
Psychology and the Ancients

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Psychology is where science/medicine and philosophy intersect.

Advances in Medicine

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Alcmaeon (~500 B.C.)

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- Practiced dissection.
 - Theory of health and disease based on balance of bodily systems.
 - Brain thought to be the central psychological entity.
 - Equilibrium rests on paired "qualities," e.g., wet-dry, cold-hot, bitter-sweet.
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Hippocrates (460?–377? B.C.)



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Hippocrates' Writings



Hippocrates' Writings

Hippocrates

- Our knowledge of Hippocrates comes from Galen (130–200 A.D.).
 - Physician should not interfere with body's own healing power.
 - Physician's role is to restore the natural harmony of life.
 - Prescribed rest, exercise, diet, music.
 - Presented clear descriptions of melancholia, mania, postpartum depression, phobias, paranoia, hysteria.
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Hippocrates

Hippocrates (cont'd)

- Theory of Humors
 - air—blood
 - earth—black bile
 - fire—yellow bile
 - water—phlegm
 - In *De Morbu Sacro* Hippocrates describes epilepsy as “disharmony” of the brain.
 - Dry mouth theory of thirst.
 - Holistic healing and health.
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Hippocrates (cont'd)

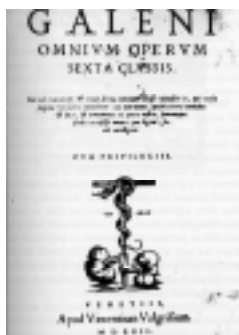
Galen (130?–200? A.D.)



Greek physician at the court of Roman emperor Marcus Aurelius

Galen (130?–200? A.D.)

Galen's Works



Galen's Works

Galen

- Extended Hippocrates' theory of humors to psychology.
 - Blood—cheerful, confident, passionate.
 - Black bile—ill-tempered, melancholic.
 - Yellow bile—choleric, easily angered.
 - Phlegm—apathetic, sluggish.
- “Diseases of the soul” arise from maladaptive passions such as anger, fear, grief, envy, violent lust.

Galen

Advances in Mathematics and Physics

- Pythagoras (~570–500 B.C.)
 - Demonstrated mathematical relationship between the physical world and psychological experience of that world (e.g., theory of musical harmony).
 - Psychophysics appears some 2400 years later!
- Democritus' (460–370 B.C.) “atomic” theory of perception

Advances in Mathematics and Physics

Advances in Philosophy

Plato and Aristotle

Advances in Philosophy

The Empiricist Aristotle (384-322 B.C.)



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Aristotle

- Sensory experience is the principal source of knowledge.
- Knowledge is made conscious through observation, inductive reasoning.
- Examples
 - Laws of association (e.g., similarity, contrast, contiguity, frequency, ease).
 - Analysis of causes.
 - Aesthetics, catharsis.
 - Scale of nature (cf. Darwin).
 - The heart is the seat of thought (!)

Aristotle

