

Tracing the Path to a Modern American Paradigm: Chapter 2

Platonic Philosophy: 6th - 4th centuries B.C.E. (Chap. 2)

- An essential, eternal quality of humans (*psychê*, soul, spirit, self) is not accessible to humans' five senses.
- The reliability of the five senses is doubted; they are said to be able to reveal merely external appearances.
- There exists a separate, "Real" world of perfect "Forms" that is beyond the reach of humans' five senses.
- Belief in reincarnation merges with above beliefs into Plato's idea that each individual's essence had been united, at least once, with the "Real" world of "Forms."
- *Thus, complete perfect knowledge is "given" to each individual; it can be caused to emerge from within.*
- Because one's inborn "givens" comprise extensive knowledge attainable via intuition, teaching ideally involves a great deal of eliciting, very little telling.

Pythagorean Philosophy: 6th century B.C.E. (Chapter 2)

- The ordered beauty of the world, or "music of the spheres," is observable by the five senses; it may be understood via mathematical insights, which *require only contemplation*.
- These insights are exact, certain, and eternal; they are *a revelation from within*, and they yield feelings of ecstasy.

Aristotelian Philosophy: 4th century B.C.E. (Chapter 2)

- Form isn't separate; it's embodied in matter we perceive.
- The objective of growth and development is the attainment of the mature human form; *this applies to mental capacity just as it applies to the physical/physiological body*.
- The above process necessarily occurs; it originates in a "given," purpose-driven (*telos*) internal principle that *inexorably attains the mature form if there is no impediment*.

[Chapter 1 has no chart] [Overview of the Eight Key Beliefs](#) [Chart for Chapter 3](#) →