.: café at the corner of a sharp turn; drivers drove 3 times in the café in less than 6 weeks ➔ no coincidence!

⇨ If the same happens usually, it's not a matter of change.

- Repetition of the same effect = identical final cause.

⇨ Artefact: purpose of things is given from exterior perspective (external efficient cause).

⇔ natural: inherent goals with adapted form.

- Internal goal is always **perfection** (cp.: object of desire is the good).
- E.g.: a seed of tree has the perfect tree in it ➔ in-forma-tion.

- Life is depended on the principle that makes life possible: ***psyche*** (soul): **selfmotion**.
  - ⇨ Potency of being alive.
  - ⇨ Need something that actualizes this potency: the soul ➔ °living thing.
- **Actuality vs. Potentiality** (Energeia vs. dynamis)
  - ⇨ 'How can a thing change in another status?'
  - ⇨ Because it's changeable, in its present actual state; it has the potency of becoming something else!
  - ⇨ Potency & act related to hylemorphic conditions.
    - E.g.: baking clay ➔ losing potency of becoming something else.
- Relations / correlations:
  - ⇨ Negative correlation:
    - Form & potency
    - Matter & act
  - ⇨ Positive correlation:
    - Form & act
    - Matter & potency

25 April

- Living things having their own terms:
  - ⇨ Soul = form: psyche, i.e. principle of life / self-motion.
  - ⇨ Matter = body.
    - The soul is the first actualisation of a body that possible has life.
    - The soul is going to determine the species-making difference.
- Theory of **the soul**: different functions determine different beings:

(1) **Vegetative / nutritive soul**: maintaining own individual life and the species to which it belongs. (= feeding & procreating) ➔ PLANTS.

(2) **Sensitive soul**: sense perception (+ presupposes vegetative soul) ➔ ANIMALS.

(3) **Rational soul**: presupposes vegetative & sensitive soul ➔ HUMANS.

⇨ Remark: all have the same type of soul; specific characteristics are coming from the body and the accidents.

- Treatise on the soul: once the combination of matter and form dissolves, the soul (vegetative & sensitive) dies along with the living being.
  - ⇨ Our capacity of reason becomes part of the cosmic intellect: by this event it loses its individuality.
  - ⇨ Individual immortality is thus impossible (⇔ Plato: Myth of Er).
    - ➢ Image of a spark that returns to the fire.

III. Theology (conception of the divine)

- Metaphysics displace a strange **ambiguity**: *ousiology* > *ontology*.
  - ⇨ Former: ousia as what it is: individual being.
  - ⇨ Latter: being qua being.
  - ⇨ Theory about the 4 causes: *aithiology*.
    - ➢ These are different perspectives in Aristotle's metaphysics; not per se contradictions.
- 4th perspective: theory about 'the highest' being = *theology*.
  - ⇨ Being as an individual: a specific ousia, i.e. God.
    - ⇔ general characteristics of being in 3 other approaches.
  - ⇨ Substance: form & act (= is full *entelechy*).
  - ⇨ No place for a creative God: he's all act, no potency.
  - ⇨ God is immaterial: a form on its own.
- God must be full **perfection**: the highest goal.
  - ⇨ It must be the highest goal that resumes al other goals in it. God is thus the final goal in which everything strives.
  - ⇨ He's the object of our **desire**; he isn't pulling / attracting us, because that would mean he's imperfect.
    - ➢ Not actually involved, but by being there, the other objects have to admire God.
- Act of thinking = what God does: the highest possible!
  - ⇨ He can only think the highest possible objects of thought: thought itself!
    - ➢ ***Selfthinking Thought***.

- God is the first **unmoved mover**: not being set in motion.
  - ⇨ Efficient causality and final causality coincide.

28 april

IV. Ethics

- Perfection within the perfection of rationality (cf. rational soul).
  - ⇨ Contemplation: epistemic activities.
  - ⇨ Moral virtue: being able to interact in a rational way.
- Birth of ethics as a **separate discipline**.
  - ⇨ Practical wisdom (prhonèsis) distinguished from theoretical wisdom (episteme).
    - ⇔ Plato: the same thing!
  - ⇨ Praxis: reason is in the activity itself ➔ typical for activities directed towards 'happiness'.
  - ⇨ Poiesis: producing something, final aim is external to the activity itself.
- '*Euidaimonia*': does not refer to an emotional state!
  - ⇨ Life that more or less objectively has achieved what it was possible to: it has 'succeeded'.
  - ⇨ We never pursue happiness as an external goal. Everything else becomes instrumental.
  - ⇨ You can only be happy by doing things; happiness isn't praxis on its own.
- Praxis requires a theory about what we do when we pursue an activity for its own sake.
  - ⇨ We pursue knowledge in order to be happy, i.e. moral good actors.
  - ⇨ Moral progress = becoming **virtuous** ourselves.

💣 The object of ethics is entirely different from the object of 'ordinary' sciences!

- ⇨ Practical wisdom: something that can't be grasped because knowing what the good is, doesn't lead to doing the good (= anti-Platonic!).
- ⇨ We need some kind of practical knowledge:
  - ➢ Syllogism concluding with an action instead of a proposition.
  - ➢ We're dealing with **specific circumstances**, not with universalia ➔ need of **experience** of the particular as the first guide.
  - ➢ There is no general knowledge of the particular.
- ⇨ Core of the art of ethics = **practical knowledge**!

- Euidaimonia: first and for most all people strive for happiness.
  - ⇨ We'll have to make choices in which way we'll pursuit this happiness.

- ⇨ We develop our own '***state***' (= hexis, disposition) of moral behaviour.
  - ➢ Acting the same in different circumstances, acquired through the years.

- Guidance how to become happy: concrete precepts, namely giving a list of what needs to be present in a happy life.
  - ⇨ Cp.: Virtue-ethics: more than just a theoretical framework.
    ⇔ Kant: universal perspective.
  - ⇨ Derived from general teleology: every function is striving for perfect functioning.
    - ➢ Doing something always involves an aim at perfection.
  - ⇨ The best is always expressed as '**virtuous**'.
    - ➢ E.g.: a good horse is a virtuous horse, it does what it ought to do.
  - ⇨ Cp.: distinction between:
    - ➢ Negation: full absence of potentiality.
    - ➢ Privation: you could have potentiality, but it isn't actualised (e.g. disabled people).
- Aristotle seems to be much more inclusive than Plato:
  - ⇨ You can still reach happiness with less rational capacity.
  - ⇨ It also involves external criteria e.g. being wealthy, having leisure time, health…
  - ⇨ Also '**pleasure**':
    - ➢ Before – seen as something bad, because we get unhappy as we never get enough.
    - ➢ Aristotle – a sign we're doing the right thing(s).
- Virtue as a **settled disposition** (hexis, habitus): combination of natural capacities & external influences.
  - ⇨ On the edge between disposition and external influence – this disposition is growing.
    - ➢ Cp.: Aquinas – "2nd nature".
  - ⇨ We lack natural weapons, other than animals (e.g.: spider knows instinctive how to make a web) BUT we have reason!
  - ⇨ Biological nature that can be elaborated with a 2nd nature that allows us to act and make choices.
  - ⇨ Our first talents are elaborated by external influences.
- By repeating a choice, it becomes part of our nature as a 'normal reaction' upon which we no longer have to reflect.
  - ⇨ Cp.: Averroes – 2nd nature colours our choice; e.g. by knowing how to play the piano, your amount of choices goes up. So enriching your nature elaborates the possibilities.

- We have to find **the middle**: a balance between too little and too much.
  - ⇨ A middle that is adjusted to us, given the circumstances.
    - ➢ E.g.: Battlefield: between cowardice and recklessness. Courage in this case is not something given universally; it's the virtue between both bad boundaries.
- The role of **wisdom**: the way a prudent man should act…
  - ⇨ But: prudence is already a virtue! This is circular!
  - ⇨ It seems Aristotle is referring to a set of given presuppositions e.g. what it is to be a prudent man… This determinations are already given.

2 May

Later Antiquity (3th century BC)

I. Introduction

- Period of **Schools**: Platonic schools stays in place, but takes on different shapes.
  - ⇨ 2BC: **scepticism** – e have to suspend our judgement, because our intelligible tools are insufficient.
  - ⇨ 1AD: return to a system or dogma after the dialogues: cosmology with Timaeus as the main dialogue: **Middle Platonism**. In fact doesn't refer to a school, but to a bunch of scholars rivalling with Aristotle's physics.
  - ⇨ 3AD: **Neoplatonism** (until 6AD) – dominating school, commenting on Aristotle (e.g. Alexander of Afphrodisias 2-3AD).
  - ⇨ From middle ages on: Aristotelian Schools are dominating again…
- Epicurian school: live in a hidden way, go to your garden and enjoy.
- Stoicism (> Stoa – gallery, where Zeno of Citium was teaching). Live in accordance with nature!
  - ⇨ Emphasis turning from systematisation towards ethics i.e. a way of life.
  - ⇨ The rest (logic, epistemology, physics) are further developed under this main goal of becoming happy.
  - ⇨ Once again: Socrates as the role model of a wise person.
  - ⇨ What is **happiness?**
    - ➢ Nowadays: we have technological tools to acquire access to our desires.
    - ➢ Antiquity: main message of ethics is that you have to manipulate the demand, not the supply. E.g. be happy with a glass of water to quench your thirst, not the most expensive bottle wine ➔ ° boundaries to your desire!

II. Stoicism

- Three periods:
  (1) **Early** (3-1 BC) – exclusive Greek / Hellenistic times with an expanding culture until the Indus. Zeno & Chcysippus seen as the founders.
  (2) **Middle** (1 BC – 1 AD) – roman republican period (e.g. Cicero). Platonization of the stoicism (e.g. Posidonus, introducing the tripartite of the soul).
  (3) **Late**: Seneca, Epictetus (the slave), Marcus Aurelius. Inner freedom is not affected by what happens on the outside.
- Physics:
  - ⇨ Again **materialists**.
  - ⇨ Anything that has an active causal operation, needs to be **corporeal** (having a body).
    - ➢ E.g.: the soul, emotions… are corporeal!
  - ⇨ Two bodies can coexist at the same place, at the same time ➔ rejection of atomism (so there is no empty space here).
    - ➢ '**logos'** is present everywhere: the first active principle in the universe. Wherever you isolate an atom, there will be logos (reason) in it.
    - ➢ Doctrine of divine providence: logos has foreseen everything and is slowly developing. We are free, but yet at the same time subordinated at fate.
  - ⇨ Stoics doesn't mean the incorporeal doesn't exist! It's just passive, because is doesn't have causal power.
- Four types of 'incorporeals':
  (1) **Sayables** (lekta): linguistic utterances that refer to corporeal things.[13] They have no causal effect, although there seems some causality introduced by listening to a proposition (e.g. "The door!"). The representation is like a textual balloon in a comic, namely only abstract representation of what's happening on the level of propositions.
  (2) **Emptiness:** abstract way of pointing at an absence of things, which isn't a fact (reality). E.g.: my glass is empty ➔ contrast to possible positive content.
  (3) **Place:** does not exist on its own; is that what is occupied by bodies.
  (4) **Time:** can be measured by taking different states of a changing body. Time is something abstract, that doesn't exist without bodies.
  - ⇨ **(3) & (4):** side effects of corporeal existence.

[13] Later on: analytic philosophy – propositions, do not denote the thing itself.

- Theory of **human action**:
  - ⇨ Behaviourists (19^{th} – 20^{th} century): Stimulus ➔ Response.
  - ⇨ Stoics: between stimulus and response, there is a **black box**.
    - ➢ Stimuli are always corporeal and taken up first as representations (phantasia) which I undergo passively.
    - ➢ This representation can be translated to a 'sayable' or an incorporeal textual balloon (= proposition).
    - ➢ Rationality comes in to decide if our action is good or bad, on the prescription of living in accordance with nature: **assent** namely taking the positive reaction.
  - ⇨ Only the case by rational evolved beings!!
    - ➢ The ascent is followed by an impulse (hormè) or response.
- The first impulse is self-preservation: keeping the nature intact (= cradle argument).
- We become a free actor with the approval or rejection.
  - ⇨ Responsibility of the reason: moral or immoral!
- The stoics are also capable of explaining why things go wrong: 3 classifications of objects:
  (1) **Indifferent**: e.g. walking – wheatear you walk or not, doesn't matter for its own sake. E.g. wealth – absence of it shouldn't make you unhappy, as it isn't in your control (⇔ Aristotle).
  (2) **Good**: things in accordance with nature.
  (3) **Evil**: things that are in no way helping our nature to flourish ➔ bad! **<u>Passions</u>** (pathè) in a very specific way, namely referring to passivity and being overwhelmed.
  - ⇨ You are a stoic wise if you can make decisions according to these difference.
    - ➢ But: most people mistake these three categories!
    - ➢ E.g.: passions:
      a. Perversions of natural impulse: **desire & fear**.
      b. Wheatear or not hitting the object of the passion: **pleasure & pain**.
- Ideal of the stoics: the state of ***apatheia***. The passions pervert this state, resulting in ***eupatheia***; this is the right reaction towards the passions, not a purifying of them.
  - ⇨ **Euboulia**: wish or will ➔ correct way of expecting things.
  - ⇨ **Eulabeia**: watchfulness ➔ right reasonable attribute i.e. stay clear from danger.
  - ⇨ **Chara**: joy ➔ reasonable parallel to what happens in pleasure.
    - ➢ No equivalent for 'pain', as a wise person will always stay away from bad things.

- The stoics only have one soul, in which we find reason.
  - ⇨ How can the passions than be irrational?
    - ➢ Reason itself making a decision that sets reason check mate.
  - ⇨ If reason makes a wrong decision, it's like blowing up your car by entering the red zone on the speedometer. You can't overcome natural **boundaries**! The decision to go on beyond the limit is always yours.

[Colleges abrupt ten einde na ziekte Van Riel]

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