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# WHAT ROME REALLY ADOPTED FROM ANCIENT GREECE

by

CHRISTIAN VELLA

A thesis submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in partial satisfaction of the requirements  
for the degree of Master of Arts, The City University of New York

2019

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Western Philosophical Tradition : What Rome really adopted from Greece  
A Research Study

by

Christian Vella

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Liberal Studies in satisfaction of the thesis requirement for the degree of Master of Arts.

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## Abstract

What Rome really adopted from Ancient Greece

by

Christian Vella

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The Roman conquest of the Greek city-states and the appropriation of many aspects of its culture, especially architecture and art, is well known. But what of the many great philosophies that began in the various city-states of Ancient Greece? This piece is made in attempt to answer this question. The scope of these sources will start with the beginning of the Western Philosophical Tradition, with Thales of Miletus and the Milesian, all the way up to, but not including, the foundation of the Christian Philosophical Tradition. After the year 146 BC if a philosopher is born in a Greek-City state, they are to be considered Roman due to their induction into the Roman civilization. To this end, this text will be using translated original philosophical pieces, biographical articles and pieces, relevant historical data, and collected overviews of philosophical schools as sources. Using these sources the philosophies of Ancient Greece will each be described and have a representative appointed or each of them. Following this, the same procedure will be undertaken for the philosophies of Ancient Rome. After the outlining of these philosophies they will then be brought into comparison with one another, trying to track the lineage of a philosophy if possible, or even pairing up possibly unrelated philosophies that share distinct similarities. It is then that the philosophies will be compared and contrasted, their differences and similarities brought into light and reflected on before a final conclusion as to what Ancient Rome really adopted from Ancient Greece is drawn.

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## Introduction

Contemporary ideologies and philosophies are rarely, if ever, spontaneously generated. They are instead heavily influenced by the many millennia of human history, technological discoveries, then recent circumstances, and the development of culture. Western civilization as a whole can trace itself back to the machinations and the works of antiquity, particularly to that of the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations. It is through the discoveries and inventions of the classical civilizations that the modern day eventually arose.

## Ancient Greece

The first Western Philosopher is claimed to be Thales of the Greek city-state of Miletus. With Thales was established a tradition of exploration and speculation of the human sphere, the natural world, and speculation into the metaphysical and ethereal beyond. From this inquiry and desire to understand would arise the sciences, both the social sciences and the natural sciences, and academia. Educational systems would be founded by and refined by philosophers, with tutoring being exemplified by the Sophists, the Platonic Academy giving rise to higher level education along with the Lyceum of Aristotle. The Pythagoreans pushed ancient Greece further towards greater mathematical understanding of the universe, an understanding similar to that which is held today in the natural sciences. Athens in particular was held as a forum for intellectuals to congregate, learn and debate, attracting some of the greatest philosophers the ancient world had to offer, in particular Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle. These

three philosophers would change how the western world approached the world, understanding and wisdom in general, with Aristotle being dubbed 'The Philosopher' to many.

The variety existing in the many city-states of Ancient Greece and their exposure with other civilizations around the Mediterranean fueled their exploration of various political systems. From the Spartan Diarchy to the Athenian Democracy and various other systems utilized, the intellectuals of the ancient world had much to mull and ponder over. There was great consideration of morality, the nature of society, and political theory as can be seen in a variety of pieces that have survived. In regards to the social sciences and the study of culture and proper codes of conduct, there is also the Cynical tradition being born in ancient Greece, seeking to undermine all forms of convention, and the Sophistic and Aristotelian focus on forms of argumentation via rhetoric, and the many Pythagorean rituals and codes of conduct.

Along with a rich exposure to human nature in the form of governmental types they had a deep desire to understand the world around them, and in particular the worlds above them. Many philosophers sought to understand the universe in a variety of means, from the mystical and mythical to the attempts at proto-scientific natural sciences with what tools they had available at the time. Pythagoras sought to explain the universe mathematically, Democritus and Epicurus with theories of matter and void, Socrates and Plato with an understanding of metaphysical Forms, and various other philosophers seeking an elemental base to the universe. Their pursuits often lead to seemingly bizarre statements, such as Zeno of Elea and his denial of motion and movement as recounted by Aristotle. While many of their theories regarding the ontology of the universe or the functioning of those that lie within are demonstrably false, there is still much to glean regarding the reasoning that lead them to

their understandings and the repercussions of said understanding.

Of course the Greek city-states were a relatively small cluster of civilizations. Their intellectual scope was limited and their utility as a forum for the development and refining of their philosophies was subsequently also limited. Considering the cultural similarities between the Greek city-states and the historical and linguistic commonalities that bring them together, despite the many feuds that have occurred across their history, they will be spoken of in this piece as a collective civilization. As juxtaposition the contemporary intellectual fields, as many other things in the 21st century, are remarkably globalized, having to be put in contest with innumerable other philosophies, cultures, and religions.

### Ancient Rome

The Ancient Romans are known for not only adopting a large amount of Greek culture via their religion but also their philosophy, having translated much of the original philosophical transcriptions from Greek to Latin in order to preserve them. One of the most obvious aspects of the Greek culture that the Romans appropriated was their religion, adopting and renaming many of the Hellenic gods and keeping the many myths surrounding them. Along with this, the Romans adopted Greek architectural and artistic styling. From everything the Romans adopted from the Greek, arguably the most important and influential aspect they derived from the Greek were their philosophies. The Platonic Academy, its Skeptics and Platonists, the Cynics, the Stoics, the Epicureans and even the Pythagoreans found their ways into the Roman empire. It is within the Roman civilization that these philosophies discovered an

entirely new form of intellectual exposure.

So important was philosophy to the Romans that even one of their emperors, Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus, was heralded as a philosopher king (the likes of which described in the Socratic text of *The Republic*). Marcus Aurelius is considered one of the greatest and more influential Stoic philosophers in history, with his text *The Meditations* being the primary piece of literature he left behind to reveal his inner understanding and thoughts towards his philosophy. Philosophy flourished in the Roman Empire, particularly that of the Stoic and the Epicurean schools. The following of many schools increased significantly.

Thanks to the structure of the Roman empire, being vast and various peoples, cultures, religions, and ideologies, the ancient Greek philosophies would receive exposure but also be tested. While a number of Greek philosophies expanded their following and literature within the Roman civilization, other philosophies fell by the wayside and into historical obscurity. The various Milesian schools, the Pyrrhonian school, along with several others found themselves having no philosophers or writers upholding their philosophy.

It is in the massive, multicultural, and multiethnic Roman Empire that ideologies would truly be put through the test to see if they could survive the intense competition. Stoicism and Epicureanism were greatly favored, taking their place next to the Aristotelian Peripatetics and Platonism in the renewed Platonic Academy in Athens.

### Inciting Question

The question then arises: What exactly shifted, ideologically and philosophically, between the Greek and Roman civilizations? Was it an adoption and name change (followed by expansion and development), like what happened to the Ancient Greek Mythology and Religion? Was it a shift of focus, raising some ideologies to higher popularity based on preference, utility, or some other factor? Did the ideologies substantially change or develop? Would they remain recognizable to their founders? Did they keep the superficial or early theories the same but, with time and study, have drastically unforeseen conclusions?

The field of philosophy is an ever changing one, with both debate between the various ideologies within it and with the ever increasing examination of said ideologies. While the ancient philosophers set the groundwork for their theories it is their followers that often had to examine increasingly specific circumstances, testing the evidence presented, and often ultimately grasping conclusions that could be considered strange or outlandish. One such example can be found in the Socratic understanding of reality, speaking of a Realm of True Forms, which lead to many different understandings for various different ideologies that would develop from the philosophy of Socrates.

### Methodology

To properly gain perspective and understanding about these ancient and complex philosophies, this piece will examine multiple different sources. Firstly, translations of the primary pieces will be

held to scrutiny. While many of the primary documents have been lost to time for a number of reasons, a number of them have been preserved in transcriptions and translations over the years. Translations, unfortunately, do not always carry the same intended meaning as in their original language, but that is inherent to all translations and is often mitigated by offering multiple translations for obscure or technical words and terminology, or leaving the word untranslated and instead defining it. 'Arche', for example, has no equivalent in English and is instead treated as a term rather than a properly translated word. These translated pieces would not be merely held at face value, research would also be undertaken to see the historical significance of their various analogies and the people who allegedly partook in it (if it's a dialogue or recreation of a scene).

Secondly, secondary sources will also be utilized. Collective studies, either regarding an entire philosophical school across time and across its various representatives or a compilations of an entire person's life, will be utilized. That, with cross references to relevant historical events and developments, allows for a greater generalized understanding of said philosophies and philosophers. There are a considerable number of pieces lost to time with the only evidence of their existence being reference to them in other documents. These references come in the form of commentaries, philosophers mentioning other pieces in their own piece in order to examine their philosophy or for purpose of juxtaposition. Aristotle famously refers to many other philosophical schools throughout his his works, assisting in contemporary scholars' understanding of the schools even with lost texts.

Additionally, biographical information of these philosophers can assist in theorizing what they could have been exposed to, which in turn may have influenced their philosophy. One such example of exposure would be with Pyrrho of Elis, who traveled to the Middle-East and met with the

Gymnosophists and Zoroastrian Magi, which may have in turn influenced his perception and understanding of reality. Exposure to various philosophical schools, religions, cultures, fields and methods of study, even war and natural phenomena can affect how people approach their understanding of the world around them.

While these Ancient Philosophies will have theological and religious connotations to them we will refrain from examining explicit religions, and as such will end our review before the rise of the early Christian philosophies. In order to have a proper scope for this review excluding Christianity will assist in keeping the philosophies distinctly in the age of Antiquity. The second reason is the mitigating factor of faith in religion, one which does not operate so firmly in philosophy. The third reason is due to the more dogmatic tendencies that tend to be exhibited in religions. This is something that would discourage discourse and argumentation, two things vital for the exploration of a philosophical system.

It is with this approach and understanding that the study of the Ancient Greek and Roman schools will be undertaken. The philosophical schools will be identified, their fundamental philosophical topics and stances be explained, and a representative of their school will be selected in order for more specific attempts to understand their school. The use of a representative is to better allow peer to peer comparison between the philosophies across time, to see how stances have shifted and developed, if at all, and to lessen the likelihood of contradiction within a school that would occur by taking into account as many representatives as possible. The selection of representatives of the schools was based on a variety of factors, including the personal following of the philosopher, how prolific they were in regards to their pieces (be it verbal or written), whether or not they founded their school (a founder being close to the original tenants and focus of said school), and how influential they

were to the other members of their school, to name a few variables.

First the Ancient Greek will be taken into consideration. A Greek representative would be selected from each school. This is due to their civilization being older and also because they are later captured by the Roman Empire, and as such becoming exposed to the Roman civilization, necessarily ushering their intellectuals into a new circumstance. Following the examination of the Ancient Greek philosophies will come an examination of Ancient Roman Philosophies, to see which schools continued to exist or emerged within the Roman Empire. A Roman representative would be selected for each school, even if they already had a Greek representative selected.

Finally there will be comparisons drawn between the philosophies that persisted between the two civilizations, but also an examination of their successor or 'descendant' philosophies. One such example could be seen between the Greek Platonists and the Roman Middle Platonists, Middle Platonism easily being considered a 'descendant' of the Ancient Greek Platonism, but not the only one. The philosophy of Socrates was responsible for a large variety of schools in one way or another, either as continuations of aspects of his own philosophy or as a reaction and rejection of his beliefs. Following the comparison a conclusion will be drawn, both regarding a comparison of the philosophies of Ancient Greek and Ancient Rome and what factors were most likely responsible for the difference or similarity of the philosophies.

## **Ancient Greek Philosophy**

Within the bounds of the feuding Ancient Greek city-states lies what is considered the beginning of Western Philosophy, starting with Thales of Miletus and carrying on a tradition that has helped guide the course of history. While the many different city-states were distinct with different political regimes and other variances there were common notions of culture, inter-city activity (like the Olympics), common religious beliefs across the region, a common language, and a common notion of heritage. There will be philosophers from these city-states considered Roman within this piece due to them being born after 146 BC, considering they would then be part of the Roman civilization.

### **Pre-Socratic Philosophy**

#### **The Metaphysical/Physical Theories and Distinctions**

Long before the 'divine' task set upon Socrates to justify his title of wisest of all men given to him by 'the Goddess', there were those who also had a love of wisdom. The first recorded western philosopher is believed to be Thales of Miletus, as identified by Aristotle. Due to the great influence Socrates had to the field of philosophy those of the western philosophical tradition that operated before Socrates are collectively referred to as "Pre-Socratic". These Pre-Socratic philosophers sought that same things that later philosophers would seek; explanations for reality and the world around them,

understanding for things both perceptible and imperceptible, and how best should humans conduct themselves?

Before delving into this, clarification is needed regarding the 'Metaphysical/Physical' term being used. Considering one of the fields of studies within Philosophy is that of metaphysics, the study of the essence of reality. The term has developed an association between metaphysical things being extra-physical, super-physical, supernatural, or non-physical. Considering many of these philosophies do not explicitly believe in something metaphysical in a non-physical sense, especially those philosophies that focus on *Arches*, elemental basis for reality, they deposit a firmly Physicalist theory of reality. Physicalism being the stance in metaphysics that there really is no such metaphysics, that reality is explicitly, primarily (or, more often, entirely) comprised of physical matter, whatever form it may take. For the upcoming Ionians it takes the form of elements, transmuting and shifting. For the Atomists it takes the form of matter and void. Other philosophies, such as that of Xenophanes, Plato, and even more modern philosophers such as George Berkeley, believe reality to not be physically substantiated but metaphysically so. That would mean that physical reality, as presented, is either a product of or a misconception of metaphysical reality.

### Ionian Schools

### Milesians

The Milesian School, possibly the first philosophical school in the western world and Europe,

was founded by Thales. The main function of this school was to try to find explanation for the world. To this end they would engage in somewhat scientific philosophical examination and observation, often dubbed metaphysical naturalists. Rather than being a school unified by a cohesive ideology they could be more easily described as a school connected by tradition of methodology or by development on past works. Thales of Miletus is famously known for believing that the fundamental prime element, or 'Arche', is water, claiming that all other elements and configurations of reality arise from the flowing nature of water. Anaximander, Thales' student and successor, opposed him in this stance. The reason being was that opposites could not arise from their opposition. Fire, having a nature antithesis to water, could not arise from water. Anaximander held that none of the elements (air, earth, fire, and water) could be the 'Arche' because of this, naming a substance he called 'Apeiron', an infinite substance, to be the 'Arche'. The qualities of 'Apeiron' was that it was infinite and eternal, from which all things arise and subsequently return to. Anaximander was then followed by his student, Anaximenes, who concluded that Air was the 'Arche', citing divine qualities to it and explaining how air could rarify into Fire, condense into the other elements in the pattern of wind, then cloud, then water, then earth, and then stone. In that way Anaximenes explained the order of all things in reality, possibly acting as a minor allegory to explain phenomena like density.

### Heraclitus of Ephesus

Heraclitus of Ephesus had an influential philosophy of his own that deserves mention among the Pre-Socratics. Like the Milesian school, Heraclitus was interested in the metaphysical and physical composition of reality, and additionally had an interest in the moral affairs of humanity. Heraclitus held that the 'Arche' was Fire, and attributed reality to be in an eternal state of change and flux, one that was

ushered ever onwards by fire and heat. This eternal change was subject to a pattern that he dubbed *Logos*, being the pattern of change in reality. This change is greatly emphasized in the phrase 'No man ever steps in the same river twice, for it's not the same river and he's not the same man.' , a turn of phrase commonly attributed to Heraclitus. This phrase is derived from Plato's analysis of Heraclitus, being "*Heraclitus, I believe, says that all things go and nothing stays, and comparing existents to the flow of a river, he says you could not step twice into the same river*" (Graham, D.W., n.d., Heraclitus) , "*What Heraclitus actually says is the following: On those stepping into rivers staying the same other and other waters flow.*"(Graham, D.W., n.d., Heraclitus) This understanding also lead to Heraclitus' understanding of moral philosophy and justice, that in the change of all things the preservation of constancy is impossible and that existence is a series of ascension and building followed by erosion and degradation. This observation of Heraclitus regarding the fleeting and eroding nature of all things is in part what lead to his fabled somber disposition and subsequently his pseudonym 'The Weeping Philosopher'.

The Milesian School, its subsequent followers, and the studies of Heraclitus are collectively referred to as the Ionian school. While the individual theories vary between the individuals of the Ionian school they do have the tradition of iteration off of one another and the attempt to figure out the 'Arche', or primary element, that comprised reality.

### Eleatics

The Eleatic School, founded by Parmenides of Elea, was a school focused on metaphysical

idealism. Metaphysical Idealism, in contrast to metaphysical Physicalism/Materialism, puts forward that reality is primarily comprised of non-material components, specifically of notions and thoughts. The Eleatics held that reality was within 'the One'. The theory of 'The One' was that of both a hierarchy of reality (being from most real to least real), and the one entity or phenomenon that sits atop that hierarchy. Additionally the Eleatics believed in the stillness and unity of all things. To them there is no such thing as creation, and there is no arising, for reality exists as a constant with only superficial deception tricking the senses of living things. Zeno of Elea, one of the schools most famous representatives, brought awareness to his philosophy and the issue of the 'impossibility of movement' with his many famous paradoxes. The paradoxes are more or less repetitious, expressing how an objection, to reach its destination, continually has to traverse half of its remaining journey, and then half again, infinitely. With the infinite potential for fractal numbers in mathematics the issue then arises of the subject never reaching their goal, only coming very close. The progression goes : half, three fourths, seven eighths, fifteen sixteenths, ad infinitum. They stood in stark opposition to Heraclitus. These notions would not remain only within the Eleatic schools. The Notion of a 'The One' is not unique to the Eleatics, something that the Neopythagoreans and eventually the Neoplatonists would also hold, along with the deceptive nature of existence.

### Atomists

The Atomist school was founded by Leucippus and his student Democritus, though Democritus is the more well known of the two. The Atomist school is founded on the theory of Atoms. Unlike the particles that share the name, the Atom theory was one in which there were indivisible, indestructible,

and imperceptibly small particles that comprised physical reality. Additionally these particles would not inherently have qualities of their own that their larger materials may have, and hence allow for shifting from one type to another. The Atomist school is not Monistic (believing everything to be of one type or element) in its metaphysics, believing there to also be something they'd refer to as Void. Void to the Atomists was empty space, not occupied by any physical stances, and was essential to their understanding of how the atoms interacted with one another. While this can be taken for granted in contemporary physical understandings, it is not a given in ancient times. There were other Physicalists that did not include void as part of their theories, sometimes even attempting to refute it outright. Void allows for the atoms and larger structures that are comprised of atoms to move and shift, allowing for there to be change and movement in reality. Also the nature of atoms not having inherent qualities that the elements do, like heat or moisture, prevents the backlash suffered by the various elemental monisms, since from the atoms no opposites arose. While the various Atomists may have had personal ethical theories, as Democritus did, it was not inherent to the Atomist school that brought them together and as such will not be mentioned in tandem with their collective school.

While the Atomist school may not have persisted very far in history, its influence was far felt, having resonance with philosophers such as Plato and Epicurus. In fact the Epicurean metaphysics is vitally similar to that of the Atomist school, believing too in base matter and void comprising reality. As evidence to this being a crucial aspect of Epicureanism, rather than a personal belief of Epicurus that may have been put by the wayside in favor of his ethics, the Atomistic universal structure continued even into Rome, spread by others such as Titus Lucretius Carus.

### Pythagoreanism

Pythagoreanism was founded by Pythagoras of Samos, a remarkable Greek Philosopher and Mathematician. His philosophical interests had a strong focus on metaphysics, ethics, and aesthetics. Unlike other philosophers of his time, Pythagoras had a distinct mysticism to himself, his communities, and his philosophy. Following elaborate codes of conduct and induction into mysteries this philosophical following had distinctly religious tones and aspects to it, which other philosophers pushed back against.

The metaphysical foundation of Pythagoreanism was comprised of various fundamental components. These components were Metempsychosis, mysticism and numerology. The Metempsychosis was that all souls were immortal, indestructible and lead to forms of reincarnation after death, that the soul was transferred to a new body. Pythagoras himself was allegedly claimed to be a reincarnation of Aithalides (a son of Hermes) by Pherekydes for his mental aptitude and curiosity. The Mysticism of the Pythagorean metaphysics was expressed in alleged participation in rituals such as divination or prophecy, likely forms of prediction caused as byproduct from the upcoming understanding on Numerology. Numerology is most likely the most famous aspect of Pythagoras and Pythagoreanism, along with the commonly dubbed Pythagorean Theorem (Though the theorem preceded Pythagoras and was likely acquired by him via studies from the Middle East and North Africa). Not unlike contemporary understandings of celestial mechanics, astronomy and physics, Pythagoras held that all of reality was bound by mathematical functions. This was a strict causal relationship that could be observed and predicted, relating back to the accusations of divination and prophecy. Pythagoras held the Number three to be an ideal, fundamental number. This came from a

combination of a *monad* (1), representing the origin of existence, and the *dyad* (2), representing physical existence and matter) combined. As such he and his followers had a great fondness for triangles, the tetractys (a large triangle with 10 dots within separating it into various other triangles) became a sacred geometric symbol for the Pythagoreans.

The Pythagorean ethics was greatly founded on their understanding of nature, especially the aforementioned Metempsychosis. With the understanding of every physical body in reality possibly (if not definitely) containing a soul just like theirs the Pythagoreans and Pythagoras lived a Vegetarian lifestyle with one odd addition: they were forbidden from eating beans. This was due to a combination of older Greek mysticism and Pythagoras' own investigations. Pythagoras believed that beans and humanity shared a similar origin, something confirmed in his eyes upon watching a bean sprout. Diagramming both a sprouting bean and a human fetus he saw that there was a distinct similarity, and as such with the kinship between beans and humanity there would be the added possibility of beans being soul-bearing. Along with that the Pythagoreans engaged in a form of elitism, keeping distant from the common lifestyles of those around them, and engaged information from without their community suspiciously. There were tests, training, initiations and other rituals that would be undertaken by the Pythagoreans. Despite the many restrictions presented, there are records to show a sexually egalitarian tradition, which would make sense considering their Metempsychosis beliefs. In addition there was a focus on attaining purity as to allow the Pythagoreans to better live and attain higher states of awareness of reality.

### Sophists

The last of these Pre-Socratic groups to be mentioned are the Sophists. While this group is more known for their condemnation and reciprocated contempt of Socrates, they did serve an important role in Ancient Greece. Though not holding a set of philosophical beliefs and edicts that bound them all to one another, what did hold the group together was a common appreciation of observed and witnessed knowledge, an appreciation of rhetoric and its importance, and their status as professional educators, often taking up the role of tutor to the various wealthy families of Ancient Greece. While having these common points each were subjective, giving their own interpretations, without the regulation of a common school and discussion to ensure a higher level of objectivity. Their duty was to assist in raising the children, particularly the male children, of the wealthy families of Greece to continue in their success. Socrates famously gained their ire by approaching them on his search for wisdom and knowledge only to find them to be contradictory, empty, and false. One of the most well known of the Sophists was Protagoras of Abdera, being one of Sophists identified by Plato, and agitating Plato further with the statement "*Man is the measure of all things*" (Pastor, C., n.d., Protagoras (fl. 5th c. B.C.E.)). This focus on subjectivity would have also prevented the Sophists from operating more closely to one another, not having a common universal understanding to work upon.

### Socratic Philosophy

Socrates, the legendary Gadfly of Athens, is likely the most well known philosopher to have never written anything. Taking to his philosophical mission after being proclaimed by an oracle as the

wisest man he initially went to discover what the god and oracle meant by calling him the wisest man. In this venture he became well known in Athens, gathered a significant following, inspired a great number of others to the pursue philosophy. After his death his life was immortalized in the writings of his student, Plato, to be under the title of “Platonism” despite the most famous and influential texts focused squarely on Socrates.

When it comes to metaphysics, Socrates has a much greater interest in the non-physical rather than the physical, the most important aspect of which being the human soul. Soul in this case being the manifestation of consciousness that animates beings and allows them to live and direct themselves, and not solely reliant to humans.

*“... The choice of the souls was in most cases based on their experience of a previous life. There he saw the soul which had once been Orpheus choosing the life of a swan out of enmity to the race of women, hating to be born of a woman because they had been his murderers; he beheld the soul of Thamyras choosing the life of a nightingale; birds, on the other hand, like the swan and other musicians, wanting to be men. The soul which obtained the twentieth lot chose the life of a lion, and this was the soul of Ajax the son of Telamon, who wanted not be a man, remembering the injustice which was done him in the judgment about the arms. The next was Agamemnon, who took the life of a eagle, because, like Ajax, he hated human nature by reason of his sufferings.”* (Plato, 2008, p. 276)

It would seem that all other beliefs that Socrates held was derived from this interest with the soul, understanding and improving it, living in best accordance as to nurture it. From that comes his great

love of wisdom. As part of this metaphysical stance he came to a number of conclusions. From examining the world empirically and reflecting upon what he discovered he came to various conclusions, including the immortality of the soul, its reincarnation over the course of history, the notion of an ultimate reality in which knowledge is retrieved (the realm of forms), and the existence of extraphysical realms. In addition to this he had a notion of, or at the very least claimed to have a notion of, deities. His philosophical quest was inspired by a question given to an oracle who then identified Socrates as the wisest of men, and he makes continual references to serving ‘the god’ by having a love of wisdom and seeking wisdom.

Regarding epistemology, Socrates was notoriously skeptical, though not necessarily to the same level that other epistemologists may take their field. Rather than being in doubt about any and all knowledge whatsoever he had doubt as to what commonly passed off as wisdom or knowledge in society. His continual efforts to be as a self-described ‘Gadfly’ to the Athenian people is what lead him to his eventual death by Hemlock. He spent his time traveling and seeking out those who claim to be intelligent and wise before summarily dissecting them and everything they claim to know through a thorough and merciless series of inquiries. This earned him a reputation in Athens which lead him to be both greatly loved and hated. This reputation was also the cause of a number of his dialogues, many were held because those who either admired him or resisted him asked him to speak about his insights on various topics.

While his epistemological stance was greatly skeptical, though not necessarily to the high degree that other philosophical skeptics have taken it to, it was this skepticism that earned him an infamous reputation. Through his persistent questioning he came to find that those who had claims to

knowledge, upon a bit of prodding, were faulty for one reason or another. This earned him the infamy of allegedly not having beliefs or stances of his own, but rather that he took it to pick apart the ideologies of others. This wasn't true, as he did propose many stances, though it is difficult to parse what he actually held to be true versus what he put forward experimentally or for provocative purposes. His skepticism was more in line with Cynicism rather than sheer contemporary skepticism, meaning that he was more interested in reflecting upon what society puts forwards as true rather than worrying about proofs to justify the trusting of phenomenological perception or worrying about a variety of psychology or physics in regards to perceiving reality. When it comes to rationalism and empiricism he tends towards the rationalistic argument, having a stated belief about the immortality of the soul and that in life it's a matter of remembering rather than truly learning.

*“... [Socrates:] For if the living spring from any other things, and they too*

*die, must not all things at last be swallowed up in death? ...*

*[Cebes:] and we have not been deluded in making these admissions; but I*

*am confident that there truly is such a thing as living again, and that the*

*living spring from the dead, and that the souls of the dead are in*

*existence...*

*... Your favorite doctrine, Socrates, that knowledge is simply recollection,*

*if true, also necessarily implies a previous time in which we have learned*

*that which we now recollect. But this would be impossible unless our soul*

*had been in some place before existing in the form of man; here then is*

*another proof of the soul's immortality.” (Plato, Phaedo)*

Ethics is where Socrates shines the most. His investigations regarding justice, most prominently

in The Republic, are some of the greatest aspects of his work. In the Republic it was the investigation upon justice that lead to the talk of political philosophy in the first place

*“But in reality justice was such as we were describing, being concerned however, not with the outward man, but with the inward, which is the true self and concernment of man: for the just man does not permit the several elements within him to interfere with one another, or any of them to do the work of others, - he sets in order his own inner life, and is his own master and his own law, and at peace with himself; and when he has bound together the three principles within him, ... and is no longer many, but has become one entirely temperate and perfectly adjusted nature, then he proceeds to act, if he has to act ... always thinking and calling that which preserve and cooperates with this harmonious condition, just and good action, and the knowledge which presides over it, wisdom, and that which at any time impairs this condition, he shall call unjust action, and the opinion which presides over it ignorance. ”* (Plato, 2008, p.113)

It was in trying to understand the human soul and human psyche that he lead to his tripartite construction of a perfect city, splitting both the human psyche and city into three parts: the functional and bodily aspect aimed towards gathering resources and tending to itself, the spirited and honor aspect aimed towards protection and defense, and the wise aspect aimed towards reflection, discovery, wisdom and philosophy. It is from this that the notion of Philosopher-King was devised, being that only the true lovers of wisdom would be able to follow appreciate justice so thoroughly and be able to properly discover the good.

It was here he established that justice, and by the extent goodness, is for everyone to perform the functions they ought to do. Though it is the case that later on Socrates seems to either rescind on this argument or neglect it. After a lengthy description of a perceived afterlife he states that

*“And thus, Glaucon, the tale has been saved and has not perished, and will save us if we are obedient to the word spoken; and we shall pass safely over the river of Forgetfulness and our soul will not be defiled.*

*Wherefore my counsel, that we hold fast ever to the heavenly way and follow after the virtue always, considering that the soul is immortal and able to endure every sort of good and every sort of evil. Thus shall we live dear to one another and to the gods, both while remaining here and when, like conquerors in in the games who go round to gather gifts, we receive our reward. And it shall be well with us both in this life and in the pilgrimage of a thousand years which we have been describing.”* (Plato,

2008, p.277) .

This is where he seems to fall most closely to doctrinal or religious argumentation, that the treat of punishment alone is to encourage others to be good, along with additional rewards of the ability to pick the life they would be reincarnated to and the threat of never being reincarnated if they are evil enough.

Uniquely, Socrates seems to put forward rather egalitarian ideas forward, particularly in The Republic. The reach of this is across all souls, not just humans, which makes it even more astonishing (if he really did believe what he was putting forward). In multiple accounts in the Republic he encouraged women to be given similar, if not the same, tasks as men.

*"Are dogs divided into hes and shes, or do they both share equally in hunting and in keeping watch and in the other duties of dogs? Or do we entrust to the males the entire and exclusive care of the flocks, while we leave the females at home, under the idea that the bearing and suckling of their puppies is enough labor for them?*

*No, he said, they share alike; the only difference between them is that the male are stronger and the females are weaker.*

*... If women are to have the same duties as men, they must have the same nurture and education?*

*Yes. "(Plato, 2008, p.118)*

While he does refer to women as 'weaker', it is a physical reference, and not that of their ability as a thinking entity, but also due to their additional task of giving birth. While this may seem as a discrepancy the women of the Socratic republic are given freedoms the likes of which were extremely unusual at the time, even fair say in picking who their partner was, ability to be members of the military and ruling classes. If that wasn't far enough egalitarianism towards the end of the republic in describing the reincarnation of the soul he makes mention of a swan taking the life of a human, and humans taking the lives of animals. In here it would seem that Socrates equalizes souls across the species barrier, though to what extent is not known. By allowing animals and humans to become one another and act interchangeably it would seem to have massive implications for moral and ethical theory, though this isn't delved into more deeply. In addition there doesn't seem to be any mention of Socrates delving more deeply into animal ethics or even more surface level commitments such as vegetarianism,

To be held as representative of this philosophy will be both Socrates and Plato insofar as the Platonic representation of Socrates will be used. This is necessary due to the fact that Socrates never wrote anything of his own but Plato was less inclined to live in the manner that Socrates put forward. Socrates went as far as he could to embody his philosophy, living meagerly, having no funds (as he says multiple times in his *Apology*), and seeking to both examine and encourage examination. Additionally, for the rest of this piece the philosophy of Socrates will be spoken of in tandem with Platonism.

### Platonism

Socrates' most famous student and chronicler would undoubtedly be Plato. While his works are known there is difficult between distinguishing his philosophies from that of his teacher, and there is debate in academia as to how much the depiction of Socrates was skewed for Plato's intentions. If the portrayal is accurate it can be said that Plato did carry on his master's work, though not embodying it in deed as Socrates did.

Plato did not take upon the ethics of the Socratic life. He did not walk around consistently barefoot and verbally accost passersby about everything they thought they knew, nor was that ever explicitly a goal of his. His interests were more towards documenting, spreading, and institutionalizing the practice of philosophy via establishing the Academy and taking up the profession of teaching. He'd lecture and encourage debate rather than going far and wide as his mentor did.

Aristotelian/Peripateticism

Aristotle is likely Plato's most famous student. An extremely prolific author, there's hardly a known field he excludes from her purview. He, unlike Plato, did not continue the tradition of his mentor and instead split off to start his own school of thought. Aristotle went to found the Peripatetic school, the first Aristotelian school, within the Lyceum.

When it came to physics and metaphysics, Aristotle was primarily materialistic, though with a concept and understanding of extra-physicality. Unlike Socrates before him it seemed there was a greater tendency towards inequality when it came to souls. For Socrates what was needed for a soul to be good was simply to have a philosophical, a wisdom-loving, inclination or nature. To Aristotle there were inherent differing qualities of souls that ought to be respected and reinforced socially as to allow for function and cohesion. He had an understanding of three categories of substance in the world, things that were constantly in motion, things that were constantly still, and things that could alternate between motion and stillness. This leads to his theory on divinity, being the intelligence that began movement but was not moved themselves, which was later expanded upon by St. Thomas Aquinas.

When it came to epistemology, Aristotle was heavily empirical. It was in part thanks to his efforts in epistemology, physics and metaphysics that laid a groundwork for future natural philosophy and sciences. His treatises were as such a byproduct of heavy empirical study, examining the functions of the world around him, documenting it and theorizing as to the basis of it in order to allow for a cohesive philosophy. As a student in the Socratic tradition he was not without a skeptical inclination and as such spent some time in his treatises attempting to disprove the theories of his predecessors, in

particular Plato.

When it came to ethics, Aristotle was a virtue moralist and helped solidify virtue ethics. To Aristotle the virtues were means in which the soul operated, different qualities of action and determining what action to take. What mattered was seeking to bring about proper balance to the pursuit of each virtue, the most important virtues of which being courage, justice, prudence and temperance. When one indulges in a virtue too much or too little there is an imbalance which then leads to immoral conduct.

*“It is a middle state between two faulty ones, in the way of excess on one side and of defect on the other: and it is so moreover, because the faulty states on one side fall short of, and those on the other exceed, what is right, both in the case of the feelings and the actions; but Virtue finds, and when found adopts, the mean. And so, viewing it in respect of its essence and definition, Virtue is a mean state; but in reference to the chief good and to excellence it is the highest state possible.”* (Aristotle, 2003)

Valor, for example, was the virtuous medium between cowardice (the complete fear of endangerment of self), and recklessness (the senseless disregard of endangerment of self). All other proper modes of operation or conduct would find themselves in this same virtuous mean between two vices. What was important to Aristotle was allowing for a practical, living morality that both people and states could abide by for proper conduct.

In addition to these virtue ethics Aristotle had an understanding of peoples places in society. As earlier mentioned he lacked the general egalitarian inclination that Socrates began and falls more

rigidly into authoritarianism and stratification. Aristotle's view of women is an inherent difference between them and men, and an inherent inferiority and belonging to first their families and then their husband. Their contentedness and happiness is given merit of importance insofar as it allows for a peaceful and ordered society to be allowed to exist, attributing revolution as primarily inspired by the discontent of women.

*“[T]he male, unless constituted in some respect contrary to nature, is by nature more expert at leading than the female, and the elder and complete than the younger and incomplete” ...*

*“[T]he relation of male to female is by nature a relation of superior to inferior and ruler to ruled” ...*

*“The slave is wholly lacking the deliberative element; the female has it but it lacks authority; the child has it but it is incomplete”* (Clayton, E., n.d.,

Aristotle: Politics )

Due to the extensive amounts of work created by Aristotle and the fact that he founded the school himself, Aristotle is the greatest representative possible of both early Aristotelianism and the Peripatetic school in Ancient Greece. There were a number of Scholarchs, leaders of the Peripatetic school, that would serve as representatives for later Aristotelian philosophy.

### Eudaimonic or Socratic Schools

Following the life of Socrates arose a group of philosophical schools, each emphasizing

different parts of his philosophy. The schools that arose were Stoicism, Cynicism, Epicureanism and Skepticism. Many of these schools share similar factors such as tendencies towards asceticism and simple living, tendencies towards having strong ethical and virtuous inclinations, tendencies towards having philosophical investigations towards truth, and the necessity of living a ‘reflected life’. Many factors varied greatly within these schools, such as the degree in which these schools followed Socrates' philosophies, their popularity or prominence, and the ways in which they expressed their philosophy.

Platonism is not contained within this group due to the difficulty in discerning it from Socratic philosophy itself, considering it was Plato who documented the near entirety of Socrates' work. These schools in consequence sprung from Plato's works and the establishment of the Academy, making Socrates' works more widespread and known, and much easier to study rather than following Socrates in his endless journey, hoping he finds someone to interrogate or someone to goad him into discourse. Eudaimonic arises from the Greek word Eudaimonia, εὐδαιμονία, meaning “happiness and welfare” and is the pursuit of a good, moral life. It is derived from the words “eu”, meaning good, and “daimon”, meaning spirit. The Eudaimonic philosophies of Ancient Greece are the Cynics, the Stoics, the Epicureans, the Academic Skeptics, the Pyrrhonian Skeptics and the Cyrenaics.

### Cynicism

The Eudaimonic school of Cynicism was very similar to that of Stoicism in many ways, particularly in the ascetic lifestyle that was emphasized. A primary concern of their philosophy is to

live in accordance with the “principles of nature”, engage in counterculture activities such as decrying the traditional values of the people that they live around, and use caustic treatment of their contemporaries in order to prod them into improving themselves and taking up the task of seeking a virtuous life.

The main interest of the Cynics was that of ethics, to the point where they heavily neglected natural philosophy, metaphysics, epistemology, logic, and aesthetics. The focal point of their philosophy was the ethical and virtuous life that would be brought forth by living an austere life of poverty and shamelessness. These philosophers sought to attain happiness and eudaimonia through embodying virtues necessary for “human excellence”. These virtues include self-sufficiency, shamelessness, candidness, “manliness”, and love of wisdom. While not being a philosophy with an explicit metaphysical stance or particular religious alignment across all its followers there is sometimes references to gods by Cynics as to justify what they consider to be virtues.

One common trait expressed is a reverence of deification of nature, manifesting in an interest in living in accordance to principles of nature, two of the greatest examples of this is their asceticism and their notion of self-sufficiency. Self-sufficiency involves both the cynic having minimal needs to be fulfilled and them being able to satisfy as many of their needs as possible without relying on others. In spite of this the main occupation of Cynics would be begging, though not humbly pleading for alms. Much like Socrates, who believed himself to be a “gadfly” to encourage his people towards Philosophy the Cynics saw themselves in a similar position, having to adopt virtuous living to such an extreme degree as to rely upon others as to encourage others to adopt cynical virtues. It could be said that the Cynics, maybe more than any other philosophical tradition, embodied the lifestyle that Socrates was

advocating for. Additionally there is a belief that those who live in great accordance with nature, seeming to mean living in a way that is most akin to how humans would have lived without the interference of the many false beliefs that people hold.

Along with a reverence of nature there is a focus on the human 'soul' and its good as the goal of this philosophy. Due to a limited metaphysical explanation it is not solidified if by soul they are referring to a physical or extraphysical manifestation of the human mind. Considering they are within the Socratic tradition and their repeated reference to piety and deities

The Cynics gained notoriety from their 'biting' manner of speech and the aggression they have towards human civilization. It is partially from this that they earned their title of Cynic, meaning 'Doglike'.

*“95 The people of Athens called Diogenes ‘the Dog’ because he made the ground his bed and would spend the night in the streets in front of doors; but Diogenes liked this nickname because he saw that it was appropriate to the way in which he conducted himself. For he knew, as Plato recounts about the nature of dogs, that it is their way to love those whom they know and to fawn on them, whilst they growl at those whom they do not know, and that they distinguish enemies from friends, not because they have any knowledge of good and evil, but because they either know people or do not know them. The philosopher must be of such a nature that he does not hate someone because that person does not give him anything, but rather that he should regard as a friend anyone whom he sees to be in possession*

*of virtue, and recognize someone as alien to him in so far as he sees*

*badness in him. ” (Hard, R., 2012, p.26)*

Despite the manner of speech that the Cynics adopted being caustic, insulting and belittling others, they hold that all this was necessary. Adopting an example given by Socrates, that Doctors wield bitter medicine to heal bodies, not sweet and pleasurable medicine, they believed that it would require bitterness to encourage others to heal their souls and understanding. They wanted to prevent their peers from living in a manner that would ultimately be harmful to them.

In pursuit of these virtues Diogenes of Sinope is a suitable representative and one of the most notorious Cynics in all of history. Unfortunately with the tenants of Cynicism including asceticism and the degree to which Diogenes was ascetic there's no evidence that that he ever wrote down any of his works. Like Socrates, Diogenes rather embodied his philosophy, living it and pursuing it in his life while only being documented by others. He lived so simply that he was recorded only possessing 4 objects for extended periods of time: a storage jar (where he slept), a lantern, a cloak, and a cup. This limited inventory did not last, for he famously discarded his cup upon seeing a child drinking by cupping their hands. Living off a simple diet of whatever he could get from begging (with the possibility of denying more lavish dishes for more simple ones, though there are contradictory reports), leaving behind shame and social inhibition, and seeking eudaimonia through virtue Diogenes was emblematic of what it is to embody the cynical philosophies.

Diogenes of Sinope is the chosen representative of the Cynical philosophy, despite not being the first or founder of it. That title would go to his mentor Antisthenes, a student of Socrates. While Antisthenes may be the first of the school, Diogenes embodied its philosophy to the fullest and became

the standard which all other Cynics were to compare their life to. His respect for nature, disrespect for societal values, sarcastic and satirical nature, abrasive demeanor and asceticism makes him the ideal cynical philosopher.

### Stoicism

Likely the most prominent and influential of the Eudaimonic schools, with strong ethical and lifestyle values that had far reaching impact ideologically. The central ethical focus of their philosophy is a form of emotional disassociation from living, that which leads one to satisfaction. This is not at all a unique ideology, the training towards emotional stillness and asceticism being well established in Asia at the time by the likes of Buddhism, and the Stoics had exposure and were influenced by the Indian and Middle-Eastern Gymnosophists who already practiced a similarly ascetic lifestyle.

Their metaphysics were not necessarily cohesive across the ideology, but much like Socrates before them they had great investment in the power and ability of the human mind and soul. In that way there is an increased effort and urgency to disassociate the mind/soul and the body. Their metaphysical understanding served more as an underlying structure as to help their ethical understanding. Similar to the Cynics, the Stoics had a deep reverence for nature and often conflated divinity with the universe and nature, and as such the pursuit of a divine or right way of living would live in accordance with natural principles. Zeno of Citium, much like the Pre-Socratics, theorized on the elemental beginnings of the universe. He believed in the theory that the universe began with fire that eventually settled into air, then water, then in most stillness became earth and from this all the diversity of the universe came.

It was in the initial flame that movement came from, and that the soul is akin to a flame, a movement that keeps what is normally still moving. This reflects the stillness of the body in death, that the soul and agitating flame has left it. One aspect of Greek Stoic metaphysics was a more physicalist understanding of reality.

*“Stoics thought that everything real, that is, everything that exists, is corporeal—including God and soul. They also recognized a category of incorporeals, which included things like the void, time, and the “sayables” (meanings, which played an important role in Stoic Logic).”*

(Pigliucci, M., n.d., Stoicism)

The ethics of the Stoics was what governed the existence and importance of their ideology. What was good to the Stoics was Eudaimonia, a good life, and it is what they pursued. The importance was placed on emotional detachment from living in order to allow them to live more peacefully and pursue the more logical and less destructive desires of the mind. The body was not to be neglected, but not to be indulged, since it was a necessary vessel for the soul in its temporal physical existence. The importance of rejecting most emotion comes from the belief that virtue is a byproduct of reason, and as such vice is that absence and rejection of reason. The resulting emotions allowed would be will, caution, and joy, and the avoidance of desire, fear, pleasure and pain. To the Stoics logic and ethics were inseparably connected since it was from reason and logic that goodness arose. It is this logical approach to emotion from which ‘*Apatheia*’, or Apathy, became an integral concept within their philosophy. “*apatheia: freedom from passion, a constituent of the eudaimôn life*” (Pigliucci, M., n.d., Stoicism)

The Stoic ethics arose from the Stoic approach to logic and reason in everyday life. It was all about understanding what was in their control, and not engaging in fruitless, useless, and foolish pursuits to control the uncontrollable. It is why they generally seem to disconnect from the rest of the world emotionally, because it is beyond their influence to control, and as such there is no reason or point in stressing or fretting over what is beyond their scope. Their home was destroyed in a storm? That was the will of the gods, and if they did not neglect their virtues then they still left the situation optimally. Has the government treated you unfairly? That is a misstep on their part in the path of virtue, and while unfortunate it should not cause disquiet within you. It is from this understanding where peace, tranquility and some form of happiness, contentedness or *Eudaimonia* is found.

*“For the Stoics, then, the “passions” are not automatic, instinctive reactions that we cannot avoid experiencing. Instead, they are the result of a judgment, giving “assent” to an “impression.” So even when you read a familiar word like “fear,” don’t think of the fight-or-flight response that is indeed unavoidable when we are suddenly presented with a possible danger. What the Stoics meant by “fear” was what comes after that: your considered opinion about what caused said instinctive reaction.*

*The Stoics realized that we have automatic responses that are not under our control, and that is why they focused on what is under our control: the judgment rendered on the likely causes of our instinctive reactions, a judgment rendered by what Marcus Aurelius called the ruling faculty (in modern cognitive science terminology: the executive function of the brain). ” (Pigliucci, M., n.d., Stoicism)*

In a way the Stoics could have been a reaction Cynics. Having the same focus on asceticism while being less aggressive, more relaxed and contemplative and with the allowance of a few more commodities, it was a more tenable lifestyle than the Cynics provided. A calm, collected, reasonable approach to living was more easily achieved to the masses than to be impoverished, exposed to the elements on the streets accosting passersby and insulting them. This is due to the fact that Zeno of Citium was trained under various Socratic philosophies, from the Socratic dialogues, to the Cynics under Crates of Thebes, along with Academic Skeptic influence.

In selecting a proper representative of the Greek school of Stoicism there is no one better to turn to in Greece than Zeno of Citium. While very little is left of his works the importance of him founding the school in Athens after being inspired by Plato cannot be overstated. While others, such as Chrysippus, can be held as being influential or even revolutionary in regards to the Stoic school in Greece, Zeno is the soil from which is sprouted from and is key in the formation of the Stoic ideology.

### Epicureanism

Epicureanism is a philosophical school founded by Epicurus with the ethical focus on pleasure. The pursuit of pleasure would not be found in expected indulgence of drugs, luxury, food, and other debauchery, but instead with a disciplined, moderated and controlled approach to life. The representative for this philosophy will be its founder, most influential member, and most prolific writer regarding Epicureanism in ancient Greece.

Metaphysically the approach of Epicureanism had more of a physicalist bent, being Atomists, Atomism entails that reality is both physical and comprised of physical components that eventually reach a point of no division (in contrast to Corpuscularianism). This may be what lends the Epicureans to be more concerned with the body than the other schools, having it be of increased significance that may be seen as on-par with that of the body. His understandings of metaphysics could be found as contentious for his time. When discussing death and the natural worry that most people have towards its inevitable approach Epicurus has “The Principal Doctrines” regarding death.

*“II Death is nothing to us. For what has been dissolved has no sense-experience and what has no sense-experience is nothing to us.”* (Brennan, Stainton, p.167)

In this way Epicurus seems to put forward a senselessness to death, which is in contrast to the Socratic position of the activity of the soul post mortem. The Epicurean position would then follow that life is the finite time in which existence is possible, that in death there is annulment and destruction of the soul and consciousness. In addition to the “tetrapharmakos” as documented by Lucretius “*“God holds no fears, death no worries. Good is easily attainable, evil easily endurable.”*” (Simpson, D., n.d., Lucretius (c. 99—c. 55 B.C.E.)) it would seem inevitable that accusations of atheism would be likely for Epicurus as he presents a philosophy where one needn't take into account extraphysicality, spiritualism or deities. The mention of spirit is made, though the contemporary distinction of spirit isn't necessarily there. The more contemporary notion of the spirit being a non-physical aspect of a human (or other conscious entity) that can exist separate of the body, can work in conjunction with the mind, and allows for existence beyond death

Epistemologically the Epicureans are empiricists. They are of the belief that the primary way to get knowledge regarding the universe is through witnessing phenomena and having sensation, having a belief that the senses are without fault “... *According to Epicurus: They cannot be wrong (LS 16A).* *Your senses are infallible guides to the way that the external world is interacting with your body.*” (Adamson, 2015, p. 24) . While this fails to take into account some of the psychological phenomena and tendencies we are aware of today it does allow for a decent basis for an attempt at a systemic approach to understanding reality. Appreciating empirical observation is not the end of their epistemology since they do allow for deduction and reasoning.

Their ethics were centered around the notion of maximizing pleasure, but in an ultimate sense. By 'ultimate sense', what is meant is that the seeking of pleasure and gratification is not a pursuit concerned with immediate dividends. Their acquisition of pleasure takes into account the entirety of the subject's life, insofar as can be predicted, and seeks to maximize it across the lifetime. Unlike sheer indulgence and hedonism there is the necessity of moderation. Additionally, there is the necessity of taking into consideration the pleasures of the mind. In the Letter to Menoeceus, Epicurus puts forward “132 *For it is not drinking bouts and continuous partying and enjoying boys and women, or consuming fish and other dainties of an extravagant table, which produce the pleasant life, but sober calculation which searches out the reasons for every choice and avoidance and drives out the opinions which are the source of the greatest turmoil for men's souls*” (Brennan, Stainton, p.166)

With these conditions many commonly believed sources of pleasure were abstained from. Drugs, alcohol, and the pursuit of other delights that damage the body are discouraged for the future pain. In

The Principal Doctrines Epicurus claims.

*“XX The flesh took the limits of pleasure to be unlimited, and [only] an unlimited time would have provided it. But the intellect, reasoning out the goal and limit of the flesh and dissolving the fears of eternity, provided us with the perfect way of life and had no further need of unlimited time. But it [the intellect] did not flee pleasure, and even when circumstances caused an exit from life it did not die as though it were lacking any aspect of the best life.”* (Brennan, Stainton, p.168)

This is in stark comparison to the Cynics and Stoics, who seek the denial of pleasures, even subtly speaking ill of them by referring to pleasure as necessary for “*the best life*”, meaning those who didn't accept this more holistic approach were lacking the best life.

While sprouting from the philosophical movement caused by Socrates it is almost undoubted that Socrates would have chastised the pursuit of pleasure that Epicurus held high. This is despite the similarity in lifestyle that the Epicureans had to many other Eudaimonic schools: living modestly, engaging in philosophical discourse and reflection, seeking truth and goodness in all things and encouraging others to do so as well. The interest in pleasure is what keeps this school separate from all the others, even in utilizing temperance.

*“... if the nature of justice and injustice be known, then the meaning of acting unjustly and being unjust, or, again, of acting justly, will also be perfectly clear? ... they are like a disease and health; being in the soul just what disease and health are in the body? ... that which is healthy causes health, and that which is unhealthy causes disease. ... And just*

*actions cause justice, and unjust actions cause injustice? ... Then virtue is the health and beauty and well being of the soul, and vice the disease and weakness and deformity of the same? ... And do not good practices lead to virtue, and evil practices to vice? ... Still, our old question of the comparative advantage of justice has not been answered: which is more profitable, to be. " (Plato, 2008, p.114)*

It could easily be argued that seeking pleasure as the core of the philosophical pursuit of virtue and goodness, even if moderated, would eliminate it as a proper pursuit . Unfortunately this school started after the life and death of both Socrates and Plato and as such there were no interactions between the founders of the ideologies.

### Skepticism : Academic

Unlike the other Eudaimonic schools, the Skeptical schools of philosophy were more based in the epistemology and the methodology of Socrates rather than his ethical stance. In the same way that Socrates went forth questioning those who claimed to have knowledge the Skeptics went forth to question everything they could, from firmly established cultural beliefs to newly discovered. This leads them to have the moniker of being a negative philosophy rather than a positive one, meaning that instead of putting anything forward (any positive claims) they examine the claims of others and attempt to disprove them.

None of this is to say that no individual member of the school had their own stances on any

number of important topics. As individuals it isn't the case that the members of this school were completely skeptical on all matters to the point of having no beliefs of their own. Instead it was a unified goal of academic and intellectual excellence that urged them to continually doubt and undermine all things proposed to them for any fault.

Epistemology and logic is where the skeptics shine. Testing standards of knowledge, discovering and examining paradoxes, looking over the theories of others, finding and exploiting their faults. This form of academic rigor would encourage a higher standard of thoroughness and quality in postulating theories as weak ones would not be able to take ground.

This could easily be considered as one of the more unified of the schools, referring less to a unified ideology and more of a unified movement and objective in philosophy. There was no unified understanding of metaphysics, ethics or any other field of philosophy, but there was the necessity to encourage critical thinking wherever they went. In Ancient Greece what is accredited as the first Skeptical school is the Pyrrhonian Skeptical school.

Due to the relative simplicity and lack of positive ideology put forward by the Greek Academic Skeptics a single representative for their philosophy will not be necessary, and instead they will be approached as a movement.

### Skepticism : Pyrrhonian

The Pyrrhonian school was started by Pyrrho of Elis and later revived in part by the Roman Sextus Empiricus. While Pyrrho, like Socrates, did not write any of his theories. Instead, his student, Timon of Phlius, did record some of his doctrine along with satirical poems. One of the most revealing and influential works in regard to Pyrrho is the ‘Aristocles Passage’ which contains the following questions.

*“First, what are things like by nature? second, how should we be disposed towards things (given our answer to the first question)? and third, what will be the outcome for those who adopt the disposition recommended in the answer to the second question?”* (Bett, R., 2018)

Pyrrho's answers to the questions are as follows.

*“As for pragmata ‘matters, questions, topics’, they are all adiaphora ‘undifferentiated by a logical differentia’ and astathmēta ‘unstable, unbalanced, not measurable’ and anepikrita ‘unjudged, unfixed, undecidable’. Therefore, neither our sense-perceptions nor our ‘views, theories, beliefs’ (doxai) tell us the truth or lie [about pragmata]; so we certainly should not rely on them [to do it]. Rather, we should be adoxastous ‘without views’, aklineis ‘uninclined [toward this side or that]’, and akradantous ‘unwavering [in our refusal to choose]’, saying about every single one that it no more is than it is not or it both is and is not or it neither is nor is not.”* (Pyrrho's Thought, n.d., p. 23)

Here Pyrrho shows his skepticism and doubt in regards to human attempts at understanding the world. Firstly to claim that the nature of things is unknowable and indiscernible, to follow it by that we shouldn't be over reliant on our beliefs and theories, and concluding by saying that we should be without inclination or views and resisting to be affixed to any single ideology. While it may seem

paradoxical for someone to so dogmatically appeal to indecision existentialists had long ago

understood the choice in not choosing and that

The Pyrrhonians do fit into the Eudaimonic category more than the Academic skeptics, having a believed notion of a way of life. In that way they upheld an ethical standard. To the Pyrrhonians the way to a good life is through relieving the stress caused by the psychological dissonance generated from the epistemic barrier to knowledge. This dissonance causes stress and discontent, but with the Pyrrhonian school the way to reach satisfaction would be to disassociate and remain unattached to theories involving the universe. In that way they resembled the Stoics and the Cynics. The Stoics would lessen and detach from emotions and futile pursuits of pleasure that would hold them back, and the Cynics would detach from shame and other negative social stigma that caused them this negativity in their lives.

Since the Pyrrhonians are a fairly cohesive school with an established lifestyle and ethical understanding to their work Pyrrho of Elis fits in being their representative. The lack of work from him does make it difficult, but the references to him made by Timon of Phlius and Sextus Empiricus will be used.

### Cyrenaics

The Cyrenaics were a relatively small school founded by Aristippus of Cyrene, a follower of Socrates. The primary doctrine of the Cyrenaics was the importance in the immediate indulgence of

pleasure. They express ideological similarities to that of the Epicureans and the Pyrrhonian Skeptics. They were similar to the former by their common sense of pleasure seeking and hedonism, and to the latter due to their embrace of immediate empiricism and epistemological skepticism. To the Cyrenaics the goal of life was to experience pleasure in the present moment. Unlike the Epicureans, due to their highly skeptical nature, there was little use in planning for the future or being overly logical in the indulgence of some reward that has yet to come. Unlike the Pyrrhonians their skepticism was not used as a mechanism in order for them to better and more carefully try to understand the world around them in what little ways they can.

Despite being a Socratic or Eudaimonic school the Cyrenaics express what would seem to be a very strong rejection of the teachings of Socrates. Instead of focusing on the pursuit of enlightenment and turning away from the common human focus on pleasure they indulge themselves greatly. While this did not manifest itself as complete loss of self in debauchery, it did very much go against what Socrates was proclaiming.

*“Aristippus' ethics are centered around the question of what the 'end' is; that is, what goal our actions aim at and what is valuable for its own sake. Aristippus identified the end as pleasure. This identification of pleasure as the end makes Aristippus a hedonist. Most of the pleasures that Aristippus is depicted as pursuing have to do with sensual gratification, such as sleeping with courtesans and enjoying fine food and old wines.”* (O’Keefe, T., n.d., Aristippus (c. 435—356 B.C.E.))

The epistemology of the Cyrenaic is classical skeptical, that the world outside of oneself is nigh

unknowable. Rather than turning to rationalism, which is closer to what Socrates and the Platonic schools took, the Cyrenaics turned towards Empiricism. Considering the main means in which a human engages with information is by witnessing it empirically, the Cyrenaics felt that the best means in which to engage and operate in the world is based on said impressions. They also had a recognition of the subjectivity of empiricism, with people recounting the same stimuli in different ways. One such example could be found in taste, where illness causes one to taste something different from another. This allowed them to occupy a epistemological space of empirical subjectivism.

To the Cyrenaics the pivotal thing in life was pleasure and enjoyment in the present moment.

*“Xenophon, a hostile contemporary of Aristippus', reports that Aristippus rejected delaying any gratification. Aristippus advocated simply deriving pleasure from whatever is present, and not producing trouble for oneself by toiling to obtain things which may bring one pleasure in the future.”*

(O’Keefe, T., n.d., Aristippus (c. 435—356 B.C.E.))

This did not mean, necessarily, foolishness and foolhardiness. Instead there was need for some amount of reflection before engaging in actions, but not in an ultimate or very long term sense. Additionally there was a vivacious nature to this philosophy, encouraging its members to make the most of their situations and find themselves victors in circumstances where that may be unlikely. Why did they focus so much on pleasure? It was due to the natural human tendency towards pleasure seeking, and as such they fell towards what nature was seemingly communicating with them to do. This was not unlike other Socratic schools, the Cynics for example had a great investment in the natural virtues of self reliance and 'manliness'.

The representative of the Cyrenaic school will be Aristippus of Cyrene considering he is held as the founder of the school and one of its more prolific members.

### **Ancient Roman Philosophy**

The Roman civilizations of the Roman Kingdoms, Roman Republic and then the Roman Empire are at once different from Ancient Greece while being heavily influenced by them. A cosmopolitan, expansive state that encompassed most of their known world, bringing together people of numerous cultures and heritages into a single network across western and southern Europe, North Africa, and the Middle-East. In comparison to the diversity found in the Roman civilization, the Greek city-states were fairly homogeneous with many similarities (linguistically, culturally, historically, etc.) that generally stood divided until an outside force brought them together.

The influences on Roman philosophy are many, but some of the most potent influence came from Ancient Greece. This cultural appropriation is reflected in not only the adoption of a large amount of Hellenic mythology, theology, and religion but also the philosophy of Ancient Greece. Along with Ancient Greece, Rome was exposed to all the cultures around the Mediterranean sea and beyond, in turn influencing and being influenced by these peoples and civilizations. Egypt, the various civilizations of the Middle East and even Eastern philosophy, such as the Gymnosophists, had their influence seen in Rome as well.

### **Eclecticism**

With the rise of the pragmatic and cosmopolitan Roman civilizations Eclecticism may seem

almost inevitable. Instead of being a singular cohesive philosophy it inhabits a similar position that academic skepticism, that they have a greater vested interest in holding a philosophical mechanism rather than a singular philosophy. Eclecticism is not a title isolated to philosophy, but is rather something applicable to any pursuit available. Eclecticism refers to a style in which there is no single, cohesive style that is adapted but rather fragments from multiple styles are brought together. In Philosophy this can be expressed by adopting various different philosophical stances even when they aren't necessarily endemic of one another or even aren't cohesive, compartmentalizing these from one another in order to prevent excessive conflict. The method in which choosing these different ideological principles isn't universal, altering from person to person to person due to preference. In spite of that there is a general tendency towards going towards what appeals to the subject, be it from perceived truth, goodness, or practicality. In that last merit it would resemble pragmatism.

Its existence is not surprising in the Roman civilization due to the aforementioned cosmopolitan quality it possesses. With access to so many different philosophies and cultures within the Roman civilization there is great ability for its citizens to parse through them, adopting whatever theories suited their causes and cherry-picking around all that which may refute them. Thankfully for these Eclecticist philosophers they had a great wealth of intellectual tradition within their reach from not only Greece but also from the Middle-East.

The representative of Eclecticism will be Cicero, considered one of the most prominent Eclecticism philosophers though his actual contribution to philosophy may be limited. He is known mostly from his translation of Greek pieces into Latin and his work as a politician in the Roman Republic, both of which are tied to his study of philosophy. *“Cicero chose a career in the law. To*

*prepare for this career, he studied jurisprudence, rhetoric, and philosophy.”*(Clayton, E., n.d., Cicero (106—43 B.C.E.)). Considering the close relation to moral theory, rhetoric, oration and the study of history it proved prudent for Cicero to take up this study in order to excel.

### Neopythagoreanism

The teachings of Pythagoras persisted after the rise of the Socratic philosophies, retaining much of its cult-like and superstitious qualities. It held a focus on the divinity and the ontological significance of numbers and with great studies into mathematics and what could be discovered there.

*“Philostratus' voluminous Life of Apollonius explains that the sage of Tyana was a teacher of asceticism whose personal knowledge featured not only an understanding of mathematics and philosophy but also direct revelations from the gods.”* (Apollonius of Tyana (n.d.))

While Philostratus himself is considered a Sophist, he was trained by Apollonius of Tyana, one of the most influential Neopythagoreans. Neopythagoreanism, like Pythagoreanism, retained much of its mystical or ritual qualities, maintaining many of the laws and codes of conduct established by Pythagoras and holding their founder in great reverence. Due to the destruction or loss of texts over the many centuries since their prominence some of the major details of their beliefs have been documented by others.

The main differences that arose with Neopythagoreanism came from what would then be contemporary influences. Unlike the original doctrines and beliefs of Pythagoreanism,

Neopythagoreanism was influenced by the teachings of Socrates and Plato, in particular establishing a relationship between the Platonic Forms and the metaphysical importance of numbers. Due to combination of these two theories there was metaphysical understanding of 'the Good' and 'the Monad' (a term that would be later adopted by modern metaphysical dualist Gottfried Leibniz). The Good and The Monad were predecessor theories to the Neoplatonic theory of The One. This lead to the tiered understanding of reality, starting with perfection, as can be seen in the Platonic forms and the Neoplatonic The One, and descending to deceptive and base complete-anti-perfection, as can be seen in the Neoplatonic Matter.

The metaphysical understanding of the universe according to Neopythagoreanism is distinctly theistic. "According to Eudorus, the Pythagoreans posited a single supreme principle, known as the one and the supreme god, which is the cause of all things" ([plato.stanford.edu/entries/pythagoreanism](http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/pythagoreanism))

The Ethical theory of the Neopythagoreans was, like their metaphysics, a blending of both Platonism and Pythagoreanism with a combination of a seeking of a good and a perfect mathematical universal harmony being established. One noticeable facet from the Socratic influence was a greater emphasis on the ascetic lifestyle, something which is reflected in other Socratic schools such as Cynicism and Stoicism. The reason being was distinct from their peers, namely that in living ascetically you would be denying the evils of matter, preventing yourself from being base. The Cynics engaged in ascetics to optimize their self reliance and ensure their purity of virtue, the Stoics to avoid raised expectations and unnecessary hardship as a result on dependence on pleasure. This is not to deny the ascetic nature of Pythagoras and the Pythagoreans, but to re-contextualize the circumstances and causes. In addition to these beliefs there were sets of more mystical ideology as a byproduct of the

Pythagorean influence, along with an influence of the Orphic mysteries. In this way this philosophy seemed to veer closely to becoming a religion, and it could easily be seen as a religion in its own right, much like Pythagoreanism could have easily been identified as a religion.

The representative of Neopythagoreanism will be Apollonius of Tyana. He is considered crucial in sustaining the tradition but seeking greater understanding that may not have been found therein the tradition, expanding it to encompass more. While his works did not survive, he is remembered through the writings of his student, Philostratus the Sophist.

### Middle Platonism

The teaching of Socrates and Plato remained influential many years after the death of Plato. Being such a prolific and prominent pair of philosophers, especially with Plato's tendency towards writing and his founding of the original Academy, lent him to have a sizable following and preservation of his documents. The main push forward for Middle Platonism against the Academic Skepticism was the rejection of knowledge as an impossibility, allowing for a firm positive philosophy to come forward. This was an affirmation of the life of Socrates, his continuous pursuit of knowledge, attempt to do good, and to seek the light of reason.

*“Scholars generally consider the Middle Platonic period to have begun with the work of Antiochus of Ascalon (d. 68 B.C.), who was responsible for overhauling the increasingly stifling skepticism of the New Academy.”*

(Moore, E., n.d., Middle Platonism)

Middle Platonism functions as a continuation of Platonic philosophy with additional works and widening the scope that it tackles, along with bringing the Platonic Academy to a more positivist stance. The additions brought into Platonism to bring it into Middle Platonism there is the inclusion of Aristotelian work (from the Peripatetic school), Stoic work, and the influence of Pythagoreanism. Unlike the original academy and the original Platonism, having more of a focus on the Academic Skeptical aspect of the teachings of Socrates and Plato, this would be a bit more grounded and functioning, asserting more strongly a positive philosophy.

The ethical core of Middle Platonism was similar to that of the Platonic philosophy, namely the pursuit of justice. Justice, in this context, was the operation of things in their intended or best suited place and in their intended or best suited way. It was proper order and configuration, allowing for better cohesion and cooperation between peoples and mutual respect in seeking ever higher mental aptitude. It was the understanding of boundaries and rules. While Socrates' doctrine may be vague, but it works as a proper structure to which other rules and edicts could be founded, and it was especially crucial to the understandings of the Neopythagoreans. The influence of the Pythagoreans is unmistakable in the Middle Platonism. *“Plutarch understood the highest goal of existence as achieving likeness to god, yet he had little confidence in the ability of human reason to adequately contemplate and understand divinity, believing instead in the possibility of divine revelations.”* (Moore, E., n.d., Middle Platonism)

The metaphysical and physical study of Middle Platonism continued on in the examination of the Socratic/Platonic forms in comparison to particulars and the extrapolation of their perfection, as ideal aspects to which all things physical attempt to emulate. This would act as a groundwork for

Neopythagoreanism and Neoplatonism in their eventual hierarchy of existence. While many of Plato's writings had a focus on ethics, epistemology, and cultural critique, there were also clear asides to talk about metaphysical understanding of the universe. The Phaedo and The Republic included at length discussions on the nature of the soul and what death is, for example.

The representative of Middle Platonism will be Plutarch of Chaeronea. His selection is due to him being one of the most renown Middle Platonists and the number of works he produced, both as a philosopher and a biographer. *"Plutarch was a prolific writer. The so-called Lamprias catalogue, an ancient library catalogue (preserved mutilated) ... lists 227 works, several of them no longer extant (Russell 1973, 18–19). Plutarch's works divide into philosophical and historical-biographical."* (Karamanolis, G., 2014)

### Neoplatonism

Neoplatonism on the other hand has a somewhat Eclectic nature, introducing other philosophies and even theologies into Platonism such as Neopythagoreanism. Coming as a byproduct of a blending various philosophical and religious traditions it still holds its identity as a form of Platonism thanks to its tendency towards the Eudaimonic Schools (most especially skepticism and stoicism) and towards the spiritual aspects of the teachings of Plato and Socrates. Unlike Middle Platonism, Neoplatonism is a categorization of philosophers and philosophy made retrospectively rather than something necessarily recognized during its time in Rome.

The Representative of Neoplatonism will be Plotinus, being both one of its most prolific and earliest philosophers, often considered to be its founder. Neoplatonism, in Plotinus' honor is sometimes referred to as Plotinism. Neoplatonism is not a then-contemporary ascribed title, instead the title was placed on them during modernity considering the distinct traits this philosophy does no share with its originating philosophy.

One of the major focuses of Plotinus and Neoplatonism is the pursuit of understanding reality via metaphysics. Plotinus organized reality in an order starting with The One. “*The One is the absolutely simple first principle of all. It is both ‘self-caused’ and the cause of being for everything else in the universe.*” (Gerson, L, 2018). The description of existence then describes categories of things descending from The One. The One, along with it being ontologically self-emergent, has qualities such as being infinite, being goodness and beauty, being orderly, and being the most real and, most importantly of all, being the most simple. This simplicity is needed in order to explain how more complex forms arise from it and All other categories of existence descends from The One, all the way down to “Matter”. Matter is considered to be comparable to an inversion of The One, namely being the least real (Non-being) and illusory, being evil, ugly, chaotic, and complex. “*According to Plotinus, Matter is to be identified with evil and privation of all form or intelligibility*” (Gerson, L, 2018).

All the aspects of The One are integral to both it and all of reality as a consequence, used to explain both physical and metaphysical processes. The qualities of goodness and beauty are complementary, as there is the notion of true beauty accompanying true goodness. The qualities of The One being the most real, most orderly and most simple allow then that all things branched off from it, diversions from the seemingly perfect design, can explain all the chaotic, illusory and even unreal

aspects.

*“Neoplatonic philosophy is a strict form of principle-monism that strives to understand everything on the basis of a single cause that they considered divine, and indiscriminately referred to as “the First”, ‘The One’, or “the Good”. Since it is reasonable to assume, as the Neoplatonists did, that any efficient cause is ontologically prior to, and hence more real, than its effect, then, in the hierarchy of being, the first principle, whatever it is, cannot be less “real” than the phenomena it is supposed to explain.”* (Wildberg, C., 2016)

In relation to more traditional Platonism, ‘the One’ is essentially the ultimate form from the Realm of Forms as Socrates and Plato describes it, additionally embodying the position of the Sun in the Cave Allegory. The Sun, in the Cave Allegory and especially near the end of the republic, serve the point in analogy as the creation of existence, life and goodness all in one. As such the One embodies all of these positive things, being the fount from which all good comes from and the further down the spectrum of existence something is found the more warped from the perfect qualities of the One until it eventually reaches the lowest rung for Neoplatonists, referred to as ‘Matter’. This metaphysical stance is not unique, being reflected by a number of religions, and especially in later Christianity (which can attribute much of its original philosophical and metaphysical development from Neoplatonism), having a comparative distancing from God being an attribution to imperfection. Earlier philosophies, such as the Eleatic school and the Pythagoreans, also had a similar approach to metaphysics.

One thing The One does not possess is intellect, that being a quality of other categories and beings within it, but not to Matter. Intellect is the first step down from The One, being the faculty of

comprehension of forms. The category being intellect, that which is one increment below The One, is sometimes referred to as Divine Intellect. It could reasonably be said that intellect is not necessary for The One and as such, in the necessity for simplicity, it lacks such a trait. The reason intellect is not necessary for The One is because it simply is being, not the reflection of being.

### Aristotelian/Peripateticism

The Peripatetic school did not have the same following that the other Hellenic schools had in Rome. *“The obscurity of Aristotle’s works hindered the success of his philosophy among the Romans.”* (Peripatetics, n.d.). Instead, such there was a greater focus on the Peripatetics to preserve the works of Aristotle. Aristotelian philosophy did make significant impact to Platonic philosophy in the Roman empire, and thanks to the semi-Eclectic nature of Middle Platonism and Neoplatonism it took part in the synthesis these philosophies needed to exist.

Long after the life of its founder, Aristotle, the Peripatetic school continued into the Roman empire and around the Mediterranean. Considering its foundations in the Platonic Academy, though acting as a departure in many ways, it would seem natural that the philosophies would alter due to the mutual exposure, though the core values remain relatively the same. The Peripatetic school continues its main divergence from Platonism, namely the emphasis on Empiricism and a more Physicalist understanding of reality versus the more Rationalistic and Idealistic views that Platonism put forward. It is in much this way that the Peripatetic school was more similar to natural philosophy than other Socratic or Socratic-descended philosophies.

The metaphysical stance of the peripatetic school was, as indicated above, physicalistic (subscribing to physicalism). Namely that the foundation of reality was of two components, that of matter and forms, though not in the standard Socratic or Platonic understanding. Matter acted as a base substance which all existence is founded from, without qualities but with infinite potential. The actualization of the potential comes in the notion of the form, the matter gaining shape and properties in order to properly operate in a physical world. To explain living things there was a theory of soul, an animating force or energy, that allows for organisms to operate, though on different levels. The soul is responsible for the faculties of reproduction, nutrition, memory, recollection, reason, and understanding, and more, though there wasn't a necessarily extraphysical understanding of said 'soul' as may be ascribed in a more contemporary understanding. These souls were inherent to and inseparable from the bodies which they operated.

The ethics and social philosophy of the Peripatetic school acted primarily as an understanding and justification of the politics it bore to witness and, in turn and partially opposition to the Platonic works, came to support things like sexism and slavery. Another major facet of the ethical philosophy of Aristotle was the examination of virtue in an analytical and pseudo-scientific way, namely by organizing it. The various virtues as listed in the Peripatetic school are only considered virtues in moderation. The virtues are traditionally between two vices, a prime example being bravery or courage being the moderation between the vices of foolhardiness and cowardice. Another integral factor of Aristotelian ethics is the recognition of the virtue within others, submitting to the more virtuous and dominating over the lesser as to ensure their eventual rise to virtue. As a consequence of this there is a strong sense of social structure and place for the Peripatetic, along with an acute sociological

perspective of justified elevation or degradation of a person due to their virtue. This fit well within Rome, a society that believed itself to be heavily meritocratic and accomplish-oriented.

The representative will be Alexander of Aphrodisias, one of the most important figures in keeping the philosophy alive into the Roman civilization. He did so by writing commentaries to the writings of Aristotle, keeping alive the examination of Aristotle's work into this age. This is in recognition of the work done by Andronicus of Rhodes who worked to compile the collected works of Aristotle into the *Corpus Aristotelicum*.

### Eudaimonic or Socratic Schools

The Eudaimonic schools did not go into the Roman civilization unaltered. With the popularity of Greek culture within the Roman world it goes without saying that some of its most influential philosophical schools found many sympathetic followers awaiting them. The people of Rome and all the Mediterranean were seemingly seeking for a path to happiness and Eudaimonia, which these philosophies offered. The philosophies mentioned previously had aspects of blending and rarification of ideology. Due to a combined effect of the continued efforts of subsequent philosophers building upon one another in these philosophies and the ever-increasing exposure to other ideologies these philosophers were exposed to there came reflection in the work.

When the Roman empire conquered Greece the Socratic schools were prosperous, as such making them prime for transfer and translation into Latin by Roman intellectuals and scholars. In order to

ensure the preservation of the work it was common to have texts rewritten, one of the major factors influencing this was the development of new technologies involving the creation and storage of text. The Eudaimonic Schools of Ancient Rome are the Cynics, Stoics, Epicureans, Academic Skeptics, and the Pyrrhonian Skeptics.

### Cynicism

Cynicism managed to continue into the Roman civilization, though the transition seems to have spared nothing of their cause. Still deeply ascetic and virtuous, concerned about the self-sufficiency of people and the shunning of material goods in order to live more closely with nature. This nature also makes them notoriously difficult to study posthumously considering it is said material goods that are needed to document these philosophers, though thankfully there is documentation on their activities, habits, and wisdom. Cynicism was both loved and hated in the Roman world, admired for the honest and direct virtuous and good life that is lead of deep sacrifice, but similarly complaints regarding its practitioners. It is with these complaints that we are assured Diogenes' wishes live on.

It could be theorized that maybe in the very same aspect of the philosophy that would lead to such a lack of documentation would also lead to the relatively stable nature of the philosophy. Similar to skepticism, Cynicism has a highly negative disposition, but that is due to a very strong core of positive beliefs. The virtues of rationality, self-sustaining, freedom, autonomy, and the importance of education and information (often translated as 'Manliness') keeps the Cynics busy with deconstructing the foolishness around them. It is this that also keeps them from giving too much speculation regarding

the nature of reality or really any other philosophy. While the Philosophical exploration of Absurdism arise in the 20th century in Europe with philosophers such as Albert Camus, it could be argued Cynics engaged in this examination heartily, much to the discontent of all those very much invested in their civilization, traditions, rituals, and social structure.

The representative of this philosophy in Rome will be Demonax, teacher to Lucian of Samosata. His selection was due to him being one of the most famous Cynic Philosophers of that age, but the difficulties of the earlier Cynics carries on: the biggest one being that he did not leave any writings. Thankfully his student, Lucian, wrote the *Life of Demonax* in honor of his mentor to allow future generations to bear indirect witness to his philosophy and virtue.

Like Diogenes before him, he did not turn away those who were keen to learn philosophy from the virtuous, he allegedly lived simply. Considering the famous anecdotes of Diogenes of Sinope, Demonax was often compared to him, and was even asked which philosophers he admired replying "*I admire them all; Socrates I revere, Diogenes I admire, Aristippus I love.*" (Lucian of Samosata, n.d., LIFE OF DEMONAX). Like Diogenes before him he was known for great stubbornness but also for virtue. Unlike Diogenes, Demonax earned his reputation as a resolver of arguments and a maker of peace. Like his philosophical ancestors he also bore a sharp and caustic wit in order to strike down the foolish, illogical and non-virtuous things he saw about him in society. Demonax became rather revered in his lifetime, seen as sagely and a bringer of much good to the point where people would happily offer him stay at their home and as much food as he could want. In the end, after allegedly living nearly a century, he died from self-imposed starvation and Athens deeply mourned losing him.

### Stoicism

Of all the Eudaimonic philosophies, Stoicism was one of the most prosperous in the Roman empire. There is no shortage of evidence regarding this claim, showing the wide number of people that adopted this philosophy from all strata of life and all levels of society. This was in part thanks to the universal usefulness of its tenants, the increasing number of stoic groups being established, and the works made available for all within the Roman expanse. One of the more influential pieces made the *Enchiridion* of Epictetus. Its tenants of emotional distance, mastery of self, and acceptance regarding what life and fortune may offer remain relatively undisturbed. Stoics even assisted in actualizing a deep desire of Socrates and Plato; the establishment of a proper ‘Philosopher King’ (as mentioned in *The Republic*). This Philosopher King was Marcus Aurelius, the 16th emperor of Rome. He upheld stoic virtues in his life both as an emperor and as an individual. His works, *the Meditations*, are held as a landmark in Stoic philosophy despite the fact that Marcus Aurelius never intended for them to be published, writing them instead as part of his own personal meditation.

Considering the number of possible candidates the one that is selected will be justified. The Stoic Philosopher that will represent Stoicism will be Lucius Annaeus Seneca, also known as Seneca the Younger, or just simply as Seneca. The reason for his selection not only the amount of work he produced but also the distance he carried his philosophy with him, all the way to the grave.

Being accused by then emperor Nero, who Seneca advised and tutored, of conspiring to betray him he was sentenced to death. Instead of resisting this fate he instead took up the opportunity given to him to take his own life rather than be executed, to which he did. Slicing the veins in his wrists he had a

lingering slow death, according to Tacitus (a roman senator and historian). In the words of Seneca “*Can you no longer see a road to freedom? It's right in front of you. You need only turn over your wrists.*” (The School of Life, 2014) . It was the life's work of Seneca to adjust his understanding of life and assisting others in theirs, allowing them to handle the hardships more favorably.

At the core of the Stoic understanding is the realization that life is fraught with events that are often used as justification or causes of suffering. The realize that these events are only able to negatively impact people due to the inherent understood attachment or association between the self and the event. An example of this would be the incarceration of someone. To a family member of said incarcerated person, it may be a negative experience and as such inspire grief or frustration. To a citizen of the state it may be seen as positive, that there is one less criminal threatening them and that they will now be subject to justice via punishment and rehabilitation. To an anarchist or anti-establishmentarian, they may be frustrated due to the belief that the justice system is corrupt and that people's freedoms should not be hindered by governmental and social machinations.

To counteract these frustrations the Stoic focuses inwardly and a certain quality in all events: either the ability to control or have no control over a situation. Using a dispassionate and neutral approach they examine a situation to see the degree of control they have over it. If they have no control, then there was no way to avoid said situation, and as such fretting over the inevitable is illogical. To all things they can control they focus on trying to optimize the outcome or improve their situation. The Stoics came to the conclusion that all things external to themselves, namely natural phenomena and the actions of others, are outside of their control. As such the operations of both the natural world and the social realm are outside their ability to control or regulate. The Stoic recognizes

that the only domain in which they have control is the self, how they interpret data and how they act.

Following the determination of control, the Stoics realize that often attachment is what leads to dissatisfaction and suffering. In the Enchiridion it actively encourages feeling unattached to many things that are commonly held close, such as family members and spouses, and instead encouraging a loose attachment on large groups since the human psyche does inherently form attachments.

*“With regard to whatever objects either delight the mind or contribute to use or are tenderly beloved, remind yourself of what nature they are, beginning with the merest trifles: if you have a favorite cup, that it is but a cup of which you are fond of—for thus, if it is broken, you can bear it; if you embrace your child or your wife, that you embrace a mortal—and thus, if either of them dies, you can bear it.”* (Epictetus, 2014)

### Epicureanism

Epicureanism was also popular in Rome. The focus towards pleasure is one that was widely appreciated in Rome and the establishment of Epicurean-style homes became widespread across the civilization. While suffering competition from other Hellenic and Greek philosophical schools, Epicureanism did make an impact on Roman society. Epicureanism was given consideration alongside other philosophies such as Platonism, Stoicism and the Peripatetic School.

The representative of Epicureanism will be Lucretius, Titus Lucretius Carus. Despite being

remembered as a poet, he was also a philosopher. Lucretius was one of the most prominent voices in the way of Epicureanism both in the natural sciences and morally. It is in part thanks to him that Epicureanism was able to flourish in the Roman civilization, alongside the staunch opposition of the Stoics.

In his piece *De rerum natura* ('On the Nature of Things') Lucretius advocated for the Atomist view that Epicureans had been supporting, pushing back against the various pre-Socratic metaphysical understandings of the universe. The stance continued that the universe was comprised of physical matter, one that did not align with any of the previously held fundamental elements of Earth, Water, Air and Fire, and a void that existed between this matter. Lucretius did not mere propose this unfounded, but gave reasons as to why none of the other elements could sensibly transmute themselves or appear as the others, claiming that the reasoning for any of them being the base element of reality is insubstantial. Lucretius postulated that reality was matter and void, matter lacking what he dubbed 'Secondary Qualities' like the other elements other than merely being physical, and void being necessary for proper rearrangement of this matter in order to be able to have qualities and interact with one another.

While many of his beliefs did mirror more contemporary and scientific understandings of reality, namely that physicality in general is comprised, more or less, of base particles in different modes and void, Lucretius did oppose the notion of a spherical Earth. Lucretius instead advocated for a universal structure that would be similar to the Socratic one and many others before it, of different types of material have what may be called different 'weights' or 'density', the heavier materials sinking to the bottom while the lighter material floats, hence why water is above earth, air above water and

earth, fire above all three, continuously for all the configurations of matter.

The Epicurean epistemology of Empiricism was upheld by Lucretius, claiming to base his primary physical understanding of the world on what he sees and witnesses via study and not merely deduction. He uses his observations to make arguments about the importance of humans over other species, in particular noting the common maternal instinct among mammals (including humans). He also observed, to a minor degree, the development of species but did not see them interconnected.

*“But neither were there Centaurs (Monsters compounded of animals of different species never could have existed, for the growths of the various animals are not parallel), nor at any time can there be animals of twofold nature and double body, put together of limbs of alien birth, so that the power and strength of each, derived from this parent and that, could be equal.”* (Lucretius, 1948)

The Epicurean ideology on the ethics of sustainable pleasure persisted. The reasonable pursuit of pleasure still holds close to the Epicurean Morality, assisting its practitioners in living wisely and not fruitlessly. In fact, the number of Epicurean communities swelled greatly across the Roman civilization and, in their own way, unintentionally may have influenced certain aspects of Christian monasticism. Like the Christians that would supplant these Socratic philosophies in Rome, the Epicureans advocated for a quiet life spent in intellectual seclusion, study, and reflection, along with a rejection of the many stresses of life that still afflict humanity today. These afflictions manifesting in the great stress for survival, the need for ever improving living standards, struggles for social acceptance and recognition, the hunger for fame and fortune, the unnecessary dealings with the malicious, and many more. In these

communes the Epicureans tucked themselves away and focused on simple, honest work that they could manage themselves, even if it wasn't especially prosperous or luxurious.

Unlike Christian ideology, the Epicureans were imminently focused on life and maximizing the pleasure therein. They saw that living sensibly let them avoid unnecessary hardships and stress, that their communes filled with other intellectuals and philosophers was mentally stimulating and good for the psyche, that the common moral interest allowed for them to engage with agreeable and trustworthy people that they would be happy to call friends, and that they would gain greater satisfaction in having reasonable aspirations with personal labor (such as gardening, simple manufacturing, study). It was truly a life to be envied.

### Skepticism: Academic

It was in Rome where the Academic Skeptics petered out, being replaced more firmly with the Middle Platonists and then the Neoplatonists. Even in Rome the Academic Skeptics remained a negative philosophy and a standard mode of operation for its practitioners to actively doubt, undermine and prove weak the positive propositions of others. While this is good for academics, receiving untold number of contradicting theories from naturalists, philosophers, and other scholars, in order to test the mettle and worth of their theories they would need to be tested by a more radical and concentrated skepticism.

In the same way that the Greek Academic Skeptics were a negative philosophy, lacking positive

or assertive aspects to their ideology other than systemically doubting all propositions presented before them, the Roman Academic Skeptics operated. It is due to this that there will be no representative selected for the school.

### Skepticism : Pyrrhonian

Pyrrhonism, while arguably the least populous it managed to survive in the Roman territories and expand its seeking of Eudaimonia via what they called 'ataraxia' (imperturbability). Along with accepting the unknown and unknowable to ease the human psyche there were exercises in both logic and epistemology to be explored by the Pyrrhonian and with the addition of later 'modes' or manifestations of documented skepticism.

The representative of the Pyrrhonian school of Skepticism will be Sextus Empiricus. The reasoning for this choice is because Sextus Empiricus is very likely the sole reason as to why Pyrrho's philosophies continued into the Roman civilization and are remembered to this day, despite their lack of mass recognition or popularity. Sextus Empiricus was a Roman physician and Philosopher, using his philosophical understanding to better hone his ability as a medical practitioner.

Sextus Empiricus, while being a skeptic and Pyrrhonian, did advocate for the use of empiricism in his work. Unlike radical skeptics, the Pyrrhonian skeptics advocated a mediated and lived skepticism, by which I mean using skepticism as a foundation for further inquiry to prevent presumptuousness or over indulgence in baseless postulation or unfounded deduction. “*Sextus tells us*

*that the distinctively Skeptical ability is the one which enables its possessor to set out oppositions of such a sort that suspension of judgment ensues (tranquility, we learn later, will follow 'fortuitously')*"

(Morison, B., 2014) The reasoning behind the advocation of Empiricism versus another epistemology, like Rationalism, is again rooted deeply in the skeptical aspect of Pyrrhonism. With Rationalism it would require increasing branches of deduction with a basis on understanding, inflection, or insight, while Empiricism is more immediate. Immediate understandings based on immediate appearances. Additionally, Pyrrhonism allows for a detached approach and disassociation between observer and the observation by employing a fallibilistic mentality. Fallibilism being in regards to epistemology, there is no way to completely justify any knowledge in its entirely. This mentality would be supported in the modern philosophic forum by David Hume.

The association between Sextus' medical practice and his philosophy was constructive, thanks to personal experimentation and direct witnessing of proof. Instead of having conjecture on what may substantiate physical bodies Sextus would derive his work on that which he had the greatest faith in, his own witnessed and noted phenomenon and experiences. It was the skeptical doubt in other theories about the basis of human anatomy and physiology that allowed him to have a more lived and immediate perspective, seeing how different attempted cures and reagents would alter the body. This was likely to end up more efficient than the medical theories of the time, such as the teachings of Hippocrates and Galen's theory of Humours, having it replaced with personal experience as to what works.

As before, the ethical doctrine for the Pyrrhonians is lacking, limited to introspective ethics. It gives one's better means of handling themselves and information, offering means of action and

conduct, rather than edicts on what basis one should handle others. In that way it stands apart from the other Socratic/Eudaimonic schools, which had a much stronger moral focus (as Socrates himself did).

### **Comparing Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome**

After examining in depth the various philosophies of Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome there needs to be a comparison. The comparison will cover both differences within schools and between schools. Considering the possibility of many schools and ideologies began as Pre-Socratic and eventually influenced or became Socratic schools the distinction will no longer be held. While certain philosophies have influenced many others the focus for this section will be the most direct lineage or succession of the earliest form of the philosophy. There will also be philosophical overlap with lineage because many philosophies effectively merged in order for their successor schools to be formed. The clearest and cleanest example of this being the interaction between the Pythagoreans and the Platonists (with the influence of the Stoics and Aristotelians) with regards to the Middle Platonist, Neopythagorean and Neoplatonist schools. Because of this the information will be presented as needed for each section.

### **The Metaphysical/Physical Theories and Distinctions – Various Other Schools**

The majority of the many Metaphysical/Physical focused schools of Philosophy in Ancient Greece did not survive the carry over to Rome. These schools were inherently limited in scope, focusing primarily on cosmological and metaphysical or physical theories to describe reality and its operations while many others would come about with ethical, logical, epistemological or aesthetic claims as to substantiate themselves. While their decline inevitably came, their work did endure. Many of these Pre-Socratic Schools had succeeding schools that adopted aspects of their ideology,

incorporating these elements of their ideology with their own.

This is especially prominent with the Eleatic school of Parmenides. Considering the stance that Socrates and the Platonic schools took regarding their metaphysics/physics and even the stance put forward by the Pythagoreans it would be unfair and inaccurate to simply conclude that these ideologies perished and had no subsequent influence. In particular the theories of the Eleatic with the focus of 'The One', a term which will be very important in Neopythagoreanism and in Neoplatonism.

### Atomist School - Epicurean

The key belief of Ancient Greek Atomism is that reality is comprised entirely of Matter and Void. Epicureanism, founded after Atomism, shared this belief. While the influence of the Atomists on Epicurus and Epicureanism is clear, there are key differences that have ramifications for the philosophies.

The differences can be summarized regarding the believed properties of matter. The first is known simply Epicurus attributing one additional property to Matter, that of weight. Democritus applied the traits of size, shape and resistance to matter, in contrast to the elemental basis of the various 'Arche' put forward by the Metaphysical/Physical schools. This theory of weight comes from the tendency of matter to go 'downward'

*"Aristotle, however, criticizes Democritus on this point, saying that Democritus has not explained why it is that atoms move at all, rather than*

*simply standing still. Epicurus seems to be answering this criticism when he says that atoms do have a natural motion of direction--'downward'--even though there is no bottom to the universe. This natural motion is supposed to give an explanation for why atoms move in the first place. Also, Epicurus thinks that it is evident that bodies do tend to travel down, all else being equal, and he thinks that positing weight as an atomic property accounts for this better than thinking all atomic motion is the result of past collisions and inertia."* (O'Keefe, T., n.d., Epicurus (341—271 B.C.E.)).

Considering a later Epicurean, Lucretius, suggests that the world is flat there are questions opened as to whether or not this notion of “Downward” references something universal or acts as a ancestral theory towards some kind of notion of gravity. The second difference is that Democritus claimed that sensible qualities in matter were only subjective, not inherent to the matter itself. Epicurus agrees that while such qualities, such as color or taste, do not exist on the atomic level. He instead applies that while these qualities are not inherent to the individual atoms, the way matter is configured is significant and has inherent properties. This recognition of congregations and configurations is important, and is something that physicalist and even dualist philosophers will have to grapple with long after the time of Democritus and Epicurus.

Lastly, but most significantly, Epicurus applied a quality called ‘The Swerve’. This property of matter from the stance of Epicurus. According to the weight principle matter is naturally inclined to descend. The Swerve Principle is that “*In addition to the regular tendency of Atoms to move downward ... occasionally, and at random times, the atoms swerve to the side.*” (O'Keefe, T., n.d., Epicurus

(341—271 B.C.E.)). The first reason for this theory is to provide reason as to why atoms collide with one another. If they only even fell downwards they would not collide so much as they would accumulate, like a dune of sand. The Swerve Principle allows for atoms to shift, collide, and form larger configurations which eventually serve to form all of the configurations of matter that a human witnesses possible, along with humans themselves. The more interesting reason for the necessity of this principle of randomly shifting is to preserve human freedom.

*“The second reason for thinking that atoms swerve is that a random atomic motion is needed to preserve human freedom and 'break the bonds of fate,' as Lucretius says. If the laws of atomic motion are deterministic, then the past positions of the atoms in the universe, plus these laws, determine everything that will occur, including human action.”* (O’Keefe, T., n.d., Epicurus (341—271 B.C.E.)).

The preservation of human freedom is absolutely necessary in the maintenance of a moral system since morality, namely the study of making the right and ethical choices, exist only if choices exist.

This inclusion is an admittedly noble attempt to preserve human freedom, though one that unfortunately falls short of its attempts. Even if the completely random swerving of atoms do allow for variance to occur away from the sheer determinism as a byproduct of a mathematical and materialist understanding of reality, it does not necessarily equate to legitimate freedom. Considering human freedom would need the condition of humans being able to direct themselves to any real degree outside the confines of strict determinism, this would not be an introduction of a compatibilist view. While this may be a very early attempt at it, the random swerving does not show human freedom, it merely shows random movement. The only way it would show human freedom is if the seemingly random swerving

could be orchestrated by human willpower, somehow. Considering that Epicurus in his discourses on the philosophy of the mind, he makes it very clear that only bodies can interact with bodies, being matter interacting with matter, and as such it would be bound to the same natural laws that dictate all other forms of matter. This is further emphasized by his understanding of death as destruction of the self, while an idealistic or metaphysical stance would have minds in the form of souls more likely to persist of be necessarily infinite.

Another fundamental difference is the existence of an explicit ethical system between Atomism and Epicureanism. With the Epicurean priority being set on the maximization of the greatest kind of pleasure over the course of a lifetime the Epicureans almost seem to embody a pseudo-consequentialistic mentality of ethics, rather than the more standard virtue ethics of the time. Atomism, like many of the other Pre-Socratic, did not have a common ethical stance across the school. This is especially the case considering their metaphysical stance which supposes a deterministic reality. In the absence of choice there can be no system of morality and ethics, considering such things are the art of determining the moral goodness or evil inherent to choices. The development of the Epicurean attempt to disprove determinism while remaining a school that focuses on the materialism of reality allows it to operate with an ethical system, considering they do believe in choices.

### Pythagoreanism – Neopythagoreanism and More

The main shift between the Pythagoreans and the Neopythagoreans in the Roman civilization is that caused by exposure. The original Pythagoreans arose before the existence of the Socratic schools

of Platonism, Middle Platonism, Aristotelianism in the form of Peripateticism, and Stoicism. While they did have contemporaries, such as the Eleatics, the Ionians, and the Atomists, each having such a limited reach allowed for exposure to be fairly minimal. Thanks to the incredible popularity of the Socratic schools, especially after the death of Socrates, and even more so in the Roman civilization, such exposure became an inevitability.

Even though space in the public awareness was fiercely combated over, the Pythagoreans managed to remain relevant, unlike so many other Pre-Socratic schools. One thing that remained constant between these two schools is the worship and reverence of their founder, Pythagoras, often revering as though he were divine.

*“Because of the belief in the centrality of the philosophy of Pythagoras, later philosophy was regarded as simply an elaboration of the revelation expounded by Pythagoras; it thus became the fashion to father the views of later philosophers, particularly Plato, back onto Pythagoras.”*

(Huffman, C., 2014)

This religious fanaticism could be what allowed for this philosophy to survive within the Roman civilization, one which was filled with various spiritual and religious organizations and the worship of manner mysteries.

The metaphysical stance of the Neopythagoreans is more explicit and refined in comparison to that of the Pythagoreans. It is in that way that it acts as a predecessor to the Neoplatonists. With the Platonic influence prominent, there came a metaphysical understanding hauntingly similar to that of the Eleatics. This understanding came through a combination of a metaphysics and ethics, leading to a

theory that would act as a predecessor to the Neoplatonist's 'The One'. In a stark comparison to that made by Socrates at the end of the Republic, there was a connection between the highest and greatest level of reality and the highest and greatest level of morality.

The sun, taking its place as the supreme level of existence and enlightenment in the *Allegory of the Cave*, takes on a more literal stance. While 'The One' does not literally operate in saying that stars or other celestial bodies are inherently moral or more real than any other existing thing, it does state that in the ascent towards the greatest level of reality is also a moral ascent. Compare those trapped within the titular cave of the Allegory to those outside of the cave, basking in the sunlight and witnessing true forms. The Socratic comparison is put forward as a difference between those trapped by societal mechanisms and conditioning (those within the cave) and those who break from such conditioning and presuppositions (those who leave the cave). In the eccentric manner expressed by their Pre-Socratic predecessors, the Neopythagoreans took this allegory to manifest itself more literally. Instead of being an allegory of merely social interactions and the pursuit of knowledge, it would hold metaphysical claims. This would be the perfect fertile soil in which the Neoplatonist hierarchy of reality vs deception would arise.

While there is this difference between the Pythagoreans and Neopythagoreans, the importance and perfections of numbers remains key. This theory fit well with the metaphysical idealistic nature of the realm of forms, as presented by Plato. The mathematical and numeric aspect of their philosophy was justified to them via their appreciation of astronomy and astrology, witnessing celestial bodies as operating on numeric principles, and as such believing such principles to apply to all things. It is because of this that the Pythagoreans and Neopythagoreans both had members that attempted to

understand physical interactions on a mathematical basis. While this is the case, there is a deep and pervasive spiritualism and mysticism to the philosophies.

Another fundamental aspect of Neopythagoreanism is the relationship between the body and the soul. Much like the Pythagoreans, the Neopythagorean held onto an air of mysticism, focusing on spiritual purity via meditation, living under a code of conduct, and other such ritualistic operations. The Pythagoreans did have a focus on the nature of the soul, which justified certain actions of theirs, namely their veganism and refusal to eat beans (in worry that beans and humans shared a similar soul). It is this attempt to keep the soul pure and allow them to experience a higher level of reality that formed the Pythagorean system of ethics. In this way there is parallel to eastern spiritualism and philosophy (superficially, at the very least). This could be explained by exposure to Gymnosophists, which some Greek philosophers and western thinkers were exposed to at the time. Exposure to Eastern ideologies became increasingly prevalent with the western empires, particularly that of Alexander the Great and his conquest of the Middle East and Northern India, and that of the Roman Empire.

### Sophists - Eclectics

While the Sophists may not have a proper philosophical descendants to the Eclectics, there is still a very firm argument of the same general ideology being applicable to both. This ideology could be described as a general sense of Pragmatic Subjectivism. It is in this spirit of Pragmatic Subjectivism that both have arisen.

Examine the Sophists that Socrates so vehemently struggled against. They established themselves widely as tutors in Ancient Greece, teaching the sons of wealthy families about various topics: mathematics, history, business, and philosophy. They didn't have the type of rigorous and academic nature that Socrates had in his pursuit for truth, attempting to understand reality in an objective way. Their proclamations to wisdom and knowledge is what brought Socrates to examine them in the first place, while he remained humble (or, as some of his interlocutors attested, merely pretended humility). It is in this way that the Sophists arose, seeking cultural and seemingly superficial knowledge and expertise in order for economic and political gain, rather than the more 'pure' pursuit of knowledge that the philosophers would undertake.

Compare this to the Eclectic school. The Eclectic school is unified only by its selective approach towards philosophy, as exemplified by Cicero. Cherry-picking and choosing useful or popular philosophical theories and incorporating them into a single system, regardless of their cohesiveness, due to personal preference or benefit. This would be extremely valued in the Roman civilization, considering their meritocratic and pragmatic culture and approach to life. Rather than developing a complete, coherent and cohesive ideological system in order to give explanations for natural and societal phenomena, as other philosophical schools attempted, they approached philosophy with this distinct Pragmatic Subjectivism. Instead of worrying about objective truths, or seeking out legitimate knowledge, their focus was solely on how they ideology either appealed to them or how it could assist them.

It is in this way that the Sophists and the Eclectics seem to be mirrors of one another, altered due to the exposure to many cultures, philosophies, ideologies and religions prevalent in Ancient

Rome, in comparison to the relatively more isolated and purist Ancient Greece. The Eclectic ideology also applied to various other forms, not just philosophy. It may be due to this Eclecticism that the Roman civilization served as such a great means of exposure between the philosophers, having its members more subject to looser interpretations of doctrine and previous theory, and allowing them to create within a more diverse environment.

### Socratic and Platonic Philosophy – From Athens, to Rome, and preparing to leave Antiquity

Following the life of Socrates and the rise of Plato as the premiere philosopher of Ancient Greece, the establishment of the Platonic Academy in Athens, and the rise in popularity and acclaim of both it and the philosophy put forward within, labeling the influence of this philosophical school as immense would be a disgraceful understatement. While it is not the case that Socrates founded the pursuit of philosophy, and nor did Plato, they left indelible marks on the field. The fact that from Socrates' own philosophy at least 6 others came into being and drastically shaped the pursuit of knowledge and human understanding forever is a testament to its weight. This is without even considering the fact that the main competition to Platonism, being Aristotelianism, Stoicism, and Epicureanism, were all descendants of it.

Due to Plato's efforts to outline and extrapolate on the wisdom put forward by Socrates, all the writings of Plato, including what he references to be from Socrates, will be considered Platonism. Like all good intellectual ventures, Platonism was open for discussion and willing to take on all opposition. This, for better or worse, allowed the philosophy to naturally develop and change in response to the

exposure and influence that came to it.

In the early Academy, before the Roman civilization conquered the Greek civilizations, the Platonic school had a squared focus on Academic Skepticism. This focus came from Socrates and his constant pursuit in understanding his title of wisest man, put upon him by a god through an oracle. This pursuit outlined the majority of Socrates' life and the entirety of why he is remembered. As such this skepticism is reflected in Platonism well, though Socrates did have his own positive theories. Like the earlier parts of Socrates' career, the Platonic Academy remained primarily focused on investigation rather than enforcing their own beliefs. This is not to mean that Plato did not have positivist ideology, for he did, but the focus was on the investigation and pursuit of knowledge.

Following the early days of the Academy, once the Romans conquered Athens, the academy took a stronger turn towards positivist philosophy. This was when the Platonist school adopted the unofficial stance of Middle Platonism. With the influence of Plutarch aspects of the Peripatetic school, the Stoic school, and the Pythagorean school were incorporated within Platonism. As a consequence there was a greater focus on metaphysical study that could be more easily classified as pseudo-religious or theological in nature. There was increased interest in daemonia (spirits, extraphysical or supernatural beings), the nature of souls, and the nature of God. In turn the Middle Platonists influenced the Pythagoreans, developing them into Neopythagoreanism, a drift away from the convictions and work of their founder but keeping very much in the spirit.

Following Middle Platonism in the Platonic Academy came Neoplatonism, which was headed by Plotinus. His influence on the philosophy was so great that it is sometimes referred to as 'Plotinism'

in his honor. While still very much a descendant of the Middle Platonism, it was much more elaborate, refined, and metaphysically complex. The philosophies that influenced this were the Peripatetics, the Stoics, and the Neopythagoreans.

*“The result of this effort was a grandiose and powerfully persuasive system of thought that reflected upon a millennium of intellectual culture and brought the scientific and moral theories of Plato, Aristotle, and the ethics of the Stoics into fruitful dialogue with literature, myth, and religious practice.”* (Wildberg, C., 2016)

It was this philosophy that would act as an intellectual and philosophy foundation for Early Christian philosophy, particularly having an influence on St. Augustine of Hippo. The focus of this school was deeply and complexly metaphysical, wanting to understand reality at its essence and to figure out the path of enlightenment in a more literal way. While this may seem at odds with the original Socratic focus in skepticism and shifting society, it was reflect some of its influences (from the Eleatic school and the Pythagorean school), and exists as a more literal interpretation of some of Socrates' parables (especially the Allegory of the Cave, the discussion on reincarnation at the end of the Republic, and much of what was discussed in the Phaedo). This investigation of the metaphysical substructure of reality involved outlining the descent from perfection to absolute imperfection, from ‘The One’ to Matter, and an explanation as to how to ascend, become enlightened and better oneself. In many ways this could be seen as reflecting certain Eastern and Asian ideological traditions. It is here where the Platonic ideology comes to an end in Antiquity before the eventual collapse of the Roman Empire and rise of Christianity.

Aristotelian/Peripateticism – Influenced many

While the Peripatetic school of Aristotelians did not deviate far from the works and writings of Aristotle and did not inspire the same following in the early European civilizations as it would in the Middle-East, it was nonetheless influential. Its continued existence side by side with Platonist, Stoicism, Epicureanism and Pythagoreanism allowed for exposure between all of these ideologies. Unlike some other philosophies, who were more keen in taking advantage of this exposure in order to develop the philosophy further, the Peripatetics seemed to be take a much more isolated route.

Consider the two greatest Aristotelians between the Greek civilizations and the Roman civilization: Aristotle and Alexander of Aphrodisias, respectively. The main contribution given by Alexander of Aphrodisias to the Peripatetic school of Aristotelian philosophy is not his own treatises, but rather commentaries made on the works of Aristotle and his attempts, along with his peers, to preserve Aristotle's works through translation and transcribing.

The Aristotelian philosophy did influence Platonism, in the form of Middle Platonism, Pythagoreanism, in the form of Neopythagoreanism, and eventually the Peripatetic school was subsumed by the rise of the Neoplatonists. Their influence was not forgotten, finding revitalized interest in the Aristotelian philosophers in later history.

Considering Aristotle's prolific career, and his vast scope, covering the physical sciences, the social sciences, and every single philosophical domain, and his devoted following his works became immediately influential and had lasting impact throughout Europe and the Middle East. Many of his

scientific theories were put into practice, especially following antiquity, his design of the art of rhetoric was implemented vastly, and many of his political and societal treatises influenced the shaping of nations.

### Cynicism – From Greece to Rome

The Cynical School remained relatively consistent across time. This could be due in part to the sheer simplicity of their ideology, considering they lack general theories regarding most of the types of philosophy, instead focusing on virtue and ethics. This could also be in part to the lack of written pieces from any of their members. This is due to the fact that a major tenant of Cynicism is the rejection of material wealth and goods aside from that which they deem strictly necessary. One famous story exemplifying this is Diogenes' rejection of a cup, as recalled earlier.

Though there may be additional, unforeseen repercussions of the lack of literature from Greek and Roman Cynics. This manifests in their individual attitudes. While the ascetic nature, the tendency towards self reliance, and the fixation on virtue are universal, other aspects are less shared.

Demonax, the cynical philosopher from Cyprus, is being used as a Roman comparison to the earlier Greek Cynicism. Despite the fact that Demonax is not from Rome or the Italian peninsula, he was born and raised under Roman rule and centuries after the foundation of the Cynic school and the death of Diogenes. Unlike most Cynical Philosophers, Demonax is depicted as being kindly and greatly loved by the people.

Diogenes of Sinope, like his mentor Antisthenes, were known for being caustic. Antisthenes, one of the many followers of Socrates, likely developed it due to Socrates. Not that Socrates was known for being caustic or bitter in his rhetoric or his handling of others, he did mention explicitly the utility of bitterness or unpleasantness of certain necessary persons. Socrates spoke of a hypothetical situation in *The Republic* where the people had to choose a ruler or ally, either a doctor or a provider of sweets, and from their appearance alone the doctor provided bitterness and harm and the sweets provider gave pleasure and joy, and would be selected every time, to the harm of the civilians. This carried over to Cynical philosophy, using bitterness towards the unvirtuous to bring about virtue in the long run. Unlike Diogenes, who was both ridiculed and respected, Lucius recounts Demonax as having a very positive relationship with his society. It would be considered an honor to house him or feed him for the night. According to various anecdotes and recounts both Antisthenes and Diogenes of Sinope were harsh against everyone, especially so to those who would attempt to walk their path.

*“42a When someone expressed a wish to study philosophy with him, Diogenes gave him a fish to carry and told him to follow in his footsteps; the man threw it away out of shame,\* and when Diogenes ran across him again some time later, he burst out laughing and said, ‘Our friendship was brought to an end by a fish!’ (Diogenes Laertius 5.36; G367)”* (Hard, R., 2012, p.17)

In comparison the people of Athens held Demonax in reverence, and Lucian spoke highly of him.

Other than this difference between the two representatives of the Cynics, which would account for a great deal in how memorable and noteworthy they were as people since Diogenes is known

commonly more for his wit and shameless audacity, the overall lifestyles of these philosophers seemed very similar. Namely living simply, eating simply, having very little, and trying to live as minimally as possible. According to Lucius, Demonax even starved himself to death.

*“65 When he found that he was no longer able to take care of himself, he repeated to his friends the tag with which the heralds close the festival: The games are done, The crowns all won; No more delay, But haste away, and from that moment abstaining from food, left life as cheerfully as he had lived it.”* (Hard, R., 2012, p.20)

This keeps in line with the virtue of self reliance cherished so dearly by the Cynics. Having to live in complete reliance to others, needed to be actively tended to, would be unacceptable. Maybe this would have been the circumstance needed to convince Plato that Cynicism was not ‘*Socrates gone mad*’.

*“134b When someone asked him, ‘What sort of man do you consider Diogenes to be?’, he [Plato] replied, ‘Socrates gone mad’.”* (Hard, R., 2012, p.35)

Cynicism stayed resilient to the influences of other philosophies, though it was often seen in comparison to Stoicism. Cynicism eventually found its influence in Christian philosophy, primarily in the asceticism and sacrifice found therein.

### Stoicism – From Greece to Rome

Stoicism, as a philosophy, is one of the more firm and resilient philosophies with a sizable body

of literature. It has a greater and more full sense of understanding and completeness across the different philosophical studies than many of its contemporaries, is a school that is valued to those of all social statuses, and is universally appreciable to innumerable people, even of conflicting worldviews.

The founder of the Stoic philosophy in Greece was Zeno of Citium, a shipwrecked merchant left with nothing in Athens. With nothing more to lose but his life, and with a new found passion for the philosophical pursuit of understanding, he learned how to master himself even in the most dire of situations. Zeno of Citium is said to have died suffocating himself after tripping, falling, and breaking his toe, claiming that he was called and it was his time. Epictetus, author of the *Enchiridion*, was a slave, utilizing this ideology to make life more bearable. Marcus Aurelius, being emperor of the Roman Empire, was one of the most powerful men of his time, if not the most powerful. With all of that before him he lived a life of relatively little comfort. Leading wars in service to his people and his empire, and suffering personal tragedies, all he had as solace was his philosophy. After his death his private writings were published to become the famous *Meditations*, considered one of the most influential pieces of philosophical literature ever written. There are those who held him to such a high standard as referring to him as The ‘Philosopher King’ that Socrates was calling for in *The Republic*. Seneca the Younger's, Seneca the Elder, father was a eques, a wealthy member of Roman society with property and access to education. In his life he even rose to the point of becoming the tutor of emperor Nero. His life came to an end when Nero accused Seneca the Younger of plotting against him and commanded him to take his own life, which he did, slitting his wrists open and bleeding out over a long and agonizing period of time.

All these philosophers share a common philosophy, one that assisted them greatly in their lives.

This philosophy's main tenants are that of logic, discipline and simplicity. The main focus of Stoicism is a proper understanding of what one can control in life. This leads to a logical, introspective investigation as to what is worthwhile for one to agonize over. To the Stoic, the only thing that one has proper and true control over is the self: how one thinks and how one acts, most importantly one's actions. The actions of others, the will of fate and the gods, the results of their own actions, and the natural happenstances in life are completely outside of their influence and as such is not worth worrying over. This is how the Stoics earned their reputation as being unaffected and, appropriately, stoic, feeling that most things are outside of their reason to worry.

This pursuit allows the Stoics to live contended lives in Eudaimonia, not growing overly attached to anything or anyone, not becoming overwhelmingly delighted or sorrowful in their loss. In this way they could be interpreted to be numbed of life, which was not necessarily the case. There were those who manifested their virtue differently. Seneca was infamous for his sharp witticisms even in his dying hours, while Marcus Aurelius' writings reveal a somber and dutiful life.

This focus on logic and ethics is not to say that the other domains of philosophy were neglected. Unlike the ethics and logic of the Stoics, which act as foundations for all the rest of their philosophy, their metaphysics or aesthetics did not need to be so universal. Generally their epistemology was rather similar, a mild skepticism with an internal focus about self knowledge and control, as driven by their logic.

This philosophy was wildly popular in Rome. Though, this philosophy was not one that completely unique. Comparisons could easily be made between Stoicism and many ideological or

religious systems, such as Buddhism. While the Stoics didn't have the passionate nature of the Cynics, nor their asceticism, there were also common focuses in it, regarding the complete devotion of one's life to virtue.

The influence of the Stoics was great, but most strongly manifested in the Roman-era Platonic school. It is with their popularity and influence that the Platonic academy move from being a school primarily focused on the academic skepticism and go on towards more positivist doctrine. Due to the complexity of the words of Socrates and , as a consequence, Plato both find these schools could easily be founded, justified, and take hold within the Academy. Thanks to the Stoic influence the Platonic school was able to develop successfully into Middle Platonism, followed by Neoplatonism. The tell tale signs of Stoicism are there in Middle Platonism's and Neoplatonism's approach to virtue and goodness. The distinction with the Neoplatonists is that it was not logic and reason that brought them to virtue primarily, but firstly an epistemological and metaphysical approach to understanding that lead them to their virtue.

### Skepticism : Academic – Left in the Early Academy

Academic Skepticism did not have much of a lineage outside of Ancient Greece. Their main presence was found in the Platonic Academy, considering the separation between Platonism from the schools that dominated the Platonic Academy.

The focus of the Academic Skeptics, being that of complete skepticism and the urge to question

and undermine all things presented to them, is a natural byproduct of the investigations undertaken by Socrates after the Oracle claimed that the god named him as the wisest of all men. This lead to his long career as the gadfly of Athens. While Socrates' skepticism is reflected partially in his ideology, like the other Eudaimonic or Socratic schools the Academic Skeptics took this focus of his philosophy ran with it. Socrates' Skepticism is best seen in a positivist stance in relation to Pyrrhonism (being a school of epistemological skepticism), Cynicism (being a school of cultural skepticism), and Stoicism (being very similar to Cynicism).

The Academic Skeptics, while not being a complete ideology, acting more as a Modus Operandi for how the Academy would handle new theories. This pervasive skepticism would also earn the school a somewhat stagnant reputation. In a way, the Academic Skeptics likely prevented the rise of many other philosophical stances in Ancient Greece due to their primary objective being to undermine all that brought to them, for better or worse. This is not to say this focus was not appropriate. Being a great venue of intellectuals with all sorts of eccentric ideology (look no further than the Pythagoreans to see how unusual ideologies may manifest!), there was an equally great need to be resilient. But, in being very much open to dialogue and subsequently ridicule, this openness may be what allowed later Platonism to be shaped and developed into Middle Platonism and then Neoplatonism.

The Academic Skeptics were replaced in the Platonic Academy by the Stoics, shifting early Platonism to Middle Platonism. This change came place after the conquest of the Greek civilizations by the Roman Empire. One major influencing factor that could have ushered in such a change would be the Roman Culture. Less interested on sheer speculative, idealist intellectualism they would want more positivist guidance giving active aid to their lives. Stoicism, being likely the most universally

applicable of the Eudaimonic philosophies and being immensely useful would find favor in this new order. It is with the rise of the Stoics in the Roman civilization where the Academic Skeptics, along with other highly skeptical philosophies such as Pyrrhonism, would come to their end.

### Skepticism : Pyrrhonian – From Greece to Rome

Between Pyrrho and Sextus Empiricus, there is no noticeable significant differences between Pyrrhonism. This may be due to a lack of literature left behind on both sides, which in turn may be due to a lack of followers of this philosophy. Considering this being the one of the only coherent schools seriously trying to handle the epistemological problem of knowing, it is a real shame that they ended up like this. Either way, they earned their position among the other Eudaimonic schools.

It was more than just a questioning of what can be known that brings them here as a Eudaimonic school of philosophy, but offering legitimate and meaningful attempts towards solving the issue rather than the Academic Skeptics who were united only by their division and attempts to take apart all theories of knowledge. The Pyrrhonians attempted to offer solace in the form of logical practices and realizations to all those who came to realize the infinite imperfections in perception and who may have suffered from existential dread due to it.

Unfortunately it would seem to be the case that the last Pyrrhonian of significance would be Sextus Empiricus, and the school would fall by the wayside as so many others. Why would this happen? It would seem this to not be unusual, due to the rise of a Stoic-positivist-focused Middle

Platonism rather than the Academic Skepticism that would hold the early Platonists and the Platonic Academy in its fledgling years. It would seem that the Roman civilization and its citizens would have a greater focus on more clear, decisive, and directive answers to their questions than pondering on the absence that exists within understanding to the point of fruitlessness. Rather than grappling with more abstract and seemingly useless things in this way, they desired and found assurance and firm ground to stand on in epistemology as to lead them to what they need to do to conquer life.

### Cyrenaics – Left behind in Cyrene

The Cyrenaics did not have a major following outside of Cyrene other than those who coincidentally lived Cyrenaic lifestyles while seeking to appease their appetites. With this focus on skepticism, empiricism and the intangibility of what is to come paired with their moral focus on hedonism lead them with a life of indulgence. Those in Rome who cared little for the future and for intellectual pursuits, instead seeking to satisfy the whims of their

*“The Cyrenaics are unabashed sensual hedonists: the highest good is my own pleasure, with all else being valuable only as a means to securing my own pleasure, and bodily pleasures are better than mental pleasures.”*

(O’Keefe, T., n.d., Cyrenaics)

While their pursuit of pleasure can be attributed to them attempting to realize natural virtues, like the Cynics do with self reliance and minimalism, and while Aristippus of Cyrene did engage in his share of mental pleasures, by following Socrates, and physical ones, as recounted in many anecdotes following him, it is clear that this philosophy was ultimately neglected.

Taking up the epistemological stance of the Cyrenaics, being a high form of skepticism supplemented by empiricism and the examination of sensation, there would be many schools to carry this question on into the Roman civilization. Firstly would be the Academic Skeptics. While these are more about complete and abject skepticism regarding all things without the necessary recognition of the importance of empiricism. Taking up both the importance of skepticism and the empirical analysis of sensation and impressions would be the Pyrrhonians, who would peter out in the Roman civilization. Finally, the epistemological stance of Empiricism would be held most firmly by the Epicureans, who would also take up the misapplied slur of “Hedonist”, while ultimately being far more sophisticated than that.

## **Conclusion**

After the complete comparison between both the philosophies and representing philosophers of said philosophies from Ancient Greece and Ancient Rome when one can fully theorize and speculate as to what is the cause of this shift. To examine the shift more closely there is necessity to comment on where the philosophies stood at the end. There are many factors to be taken into consideration when theorizing why certain philosophies became prominent in the Roman civilization versus the Greek civilization, one of the most important ones being an examination as to overall cultural values.

First, there is importance in which philosophies rose to the forefront of Roman civilization. Stoicism and Epicureanism had the hearts and minds of the Roman people more than any other philosophy. Why is this? It is most likely due to what they focused on, and how it would be applicable within the Roman civilization.

## **Stoicism**

The Stoics focused on the utilization of logic, discipline, and temperance to minimize the suffering of life. A major facet of that is only feeling suffering or satisfaction based on things that the individual has control over, namely their own voluntary actions. By 'their own voluntary actions', what is meant is specifically the course of action undertaken, the result of said actions are outside their realm of control. The machinations of other humans, the whims of the gods, the tides of nature, all of these

things and more are entirely outside of the Stoic's ability to control. As such, to a Stoic it is entirely futile to lament the unavoidable and uncontrollable, instead for there to be a best focus on that which they can control. A major aspect of it is the dissociation of passions and connections, something very much expressed in Epictetus' *Enchiridion*. In that way it shows its ideological kinship with Cynicism, being self-focused and self-reliant. To a Stoic the loss of their wife is not something to feel suffering over considering they lived their life in virtue and, as such, they could have done no better. Stoicism as a philosophy is often expressed as stoic in the form of emotions, namely the lack of emotional reaction to events. This is not necessarily the case, for there can be discontent when realizing that one acted less than virtuously, and satisfaction when realizing one acted in virtue.

This is not an uncommon ideology, something that manifested itself in the Eastern world as well in the form of Buddhism. It is a philosophy that would work very well in the Roman civilization, on all levels of its people. From the slaves, like Epictetus, to the wealthy, such as Seneca the Younger, to even the emperors, such as Marcus Aurelius, could find solace and utility in Stoicism. The logical emotional numbness provided by Stoicism is useful in a practical sense to all stations of life. For the slave it makes their lives of service and abuse tolerable. For the average citizen, it helps steel against the unpleasantness and disappointments within their lives. For leaders, it assists in ensuring that they take optimal and emotionally dispassionate actions to ensure the best outcome for their civilization. While Stoicism was popular throughout the Roman civilization, its main form of competition can be considered its opposite in many ways.

### Epicureanism

The Epicureans and the Stoics share two major factors in common: their insistence upon the utility of logic and their interests to minimize discomfort. The Epicureans, unlike the Stoics, do not focus on making themselves more unfeeling and resilient in the face of life, they instead focus on a logical maximization of pleasure. Through the use of careful consideration, discipline, extensive planning and moderation the Epicureans focus on maximizing the overall pleasure of their life while minimizing the pain. One could say that they seek to have the greatest 'net-gain' of pleasure across an entire lifespan, in contrast to the more basic and hedonistic impulses of the Cyrenaics.

While the Romans believed in the Gods they were a more materialistic (interested in their present life rather than a prospective afterlife) than other populations. They engaged in vast feasts, had deep interests in sexuality, delighted in all forms of entertainment, indulged and imbibed in various pleasures when possible. To such a people who were definitely not ascetic in nature the Epicureans would offer them precisely what they wanted in life: to live the best life possible from a pleasure perspective. Thanks to the Epicureans and their pursuit of moderation to ensure future pleasures, many of those within the civilian ranks of the Roman Empire and higher could find this philosophy to have great practical utility. The Epicurean philosophy would allow for them to live long, healthy and pleasurable lives of both intellectual richness and pleasant sensations. This applies especially so to those who lived within one of the many Epicurean communes, spending their lives in the company of friends, engaging in rewarding simplistic labor, and sharing the benefits of bringing amicable intellectuals together to discussions in the evening. Despite the vicious rumors initially spread about Epicureans and Epicurus himself of debauchery, vast sexual parties, and excessive indulgence it would

be easy for any Roman to see that this is not the case for an Epicurean.

Even the Epicurean approach to epistemology and metaphysics/physics is something that all levels of Roman civilization could appreciate. With a focus on the witnessed world and the encouraging of experimentation based on documented and empirical discoveries the study of natural philosophy is not something only for the highly educated but for anyone with an inquisitive mind. In addition to the epistemology the metaphysical/physical system is relatively simplistic considering it has a physical focus rather than a metaphysical focus. It would allow for the vast number of uneducated persons within the civilization to better come to terms and understand natural phenomena in demonstrable experimentation rather than metaphysical and often transcendental speculation.

### Changed Philosophies

The most significant philosophical shifts came from the Platonic schools. The line of development came from a school that was dominated by Academic Skepticism, though still had Platonic works there, to Middle Platonists, and eventually to Neoplatonists. The most direct cause of this development was exposure to and the creation of other philosophies. The creation of the Middle Platonist school, a reaction against the philosophically negative school of the Academic Skeptics, came as a byproduct of the intermingling of Platonism, the Aristotelian school of the Peripatetics, and along with increased exposure to the Pythagorean, Stoic and Cynic schools. The Pythagoreans, in turn, took influence from the Middle Platonists and developed the Neopythagorean school during the Roman Empire. Lastly an additional blending of the Neopythagorean and the Middle Platonic philosophies, in

addition with some new discoveries by Plotinus lead to the rise of the Neoplatonic (sometimes called Plotinist) school. The Neoplatonic school was not the end of the Platonic philosophies, as it would later develop into the early Christian philosophies that would be heralded by those such as St. Augustine of Hippo.

The important factor being that in the Roman civilization, this cosmopolitan, multicultural, multiethnic civilization allowed for various ideologies to come together and develop in mutual exposure to one another. The greatest example of this exposure and development came from the intermingling of the Pythagorean, Platonic and Aristotelian schools.

### Cultural Impact

It has to be understood the the civilization and culture in which these philosophies existed. The Greek civilizations were relatively homogeneous. They had a great sense of idealism, were more isolated from exposure to other cultures than other civilizations, and were exposed to a great variety of different political systems. Considering they were the civilization in which the Western philosophical tradition arose their philosophies did not experience as much exposure or develop as would happen later in the Roman empire, and aside from the Sophists there was less interest in the instrumentalization of philosophy for personal gain or profit. It was in the Greek civilization where a vast number of philosophies would spawn, but subsequently die out, as can be seen most clearly in the numerous schools with a metaphysical/physical focus, such as the Ionian schools.

The Roman civilization, as a whole, had a greater focus on militarism, pragmatism, and was meritocratic. One of the unique philosophies that arose from it not as a continuation of the Greek philosophies was the Eclecticist school, with its representative Cicero, as a school based on isolating traits of other philosophies and appropriating them for their own use. Cicero, while being a philosopher, was also a politician in the latter days of the Roman Republic and as such the utility of a practically useful, even if not entirely coherent, philosophy was much more valued than something coherent but unhelpful in daily lived life. The useful philosophies, such as Stoicism and Epicureanism, flourished the most, gained the greatest following and had the most influence upon the empire. The Platonic, Aristotelian and Pythagorean schools were still there but had a greater academic and intellectual following rather than being something that the common person would embrace and follow.

Many philosophies fell by the wayside and died out. Cynicism remained enigmatically, and continue as it began as a pursuit of passion to the purest ascent of virtue though it would never accrue a large following. The Cynics would exist as an ideal to be admired, but more moderately pursued by the Stoics, though the general ascetic nature would be carried into Christianity (without nearly as much nudity, vulgarity, and shamelessness). Even something as arguably useful as Pyrrhonian Skepticism died out, along with the Academic Skeptics. The reason seems to be that the Roman civilization did not have much utility for a negative philosophy focused more on intellectual perfectionism than utility.

Ultimately, Rome really did adopt the various Greek philosophers on an appreciable level. This did not mean that the philosophies remained untouched. The Roman civilization acted as a vast forum of may millions of people, their cultural, philosophical, theological, political, ethical, and ideological views coming together to collide and debate with one another. In comparison to the more idealistic

Greeks, the more pragmatic Romans took value out of and reacted positively to philosophies that would assist them in their daily life. This could be due to the necessary cultural needs to sustain an empire versus a city state. While city states do have their unrest the need for an empire to be pragmatic above idealistic is present and obvious, and the Roman empire set their sights ever higher as they sought to conquer the world. This is not to say that they were lacking in intellectual merit or quality. Considering the massive intellectual accomplishments of their civilization and its many members, from functional developments as having a philosopher as one of their rulers, to ideologically creating increasingly complex worldviews with vast scope and depth, they were not intellectually feeble. It is this civilization that would assist in making permanent the great philosophies of the Ancient World and bringing it into the future ages of human history.

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