



Ancient Greece: The Legacy of Socrates

T. D. van Basten

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The Introspective Man

The philosophy of Socrates glitters until today and will continue doing so in the future. Socrates is not the actual founder of philosophy, as is sometimes claimed. Preceding him, and as the name suggests, there were the pre-Socratic philosophers. Some of them are Pythagoras, Thales, Empedocles, Parmenides and Heraclitus of Ephesus. However, Socrates is the founder of the logos (discourse). For example, a rational, coherent thought, which gradually releases the myth. He distrusted writing and teaching and was therefore exclusively oral. Everything we know about him comes from the testimony of others, and most importantly, his student, Plato.

Socrates was born in Athens, 470 BC. He was the son of a sculptor named Sophroniscus, and a midwife named Phaenarete. He was also a sculptor himself, but he devoted his life entirely to philosophy. It is possible that Socrates followed the lessons of the surveyors Theodore of Cyrene, Prodicus and Archelaus. He was first pointed out by the originality of his speeches and his way of life. He was barefoot, resisted thirst and hunger, bore the cold, helped men and young people in the street, questioned them and motivated them. He was a sort of apostle who dreamed of bringing his people to virtue and to reorganize his city, making it bigger, stronger and more radiant. He was also a mystic man.

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