

Ancient Philosophy

Anaxagoras

Pluralists

- The pluralists all grapple with these Parmenides' views. They try to reconcile Parmenides' extreme views with more reasonable views that have some resonance with common sense.

Pluralists

- What follows from Parmenides' main thesis?

THERE IS NO:

motion

generation or destruction

change

plurality

Pluralists

- All of the *pluralistic* responses to Parmenides (Empedocles, Anaxagoras, and the Atomists) were influenced by him, but rejected his extreme monism. They sought to reconcile, as much as possible, Parmenides' views with common sense.

Pluralists

- With Parmenides, the pluralists all accepted notion that things do not come into and out of existence.
- They thought was wrong about there being no plurality and motion.
- Important difference between the pluralists themselves is on their views on change.

Anaxagoras

- an-axe-ZAG-ore-us
- Dates: c. 500-427 BCE. Born in Clazomenae, Lydia - on the west coast of today's Turkey.

Anaxagoras

- He was one of the first Presocratics to teach in Athens (around 480-450). He was associated with and had some influence upon Pericles and Euripides. Surprise! Surprise! He was charged with impiety and fled. Copies of his works were on sale in the Athenian marketplace (the *agora*) in 399.

Anaxagoras

- His philosophy was in response to that of Parmenides. Parmenides thought that nothing comes into being or goes out of existence. Anaxagoras thought that this way of putting it was incorrect.

Anaxagoras

The Greeks do not rightly use the terms 'coming into being' and 'perishing.' For nothing comes into being nor yet does anything perish, but there is mixture and separation of things that are. So they would do right in calling the coming into being 'mixture,' and the perishing 'separation.' [fr. 18]

Anaxagoras

- Developed a theory of seeds (*spērmata*) from which mixtures are formed and from which all existent things come forth.
- His *archê*: Mind (*nous*) = “noose”
- Perhaps a hint of mind-matter dualism