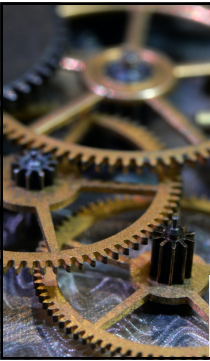




History, Tragedy, and Comedy

History of Ancient Greece | Meeting #8

1



Upcoming Dates

- Monday, October 19
Proposal due
- Monday, November 9
Birds essay due
- Sunday, October 25
Responses for Week 8 Due

2

Five things today

- Birds*
- The *Birds* essay
- Legacies of the Persian Wars
- Athenian democracy
- Athenian thinkers

3



4

Quiz #6: History, Tragedy, and Comedy

- In Birds, the Hoopoe, also known as Epops, is
 - a magnificent purple crow
 - unable to speak
 - covered in tomato sauce
 - ☒ a former human named Temus
- The breakdown of the Thirty Years Peace after only fifteen years involved all of the following **EXCEPT**:
 - A crisis caused by a Corinthian colony (Corcyra) allying with Corinth's enemy, Athens
 - A crisis caused by an Athenian ally (Potidaea) refusing to break its ties to Corinth
 - A crisis caused by Athens issuing invading laws and other decrees against its neighbor, Megara
 - ☒ A crisis caused by an Athenian noble seducing and abducting the beautiful wife of a Spartan king
- The historian Thucydides wrote about
 - ☒ The Peloponnesian War, which he fought in as a general
 - The Persian Wars, which he researched from past writings
 - The Trojan War, for which he researched generations of folklore
 - The dawn of time, which he saw in dreams
- All of the following describe classical theories about the natural world **EXCEPT**:
 - Anaxagoras said that material objects are made of particles held together by a force he called nous (intellect)
 - Democritus said that matter was made up of indivisible atoms that collide in a void
 - Hippocrates said that disease was caused by mundane factors that can be understood through careful observation
 - ☒ Socrates argued that the womb and the liver are in fact the same organ
- Sophocles was (and is) most famous for his trilogy of tragic plays about
 - ☒ Oedipus, who killed his father and married his mother
 - Orestes, who fought with monsters and married with his wife
 - Ozymandias, who slaughtered his enemies and loved only himself
 - Ophthalmos, who lost his vision and married a kourou

Extra Credit:

EC: In Birds, what reasons do the main characters, Pithetaeas and Euelpides, give for leaving Athens? What's their end goal, do you think?

5

Questions from the Responses

- Does Medea ever face any sort of punishment or judgement?
- Was there divorce? When a husband and wife are no longer in love, what actions can they take?
- How did poor citizens feel about democracy? Did they believe they were truly treated equally?
- Were there Greeks who fought for the abolition of slavery?
- How much of the Greeks argumentative / judicial structure has passed into the United States judicial system?
- I would like to find out the process of getting into Greece. How would they know who is a citizen without any form of photo ID?

6

Questions about whatever



7

Birds



8



Birds (Ὀρνιθες)

- An evocation of fantasy
- More elaborate in staging, costume, and performance
- Social criticism less targeted toward individuals or groups

9

Characters in *Birds*

- Peisthetaeros and Euelpides
pays 'teh 'tay roh's yool' piih' deez
Athenian citizens who seek to escape the trivialities of urban life
- Πεισθέταιρος = "the companion who convinces you"
- Ευελπίδης = "full of hope," "optimistic"
- Epops, the Hoopoe
ex-human Tereus; ancient king of the birds
- Prometheus
a messenger from the gods
- The gods
Poseidon, Heracles, Triballos
- The birds (chorus)
become the citizens of Cloudcuckooland

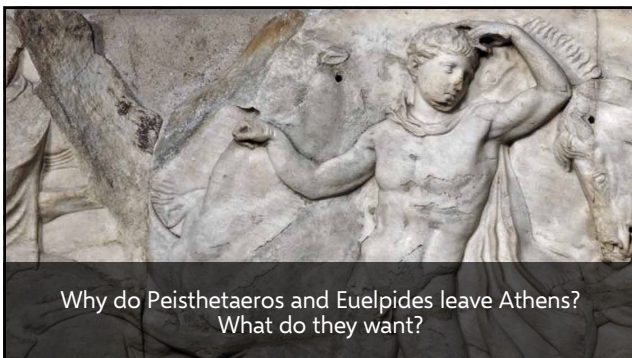
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Primary Source Reading

Aristophanes
Birds,
first half



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Why do Peisthetaeros and Euelpides leave Athens?
What do they want?

12



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Key ideas in *Birds*

- Peisthetaeros and Euelpides and their disillusionment with Athens
- The Hoopoe as a guide
- Religion and the gods
- The city of the birds as a utopia
- Why birds?
- Real-life context: allegory or absurdity?
- Escapism vs. idealism

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Cloudcuckooland

- Νεφελοκοκκυγία
(*Nephelokokygia*)
 - νεφέλη (nephélē, "cloud")
 - κόκκυξ (kókkux, "cuckoo")
 - -ία (-ía, "country suffix")
- Barrett (Penguin) translation:
"Much Cuckoo in the Clouds"
 - κοκκυγία = "much cuckoo"
 - κοκκυγία = "scarlet anemone"

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Nomos vs. physis

- How do we know what is just?
- Nomos (convention)
 - Is morality merely arbitrarily dictated by society?
 - Protagoras: "Man is the measure of all things"
- Physis (nature)
 - Is there a higher sanction to be found in something else, like the natural world?
 - A search for ways to identify natural laws of morality and justice—universal truths

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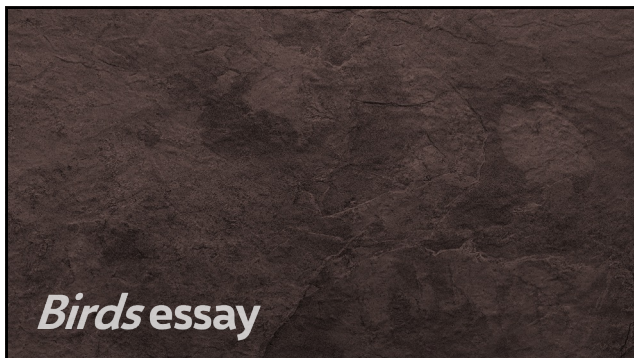
Kinds of utopia

Imaginary spaces (*utopia*) are defined in terms of existent customs (*nomos*)

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| • Anomia: | no rules | ex: cyclopes in Homer |
| • Antinomia: | reversal of real-life rules | ex: Amazonians |
| • Eunomia: | ideal rules | ex: Plato's republic |
| • Megalonomia: | exaggerated rules | ex: "imperial Rome" |

How does "Cloudcuckooland" fit into this?

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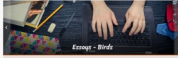


The *Birds* Essay

- Goal: Use *Birds* and one other work to say something about Athens and its culture
- Choice of three topics
- Make an argument (thesis)
- Choose three key moments that illustrate your thesis
- Compare to similar moments in another work from another work from ancient Athens

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Guidance and resources




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Birds essay options

Choose your topic from one of the three prompts below.

Option A	Option B	Option C
The use of fantasy. <i>Birds</i> uses the fantastic scenario of creating Cloudcuckooland and meeting messengers and legendary figures to comment on real issues of concern to Aristophanes. How does this compare to other ancient Greek works that use elements of fantasy or the idea of utopia to discuss matters of contemporary concern?	Aristophanes's agenda. The surviving plays of Aristophanes range over a long and turbulent period of Athenian history. Do Aristophanes's opinions and technique change over time? Discuss the consistency of Aristophanes's approach to writing, and the evolution of his overall philosophy across this most troubled period. What themes and ideas are present in both plays? Is his approach, methodology, or agenda consistent? If not, how does it change?	Gods and mortals. <i>Birds</i> uses both gods and animals as a contrast to humans. How do other plays contrast mortal humans with the gods? In what ways do the similarities or differences in <i>Birds</i> provide insight into what Aristophanes was trying to say?

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Birds essay options

Choose a second work to compare with Birds.

Option A

For the "Use of fantasy" option, choose another work from ancient Greece that uses elements of fantasy to compare to *Birds*.

Popular options include:

- *Oedipus at Colonus* by Sophocles, in which Oedipus seeks the sanctuary of a mystical sacred grove that helps him transform himself;
- *Cyclops* by Euripides, featuring the Cyclops from Homer's *Odyssey* and a chorus of satyrs;
- *Assemblywomen* by Aristophanes, which involves the women taking to create an ideal Athens; and
- *Republic* by Plato, which outlines an ideal city-state according to Plato's philosophy. (Use an outline to focus on a few key sections that might be useful examples.)

Option B

For the "Aristophanes's agenda" option, choose another play by Aristophanes to compare with *Birds*.

Popular options include:

- *Frogs*, mounted in 405 BCE, in which Dionysus, bored with contemporary Athenian plays, travels to Hades to bring back a dead playwright;
- *Clouds*, mounted in 423, in which a farmer seeks to learn false speech to rid himself of debts; and
- *Wealth*, mounted in 388, involving the god of wealth and his inability to tell good men from bad.

Any of the 11 surviving plays is fair game. Full texts in English are also available (links on the essay page).

Option C

For the "Gods and mortals" option, choose another work from ancient Greece that depicts the gods to compare to *Birds*.

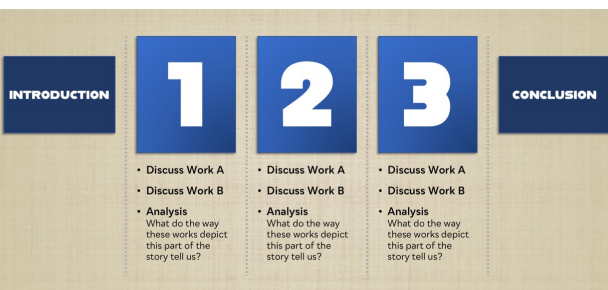
Popular options include:

- *Eumenides* by Aeschylus, which involves the Furies harassing Orestes for killing his mother, and Athena and Apollo testifying on his behalf in an Athenian court;
- *Bacchae* by Euripides, which has Dionysus punishing Thebes for ignoring his honors by driving the women into a frenzy; and
- *Hippolytus* by Euripides, which has Aphrodite plotting against Theseus's legitimate son Hippolytus, a follower of Artemis.

There are other possibilities as well.

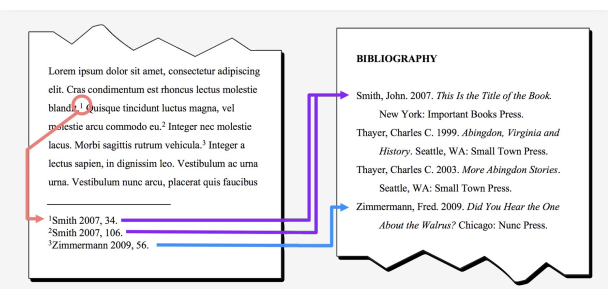
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Structure of the *Birds* essay



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Citations and bibliography



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Citing a play or poem

1080 *These Texts on Socrates*
1081 *What will you say if you're to deliver for me on this point?*
1082 *What will you say if you're to deliver for me on this point?*
1083 *What will you say if you're to deliver for me on this point?*
1084 *What will you say if you're to deliver for me on this point?*
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1099 *What will you say if you're to deliver for me on this point?*
1100 *What will you say if you're to deliver for me on this point?*

Footnote or parenthetical citation:

Clouds, lines 1087–1104

Bibliography:

West, Thomas G., Grace Starry West,
Plato, and Aristophanes. *Four Texts
on Socrates: Plato's Euthyphro,
Apology, and Crito, and
Aristophanes' Clouds* (Rev. ed.).
Ithaca: Cornell University Press,
1998.



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Legacy of the Persian Wars

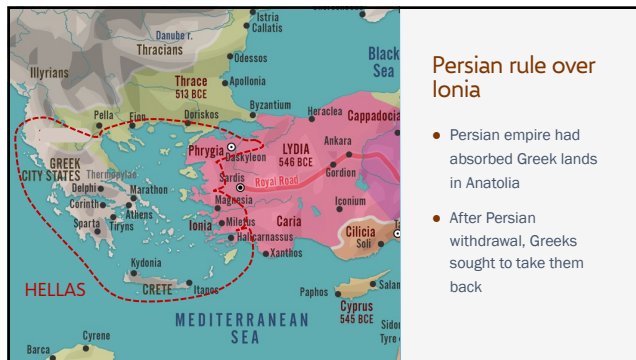
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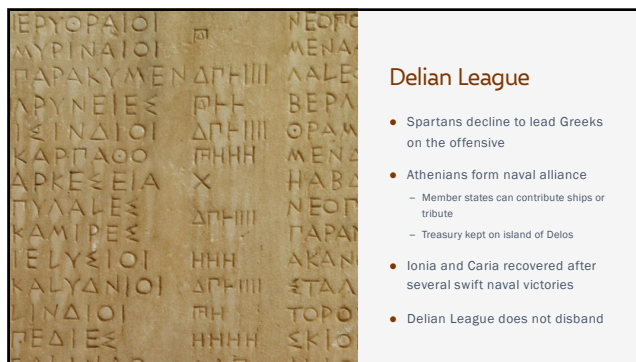
Hegemony

- Poleis are independent and sovereign
- Persian invasion causes a perceived need for leadership
- Athens becomes a viable rival for Sparta after Salamis

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Delian League: Hegemony or Empire?

- Cleruchies and forced membership
- Citizenship Act of 451
- Transfer of the Treasury
- Coinage Decree
- Athenian "despotism"
- Support of demos, opposition of aristoi across Hellas

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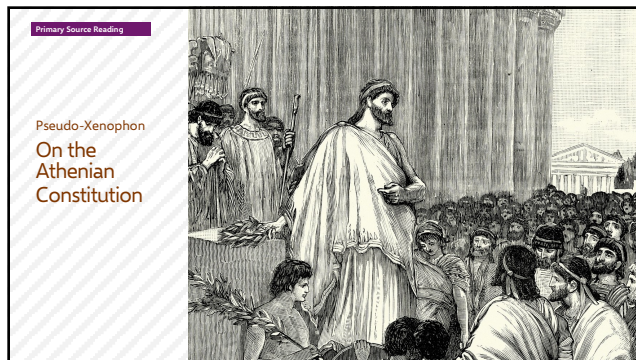
Athenian Democracy

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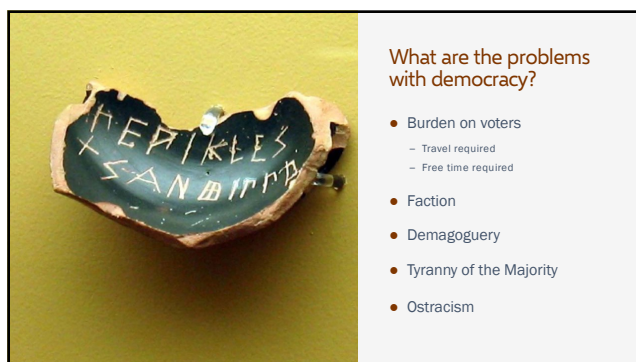
Athenian Democracy

- | | |
|--|------------------|
| • Citizen Assembly | <i>ekklesia</i> |
| – Quorum of 6,000 | |
| – Legislation, election, decrees, trials | |
| • Council of 500 | <i>boulē</i> |
| – Prepares measures for the Assembly | |
| – Executes will of Assembly (administration) | |
| – Chosen by lot | |
| • Archons | <i>archontes</i> |
| – Chosen by lot | |
| • Military magistrates | <i>strategoi</i> |
| – Elected by Assembly | |

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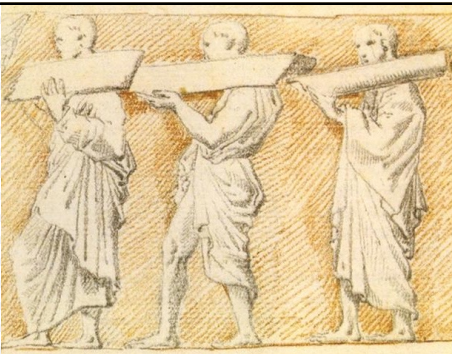
Athenian classes

- Pentacosiomedimnoi 500+
 - Largest property-holders
 - Eligible for archonship and council
- Hippeis 300+
 - Rich enough to keep a horse
- Zeugitae 200+
 - Could afford yoked oxen / hoplite armor
- Thetes
 - Wageworkers
- Metics
 - Noncitizen resident aliens
- Slaves

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Primary Source Reading

Various Documents on Greek Slavery



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Athenian thinkers

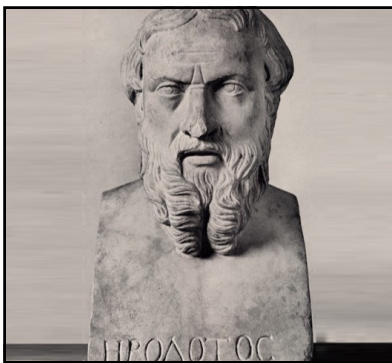
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Classical Athens

- Expansion and patronage of creative expression
- Build up and expansion of Athenian monuments and structures
- Escalation of Athenian influence

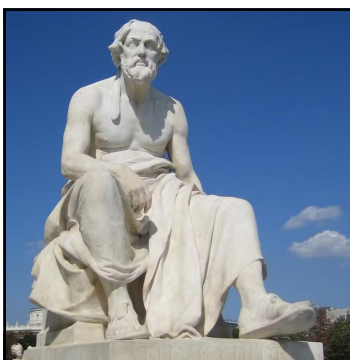
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Herodotus

- "Father of history"
- Told the story of the Persian Wars
- Approach to history?
- Overall focus
 - Social
 - Anecdotal and subjective
 - Focus on human nature

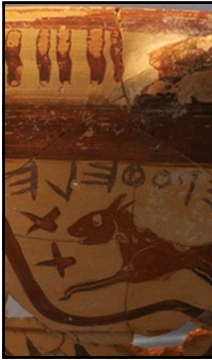
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Thucydides

- General who fought in the Peloponnesian War
- Main source for the Peloponnesian War
- Approach to history?
- Overall focus
 - Key factors causes of major events
 - Evidence-based and objective
 - Focus on making an argument and supporting with narrative evidence

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Natural philosophy

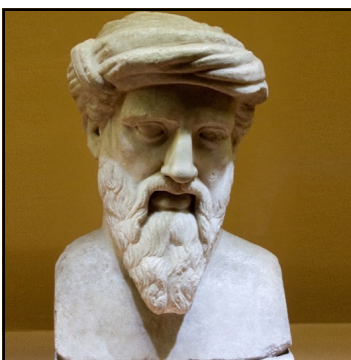
- Chaos ("expanse")
 - Primordial void / unformed mass
 - First thing to exist
 - First gods created from its substance
- Cosmos ("order")
 - Order and structure brought to the chaos
- Strong contrast
 - Chaos is the alternative to cosmos
 - Chaos is before / outside
 - Earth (place of order) vs. space (above or below)
 - Discussed in Birds
- Nous ("awareness")
 - Human genius
 - Faculty of the human mind needed for understanding truth
 - Source of reason and cosmos

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Natural philosophy

- Anaxagoras
 - Attempted to give a scientific account of eclipses, meteors, rainbows, and the sun
 - Famous for introducing the cosmological concept of Nous (mind), as an ordering force
- Empedocles
 - Originator of the cosmogenic theory of the four classical elements (earth, water, air, fire)
- Leucippus and Democritus
 - Everything is composed entirely of various imperishable, indivisible elements called atoms
- Hippocrates
 - Father of Western medicine
 - Use of prognosis and clinical observation, the systematic categorization of diseases, or the formulation of humoral theory

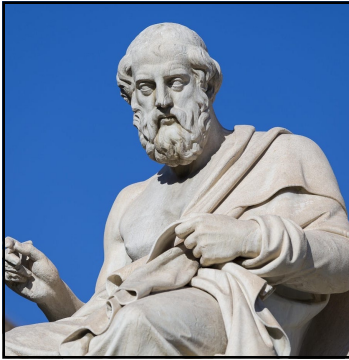
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Pythagoras

- From Samos, sixth century
- Key ideas
 - Mathematical and scientific discoveries
 - Music and harmony
 - The rationality of aesthetics
- Founder of Pythagoreanism
 - Transmigration of souls
 - Communal life
- Saw himself as a lover of wisdom ("philosopher")

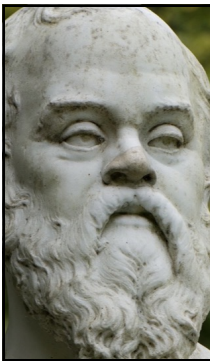
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Protagoras

- From Abdera, sixth century
- Considered a sophist
- "Nomos" philosophy
 - "Of all things the measure is Man, of the things that are, that they are, and of the things that are not, that they are not"

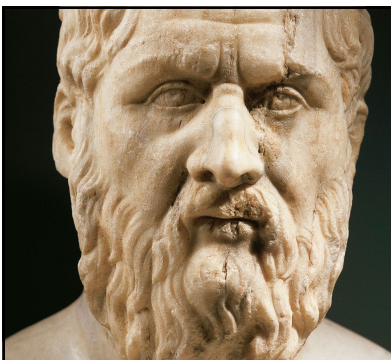
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Socrates

- Sought universal truths by eliminating unreason
- Process was to ask a series of questions that exposed irrational and superstitious thought
- Never wrote anything
 - Change created through dialog
 - Known through the writings of Plato
- Traditionalists saw him as a threat to order
 - Subject of Aristophanes's *Clouds*
 - Executed in 399 for irreligion and corruption of the youth
- Then and now considered the founder of modern philosophy

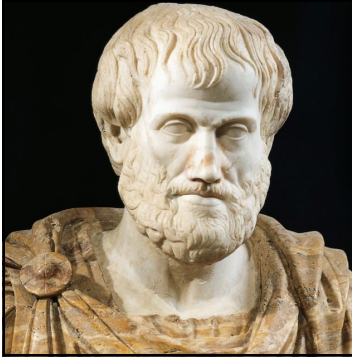
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Plato

- Student of Plato
- Comes across as more pessimistic about human nature
- Key works
 - Dialogs of Socrates
 - Republic

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Aristotle

- “Third generation” of Socratic philosophy
- Practical application of philosophy
 - Surveyed existing knowledge in many fields—politics, theater, poetry
 - Examined what worked and what did not
 - Derived basic principles
- Tutor of Alexander the Great

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