

**Aspects of Western Philosophy**  
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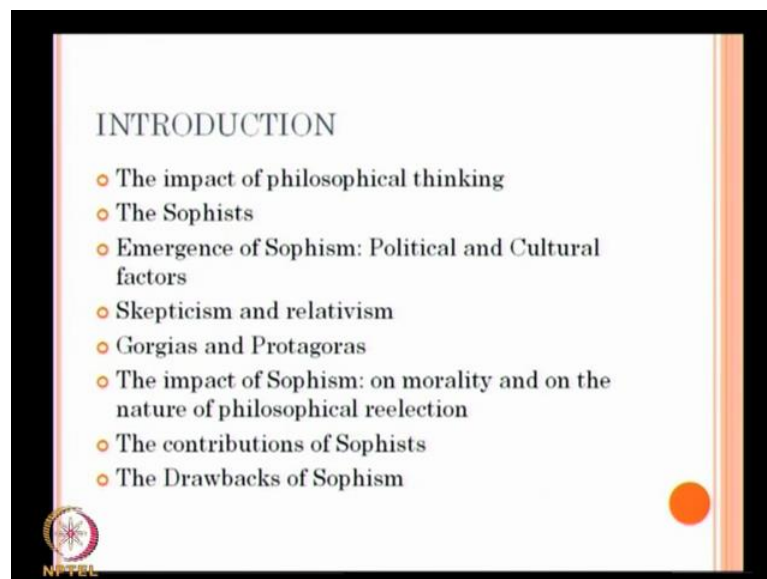
**Module - 02**

**Lecture – 02**

**Sophists, Socrates; Philosophy of Man; relativism and subjectivism; the idea of good**

Welcome viewers. Today we will see the contribution of sophists in Greek philosophy. In the previous lecture we have highlighted the contribution of the early Greek thinkers who are called the pre-Socratic thinkers and that constituted the first page of Greek philosophy and in this lecture we will focus on second face which is rather very important as per the history of western philosophy concerned. We will see the contribution of sophist and the history of human thinking particularly in the history of western philosophy. These are the topic which we going to cover in this lecture.

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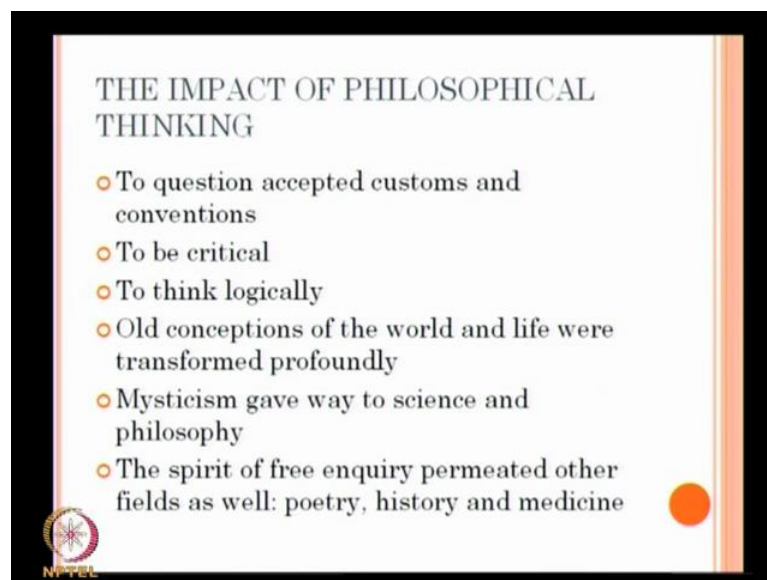


The impact of philosophical thinking in the Greek world, it is ultimately led to the emergence of sophism then, we will see the sophists what constitute or rather most important characteristic feature of sophists then the emergence of sophism the reasons behind the emergence sophism particularly political and cultural factors that propelled the emergence. Then we will see some of the major contributions or some of the major use of a the sophist which can be summarized with an explanation of what skepticism

was and what relativism was for the sophist and then we will have started we will focus on the contributions the individual contributions of a 2 of the important sophist Gorgias' and Protagoras. And then we will summing of we will see the impact of sophism in European thought particularly on morality and on the nature of philosophical reflections and then the contributions of sophists.

These are the topics which we are going to discuss; also we will have a note on the drawbacks of sophism some of the major drawbacks of sophism as a movement. Let us begin our examination of the contribution of philosophical thinking of sophist. We will have to begin with an analysis of the impact of philosophical thinking which is emerging the world with Thanes we already examine this in the previous lecture.

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This is the philosophical approach to reality questions the accepted customs and conventions naturally because philosophy critical enquiry. It never accepts things as it comes as it is set. It questions it enquires what is the reason behind things. This is both a philosophical enquiry as well as scientific enquiry.

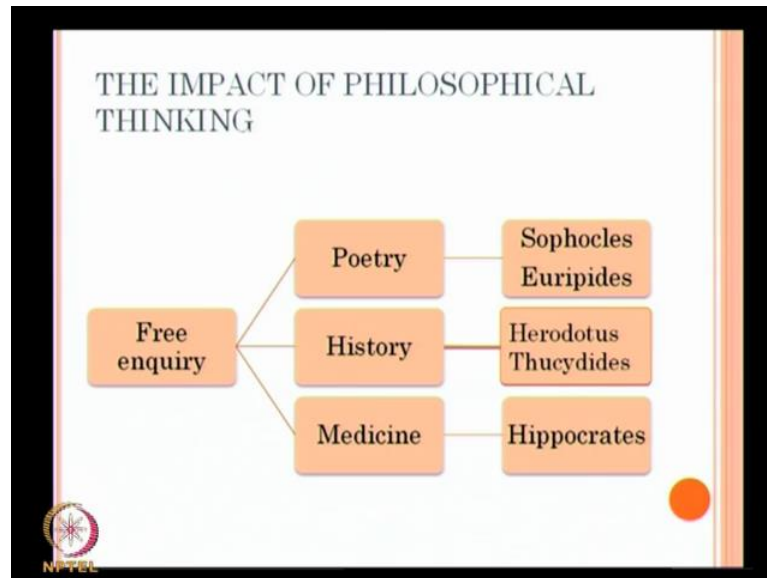
To be critical not to accept anything as it is given, but to examine whether it is true or not whether it is valid or not. One has to be critical about customs about views about perspectives and about stand points. And to think logically this is another thing which distinguish we have already seen that distinguish philosophical enquiry from other enquiries that philosophical enquiry is logical it follows reason and old conceptions of

the world and life were transformed profoundly by these philosophers, the pre-Socratic thinkers they have questioned they have introduced new problems for the human intellective (Refer Time: 03:43) upon.

The old conceptions were transformed profoundly which is predominantly the old conceptions were predominantly mythological religious in nature. These are all transformed and placed in new perspective of reason and science and mysticism give way to science and philosophy. We have mapped this emergence of science and philosophy in the previous lecture. Now the spirit of free enquiry permeated other fields as well. This is one important thing because the emergence of philosophy is actually given birth to an emergence of a new culture in the Greek world.

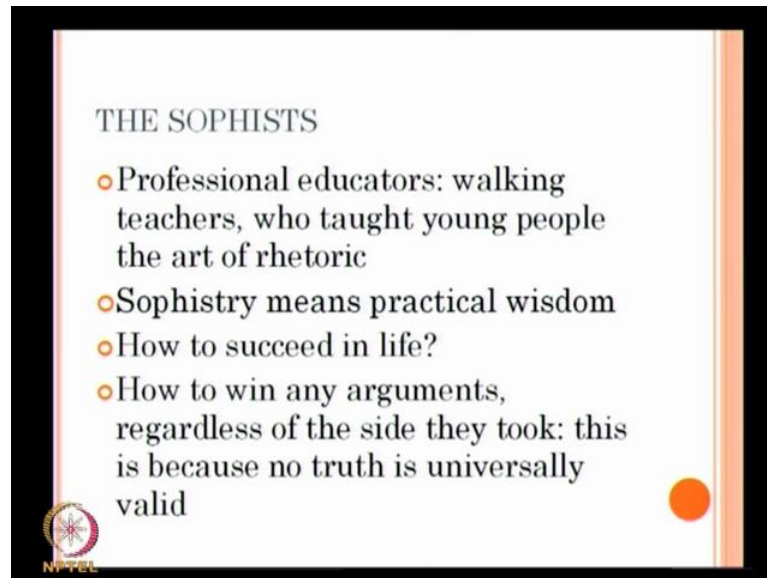
Every field of human activity was affected. For example, poetry, history, the understanding of history because normally you know this pre modern civilization they their understanding of history is based on oral traditions whatever is handed down from generation to generation. So, based on certain beliefs and conventions and customs, but with this emergence of scientific philosophical period there is a different approach altogether to all intellectual disciplines human kind is concerned with. The more important thing is we have to see the emergence of medicine as a science in the Greek world, rather than the healing practices of ancient physicians which are not based on any codified rational knowledge. Medicine as a science, as a universal science based on certain principles and also based on observation of physicians individual physicians merged during this period.

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Let us see the some very briefly the contributions see here we can see the free enquiry which is being prompted which being supported and encouraged by philosophical thinking and in the world of poetry we will see great poet like Sophocles, Euripides, the great writer of Oedipus, the great the dramatician and such a kind of changes the Greek civilization is under gone in creative domains. And when it history we have people like Herodotus and Thucydides and medicine this is what I said more importantly in the field of medicine we have to Hippocrates, Hippocrates is considered as a father of medical sciences. Even now some of his views and observation are relevant and considered as important in by modern scientist. This is the context in which sophism emerged in Greek history.

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Now, you talk about the sophists who are they? Sophists are professional educators. Till then there is no such conceptions of professional education in the sense that there are group of people who are equip with certain skills and certain professional knowledge based on which they can advise people in the society and train people in parts skills to the people who require them and also in turn they accept money. That is their livelihood. It is all done for money based on fee.

Sophist where largely professional educators they were walking teachers they never settled down in a particular place they will go around who thought young people the art of rhetoric. Rhetoric becomes important at this phase of Greek history and rhetoric is a science particularly rhetoric is science has been practice by these people sophist they perfected it and trained young people in the fine mechanisms of rhetoric, sophistry means practical wisdoms. When you examine the etymology of the terms sophist it means practical wisdom they do not claim that they have earned a special knowledge about the metaphysical reality of this universe like the pre-Socratic thinkers, we have seen in the previous lecture where talking about that what is that fundamental substances out of which everything come out. Such metaphysical questions were not entertained by the sophist. They rather focused on practical wisdom.

Practical wisdom, which is needed for living this society for negotiating with people in the society and for winning for actually gaining a success in this social life, how to

succeed in life, that is a very practical question which sophist were concerned about. In a society where you find yourself how to succeed how to have a good carrier that is a question. How to win any argument, now they come to the point, how to win any arguments regardless of the side they took. This is because no truth is universally valid.

Here you can see there so called (Refer Time: 08:52) metaphysical position as well it says that no truth is universally valid, which is relativism. The practical most practical question is how to win any arguments regardless of the side they took.

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The slide is titled "THE SOPHISTS" and contains the following text:

- Do not constitute a movement of tradition of thought
- No common metaphysical doctrine, though there are several common features
- Important Sophists are: Gorgias and Protagoras and Isocrates

Below the list are two boxes:

<b>Gorgias</b> • Nothing exists - nihilistic skepticism	<b>Protagoras</b> • Man is the measure of all things
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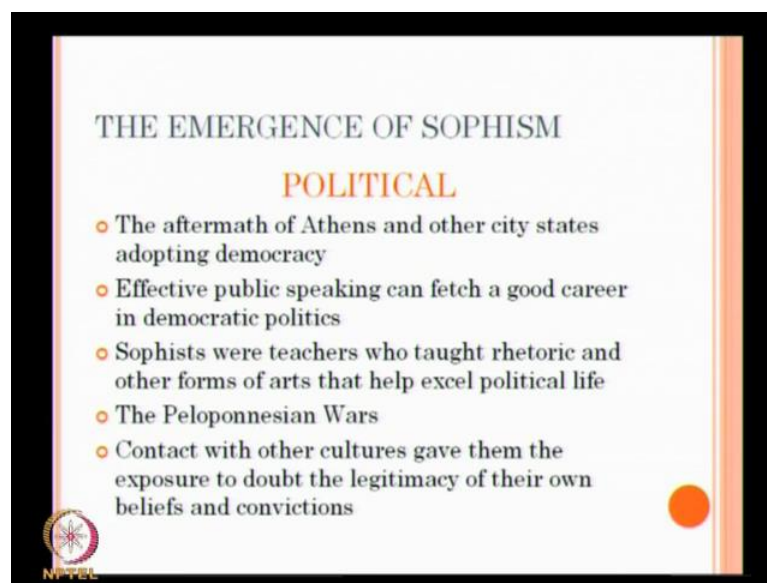
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And what they said is that do not constitute a movement of tradition of thought see this is something we have to understand from the very outset. Sophist is not a school of thought like rationalism or empiricism schools of thought they do not constitute a movement even like a group of people come together and pursue certain common objectives and do certain things on the base of certain common understanding, nothing like that, for sophist it was not like that, it was not a tradition of thought then there is no common metaphysical doctrine though there are several common features.

View in a school of thought we will find some very strong basis whether it is metaphysical or epistemological position, which you will not find in the case of sophist. Again when we talk about some there are several sophist, their names are mentioned in literature, in philosophy, in philosophical literature, particularly in the works of Aristotle Plato and many others, but we would be considering only 2 of them.

But when you the first one is Gorgias' and the second one is Protagoras and there is also one important sophist who name is being mentioned very frequently it is Isocrates, but of course, we will not be dealing with his philosophy in this lecture . So, when we talk about these 2 sophists whom I am mentioned, Gorgias' what is associated famously associated with this thinker is this thesis of nihilism nothing exists it is called nihilistic skepticism and when it comes to Protagoras the most important and the most famous and the most popular say which is become the hallmark of sophism is associated with Protagoras which says that man is a measure of all things.

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Again now when we talk about the emergence of sophism, let us have a brief understanding about this aspect as well, what let what are the conditions which ultimately led to the emergence of sophism. We will basically concentrate on 2 aspects one is the political one, the second one is cultural one and when we deal with political one, we can see that it is emerged as the aftermath of Athens and other city states Greek adopting democracy. So, politically democracy is what made sophist relevant and effective public speaking as a result of as a consequence of democracy effective public speaking can fetch a good career in democratic politics.

Public speaking becomes very important in democracy because what is important in democracy is to convince others through arguments that you have a point this is what is happening in even in today's democratic world that politician are they come with the

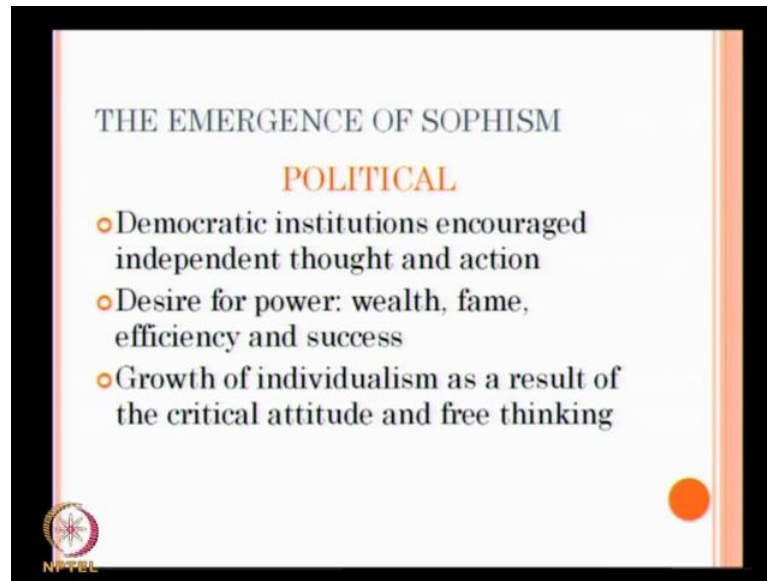
help of media and various other platforms, they come to the people and there is a public debate about issues and to what extent politician are capable of convincing people that they are good it is based on that their success depends.

In democracy, we can imagine what would have been the case in the ancient Greece with on the city states which have very small states and the population is not very large where people even know each other in such a case they have given a lot of importance to this skills the speaking skills and sophist were teachers who taught rhetoric and other forms of art that help excel political life. They were teaching excellence in one sense we can say, the certain skill that enable people to come to the public platform and convince their views to the public and engage in argument with others, with their opponents, with their counter parts and again you know in the political side Peloponnesian war also has prompted a propel the growth of sophism and contact with other cultures gave them the exposure to doubt the legitimacy of their own beliefs and convictions that is another thing because one particular idea of the sophist were relativism they do not believe in one single theory one single idea one single position.

They were relativist that is because of their exposure with other civilizations other cultures when you are expose to other people you are expose to different ways saying the word different practices and different customs this rather prompt you to accept that or rather to accept your contingency that what whatever your believe your customs and conventions are not the truth there could be other ways of saying reality and understanding the world.



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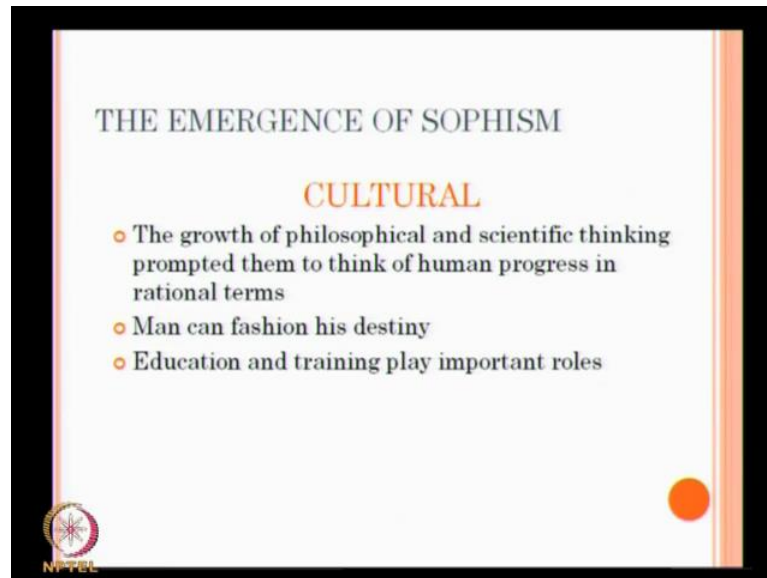


And again democratic institutions encouraged independent thought and action that is one hallmark of democracy independent action thought.

Where people, there is a desire to power and power is always associated with wealth fame efficiency and success. All these things are required see the important thing noted here is that success will never come as a matter of hereditary it is not given to you it is something which is achieved by your skills and for sharpening your skills your abilities you need to be treat in a particular way and sophist were precisely offering that training to the public growth of individualism as a result of the critical attitude and free thinking.

This is another impact of this critical thinking that individualism those people start differentiating or rather distancing themselves from commonly held beliefs and customs. So, there is a common pull off beliefs people each individual who is capable of independent thought starts questioning it and distancing himself for herself from those accepted views.

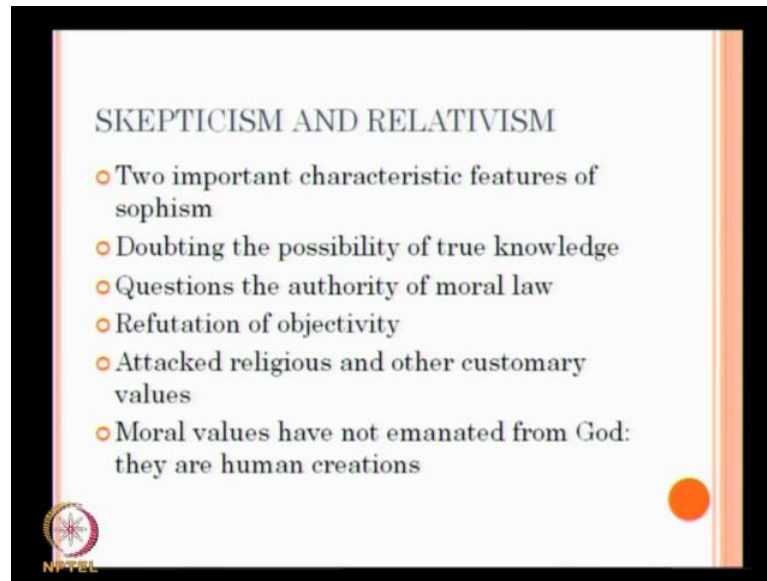
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Now, when you see the cultural aspect the growth of philosophical and scientific thinking prompted them to think of human progress in rational terms human progress is not something which is dictated by the gods not something which is dictated by the divine powers, but something which man can achieve in this world.

Philosophical thinking the growth of philosophical thinking rational thinking as help them to conceive human progress from that perspective from a very optimistic humanistic perspective man can fashion his destiny that some strangeness confident philosophical viewpoints stand point which these thinkers were adopting education, and training play important roles as I already mention it is not something which is given to you as a matter of being born in a particular family, but something which you have to achieve through education and training.

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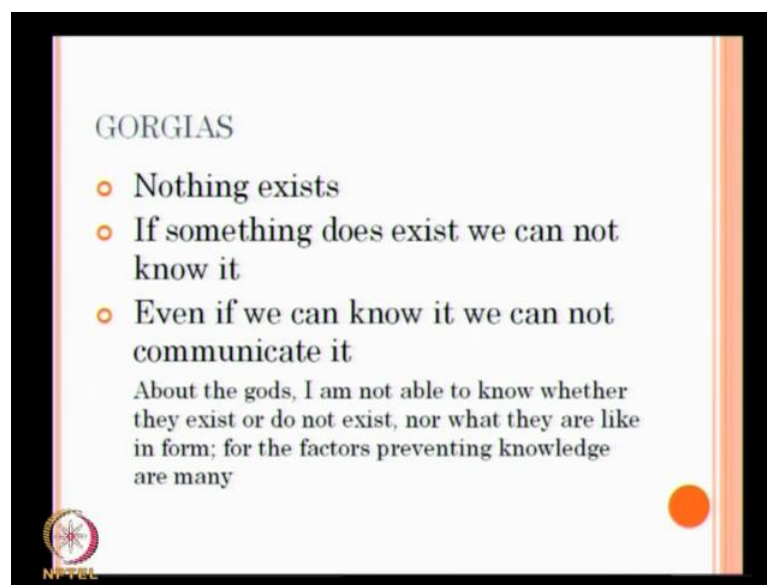
And as a result, 2 important characteristics features can be identified of sophism. The first one is skepticism, never accept anything in its face value question, everything doubt everything there are no fundamental positions possible.

Everything can be doubted and the second one is relativism that is again kind of approach to life in reality where you see that there is no ultimate fundamental perspective from where reality can be grasped in absolute sense. Everything is relative to perspectives doubting, the possibility of true knowledge that is one of the consequences of this skepticism because true knowledge depends on something which is fixed, something which is assents we can call, but here these people oppose all possibilities of such an essentialistic, foundationalistic philosophy.

Doubting the possibility of true knowledge again questions the authority of moral law that is another one moral law. Moral law is again there is a conception of moral law which is which underlies the Greek world that moral law is something like are the natural law which cannot be violated which is. Naturally there it is natural coat and coat which cannot be violated, should not be violated, but here these people with that skepticism, with that relativism questions the very sanctity of such a moral law which is universal and objective refutation of objectivity (Refer Time: 18:03) particularly in the field of knowledge and in the field of morals, attacked religious and other customary values.

Their conceptions are very peculiar in that way and again moral values have not emanated from god they are human creations. This is another very important starting point, I would call it starting point because you know these people have already set aside everything that has been accepted by tradition and they wanted a new beginning. Moral values one of the important conceptions about moral values is that they are given by gods the divine creations we are not suppose to violated because god has already institudarate, but these people say that it is not the creation of god they are created by man human beings have created it.

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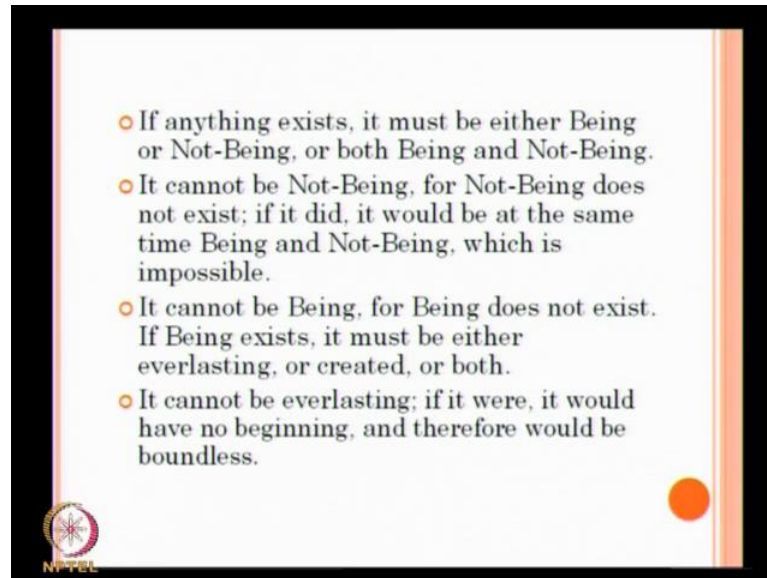


Now, let us examine 2 important philosophers of the sophist and I will first go to Gorgias' and here I will just take an example of one of the arguments he has initiated which is depicted by Plato, but before that the major theory which propound which is propounded by Gorgias', nothing exists.

As I have already mentioned earlier, he is philosophical position can be termed as nihilistic skepticism nothing exists. If an, this is a argument this is actually given by a Plato, if something does exist, we cannot know it even if we can know it, we cannot communicate it about the gods. I am not able to know whether they exist or do not exist, nor what they are like in form for the factors preventing knowledge are many.

This is view which is attributed to Protagoras as well some scholars, but largely you know when you follow the logic which is developed by Gorgias' in his nihilistic skepticism he begins with the thesis that nothing exist.

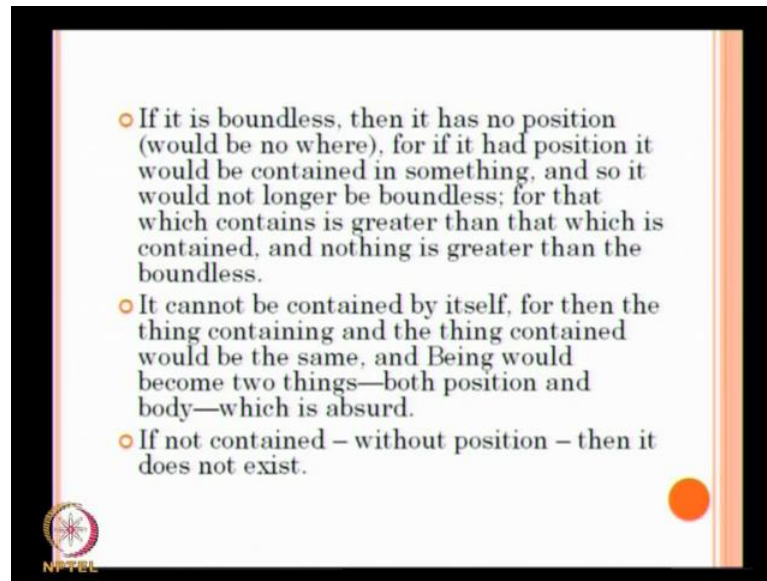
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If anything exists it must be either being or not being or both being, or not being that is another step.

We are advancing the argument is being advanced if anything exist it must be either being or not being or both being and not being it cannot be not being for not being does not exist, but if there is a case if it did it would be at the same time being and not being which is impossible which is contradiction. So, one possibilities ruled out it cannot be being for being does not exist if being exist, it must be either everlasting or created or both. So, now, another argument if at all being exist it must be either everlasting or created if it is created, it is not everlasting because it has a beginning now it cannot be everlasting because if it were it would have no beginning and therefore, would be boundless.

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Now, if it is boundless then it has no position would be no where for, if it had position it would contained in something. So, this is another one, if it is boundless then it has no position because boundless cannot be contained anywhere for if it has a position it would be contained in something. So, it would be no longer be boundless if it is contained in something less then you cannot called that objective boundless because there is something in which it is contained which is greater than this for that which contains is greater than that which is contained and nothing is greater than boundless. You come across a contradiction here.

This is a way these people develop their arguments. They use language a lot and show that you contradict and this contradiction will result in a kind of truth the clash of contradicting ideas will result in the emergence of truth this is what these people believed. It cannot be contained by itself for then the thing containing and the thing contained would be the same and being would become 2 things what position and body which is absurd. Again that possibility is also ruled out if not contained then it would not have any position at all then it does not exist.

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• Hence if Being is everlasting, it is boundless

• If boundless, it has no position ('is nowhere')

• If without position, it does not exist

Use two arguments which may oppose each other  
Allow them to clash  
This may result in truth

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So, all the possibilities are ruled out hence if being is everlasting, it is bondless if boundless it has no position which means that it is nowhere if without position it does not exist. So, here what it does this is what I have already mentioned use 2 arguments which may oppose each other. So, you give to possibilities and 2 arguments which may apparently contradict each other allow them to clash now you make them clash and this may result in the emergence of truth.

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GORGIAS' PHILOSOPHICAL POSITION

- A master of rhetoric
- Refutation of the theory of Being proposed by Parmenides
- A major proponent of the idea of paradoxical thought and paradoxical expression
- Not primarily a teacher of excellence or virtue like other Sophists
- Believed that there is no absolute notion of excellence or virtue: they are relative to the situation and context

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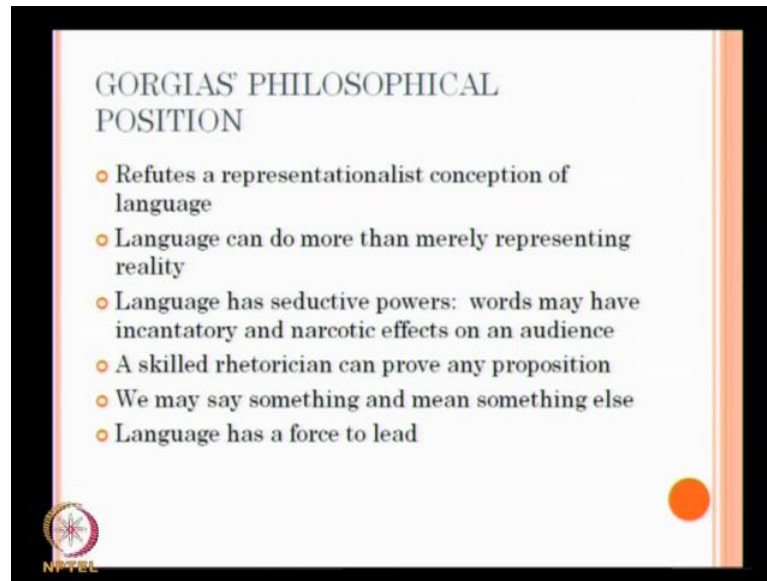
This is the method these people adopt and in the light of this when we examine in Gorgias's philosophical position we can see that he is a master rhetorician and a master of rhetoric and a master of refutation of the theory of being proposed by Parmenides. This is what we can understand because one of the greatest pre-Socratic thinkers Parmenides which we have already examined in the previous lecture has shown that he has here a conception of reality which is immovable which is boundless being he calls a being, boundless being, which is immovable which is imperishable which is eternal such a conception is being refuted by the sophist Gorgias' with this nihilistic skepticism.

It is a refutation of the theory of being proposed by Parmenides and is a major proponent of the idea of paradoxical thought and paradoxical expression. So, you can see they bring about or rather they put forward certain paradoxes that are what I said they allow contradiction to clash a position to clash and paradoxical expressions also. So, we can see that in this sense Gorgias' is not primarily a philosopher of excellence a teacher of excellence or excellence of virtue like many other sophists as I already mentioned many of the sophists were walking teachers they trained people in excellence how to be excellent, how to succeed in life they were teachers of excellence virtue.

But Gorgias' in that pure sense of the term is not a teacher of excellence of virtue. He believes that there is no absolute notion of excellence or virtue that is another important thing because there is no such absolutism present in Gorgias' philosophical position. He is a thoroughgoing relativist or nihilist they are relative to the situation and context. So, excellence in one context need not be an excellence in other context. So, that makes the space for relativism.



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And again he refutes a representationalist conception of language that is another very important contribution of the sophist by a large of a sophist and particularly Gorgias' a from the perspective of contemporary philosophy, why I mention contemporary philosophy because now we talk a lot about postmodernism and we can see that postmodernism as a western or philosophical position refutes some of the fundamental assumptions of modernity and the most important one is the belief in a kind of transcendental reason which people like Immanuel Kant propagate, the kind of rationality the rational principle transcendental universal objective reason.

The postmodern is refute that without really subscribing to a relativistic position because what most of the postmodern is where trying to do is to overcome the dichotomy between rational and irrational. So, there is no question of relativism and this is generally the trend generally the spirit of contemporary philosophy I am not saying that all contemporary philosophers are relativist or all philosophers are postmodernist, no, that is not the case there are many others like people like Heidegger who are not, who are who opposed postmodernism, but all of them accept that language plays a very important role in constituting valid. It is not that language is just a representation of reality that is there outside word.

The words which use are not just names of objects the word this is what representationism is, representational is believed that words are mere science or symbols

of objects in the word. So, these people we can find a refutation such a conception of language present in Gorgias' philosophical position as well where language can do more than nearly representing reality actually language can create a reality this is what they see. And language has seductive powers this is something which may of the sophist were interested to explore language has certain powers they can seduce people words may have incantatory and narcotic effects on an audience.

This is a very beautifully depicted by Shakespeare in this Julius Caesar where after the death of Caesar, Mark Antony comes and mesmerizes people his audience and with a rhetoric speech he delivers. So, we can see language has seductive powers the idea comes from the sophist a skilled rhetorician can prove any proposition. So, this is interesting you can prove any argument you can put forward proof for any argument. We may say something and mean something else this is all possible in language has a force to lead I mean, if at all there is something called truth it is language which takes us to that truth language which takes us to reality.

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**THE GORGIAN IMPACT**

- The youth were attracted to his position
- There is no truth out there: we can make it
- We can get training for it
- Success is not something that comes as an hereditary right: it is achieved through skills

- Does this amount to corrupting the youth?
- Does this nihilism invalidate all positions, all truth?
- No position is more correct

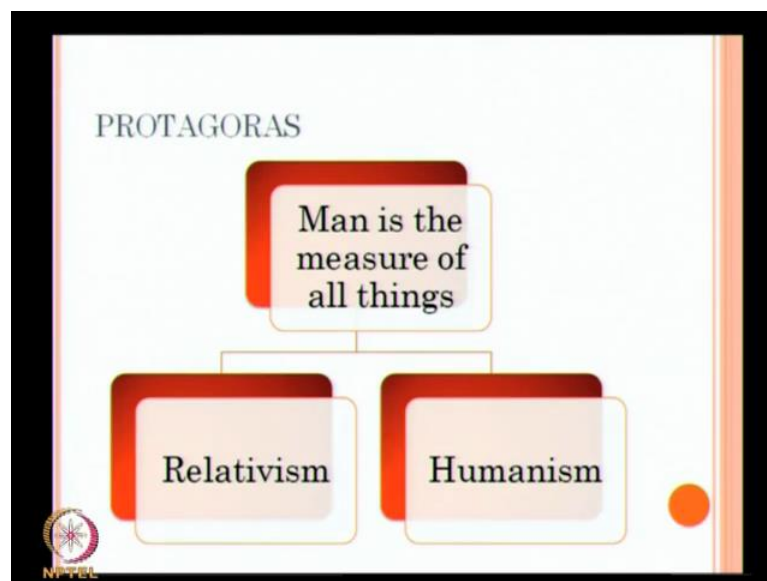
When we talk about the Gorgian impact from this prospective the youth were attracted to his position naturally somebody you comes and denies somebody who propagates nihilistic skepticism at the position will be defiantly attractive to the young stars particularly because it is at that age you sort of develop opposition to tradition conventions and customs. There is no truth out there we can make it this is another

important ah sophistic position there is no truth out there we make it and we can get training for this. You can actually sharpen your skills your abilities with the help of certain trainings and imparting certain skills and success is not something that comes as a hereditary right it is achieved through skills.

So, this is a very optimistic believe which youngsters would have and naturally Gorgias' and other sophist attracted them, but now there are certain concerns which need to be raised in this context the first one is does this amount to corrupting the youth because you know you deny the validity of any position.

Does it amount to a kind of corrupting the youth does this nihilism in validates all position all truth ultimately leading to complete nihilism complete kayos. So, these are some of the concerns no position is more correct for these people.

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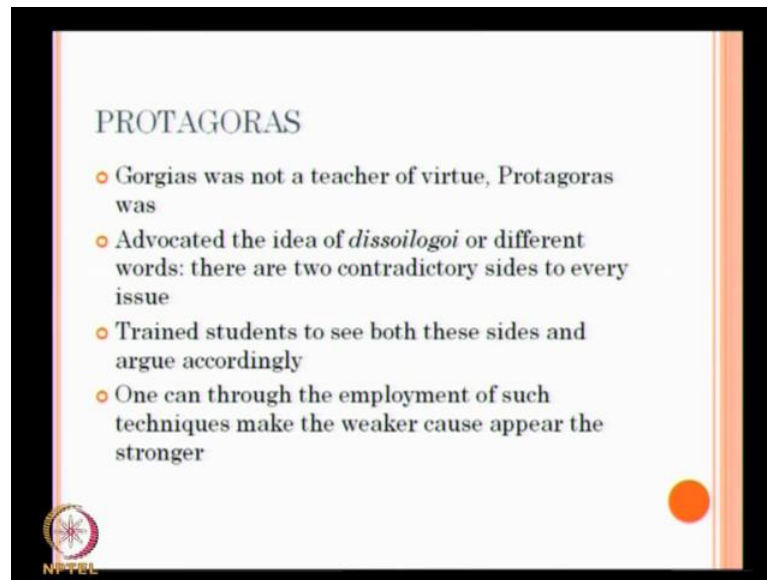


And these are some of the important aspects about Gorgias' philosophy. Now we come to the second one, second philosopher whom I am mentioned Protagoras with whom the most important expression associated with sophistic movement is associated what is it man is the measure of all things.

There are 2 aspects to this proposition first one is it asserts relativism, the second one is it propagates humanism because it talks about man, man is being the ultimate pressure of everything there is no gods no reference to any extra human beings here rather man and

on the other hand what is this man, who is this man, whether it is a human community whether it is humanity as I hold no for the sophist, it is a individual man and so, relativism actually it is subjectivism.

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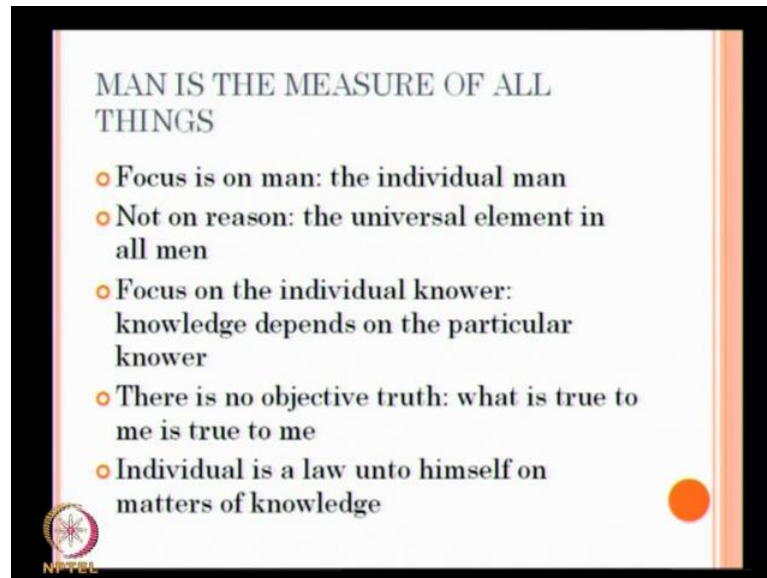


These 2 aspects need to be understood before we proceed further. Gorgias' was not a teacher of virtue as I already mentioned, but Protagoras was and he advocated the idea of it is a Greek word *dissoillogoi* or different words. There are 2 contradictory sides of every issue. Highlighting the 2 sides of every issue, you begin with both the sides and trained students to see both these sides and argue accordingly. So, what basically Protagoras says is that there is no warn issue which is correct than the other one you can for on any issue or any problem or any given situation you can find 2 opposing contradicting view points. And you cannot say that one of these view point is more correct than the other and Protagoras was training his students to argue for each of this positions each of this viewpoint. One can through the employment of such techniques make the weaker cause appear the stronger.

You can even prove that at 12 clock in the noon in a market place a philosopher goes and announces that it is midnight, now there is no light, is darkness and it is midnight now it is; obviously, against what you pursue, but then through argumentation through such lodge rectories you can ultimately prove that it is midnight. This is the way these people

have taken their philosophy to understand things from a lighter way, but of course, there have serious implications to this, such conception.

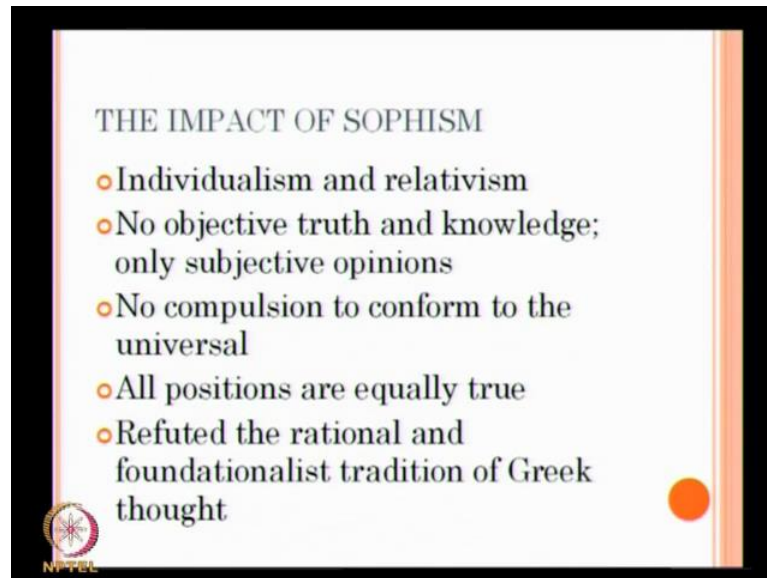
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Now, when you say man is a measure of all things you are focusing on man as I already mentioned the focus is not on human communities or humanity as such, but on the individual man and it is not on reason which is which is the universal element that is presented all men. When we talk about reason we are talking about something which is universally present in all human beings across cultures in civilizations, but here with the focus on individuality the rational element is bracketed it is kept a side and you isolate the individual the individual the concrete individual with his concrete historical environment becomes at the center of philosophical enquiry focus on the individual knower knowledge depends on the particular knower.

That is what knowledge is associated not with reason which is universal or with humanity, but with the particular knower there is no objective truth what is true to me is true to me and what is true to you is true to you. There is no such universal objective platform based on which you can arrive at a transcendental conception of truth individual is law unto himself on matters of knowledge. Everything is dictated decided by the individual there are no universal standards.

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Now, based on does there as have an analysis of the impact of sophism in human intellectual history individualism and relativism as I have already mentioned and no objective truth and objective knowledge only subjective opinions each individual is a measure of is truth.

There is no possibility for true and knowledge in the traditional sense of the term there are only opinions of individuals again no compulsion to confirm to the universal that gives you immense freedom because there is no compulsion at all that your views should confirm to something which is there something which is universal everything is tentative everything is personal all positions are equally true.

This is what it looks very attractive that every position is true every man is correct every viewpoints is equally true and it refuted the rational and foundationalist tradition of Greek thought you can see that the pre-Socratic thinkers who we have examined in the previous lecture they were all sort of subscribe to a conception of rational knowledge a kind of foundationalistic perspective that it is possible that or rather there is a reality which is absolute and it is possible for man to understand this reality with employment of reason.

These are some of the ideas which are presented the Greek civilization and these were refitted refuted by the sophist.

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**GREEK FOUNDATIONALISM:  
ASSUMPTIONS**

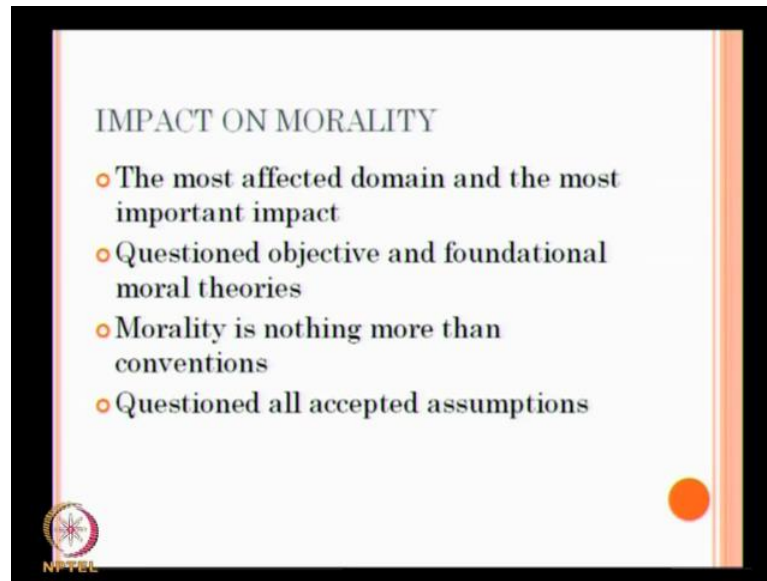
- The world as rationally ordered by laws that could be discovered by reason and observation
- The laws of that cosmos can be discovered by the application of individual reason
- The tradition of argumentation: a quest to discover truth

- Sophists countered all these assumptions
- Advocated ethnocentric and subjective views: cultural relativism and individualism

Now, when we see this foundationalism of Greek thinkers what are they the world as rationally ordered by laws that could be discovered by reason and observation there is a world which is rationally ordered which can be understood by human mind with the employment of observation and reason, scientific, philosophical, rational, approach to understand the world possibility that possibility is refuted. The laws of that cosmos can be discovered by the application of individual reason. Human mind which possesses reason as the ability to understand truth see the optimism.

The tradition of argumentation a quest to discover truth, these people believed in a tradition of argumentation. Something which I mention the previous a lecture the we call they call it a tradition of critical discourse that is being undermined by the sophist because argumentation is meant for what arriving at true, but if there is no objective truth then what is point in argument . So, argumentation the very idea of engaging in arguments the very idea of logical argumentation becomes a futile exercise sophist countered all these assumptions and advocated ethnocentrism and subjective views ethnocentric means that there is no universally valid morals or conceptions of knowledge of values, but everything is dependent on certain concrete historical social factors or individual factors. So, subjective views cultural relativism and individualism.

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Now, as I already mentioned the entire sophistic movement had its major impact on morality and which is the most serious impact which one has to understand and we can see that this is actually the we can see the emergence of a all kind of relativism from the sophist position, cultural relativism, moral realism, moral individualism and subjectivism all kinds of even nihilism from the sophist position the most effected domain and the most important impact. That is why the impacting morality is most affected domain of human concern is morality and they questioned the objective and foundational moral theories.

Again morality is nothing more than conventions further. So, there is no ground universal ground which anyone can accept it has just become what a matter of convention and questioned all accepted assumptions about what is right and what is wrong what is good and what is bad, everything that society the culture the civilization as considered as valuable as we questioned by these walking teachers of ancient Greece.




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**MORAL LAW: NATURE AND FUNCTION**

- Moral laws are like laws of nature
- Moral laws are universally true for all humans
- This universal law can be understood by reason


Sophists refuted all these views



Now, moral law nature and function moral laws are like laws of nature I have already mentioned this, the conception the original conception of moral law is to compare it with a law of nature where they are universally true for all human beings. So, there is a kind of universalism and objectivism and this universal law can be understood by reason. So, man can understand it. So, since man can understand it is possible for man to be good or bad right or wrong and sophist refuted all these. This is what sophist has taken us.

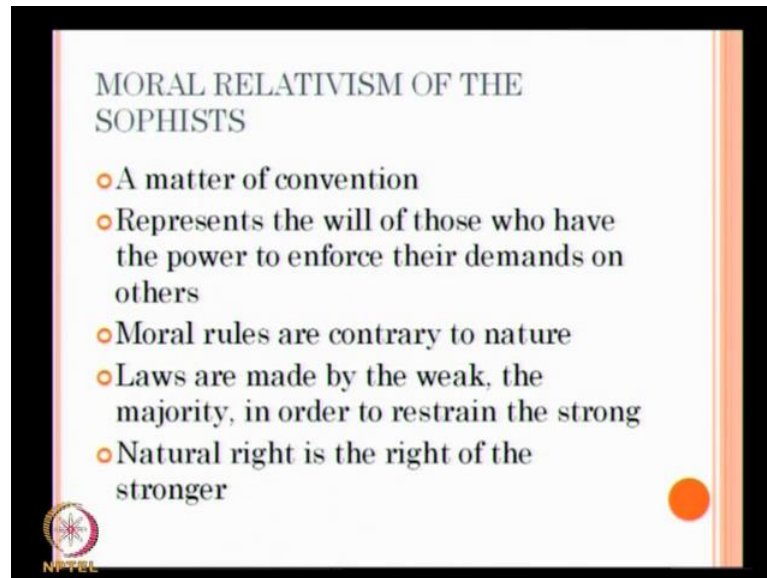
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MORAL FOUNDATIONALISM	MORAL SKEPTICISM
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Moral laws are like laws of nature</li><li>○ Universally true for all humans</li><li>○ Universal law can be understood by reason</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>○ Created by man based on circumstances</li><li>○ No independent objective existence</li><li>○ Vary from time to time and place to place and even from individual to individual</li></ul>



And when we talk about moral foundationalism moral laws are alike as just a sum of laws of nature universally true for all humans universal law can be understood by reason and moral skepticism says is that it is created by man based on circumstances no independent objective existence and vary from time to time and place to place and even from individual to individual, so moral foundationalism versus moral skepticism.

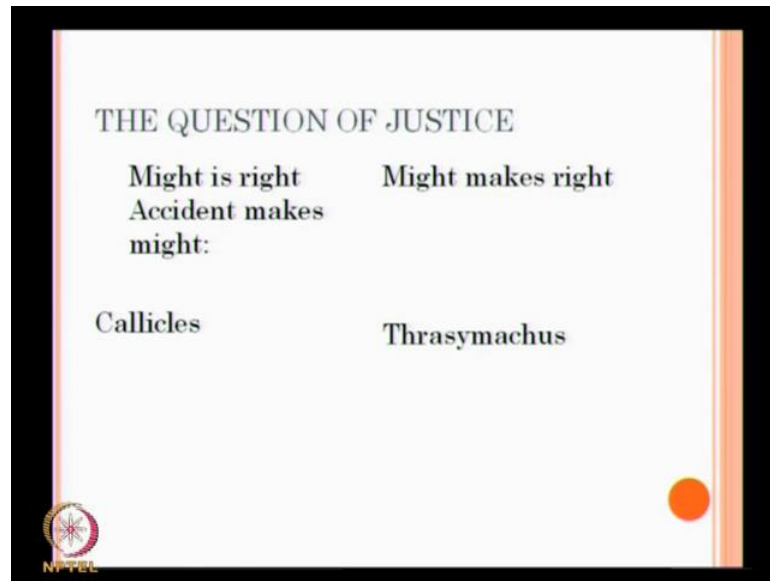
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And again as I already mentioned sophist would see morality as matter of convention according to some of them morals or morality represents the will of those who have the power to enforce their demands on others that is one view. So, moral rules are contrary to they would say that contrary to nature, they cannot be compared with natural laws they are contrary to nature and laws are made by the weak that is another view.

So, I am just presenting that there are different views possible and different sophist held different views about morality according to some it is it is those who have the empower enforce them and that is become right that is become just and according to some others laws are made by the weak the majority in order to restrain the strong from over powering them, you can see that this resonance of a such a view in the philosophy of each late night incendiary. Natural right is the right of the stronger according to this view they would say that natural what is natural is the interest of the strong.

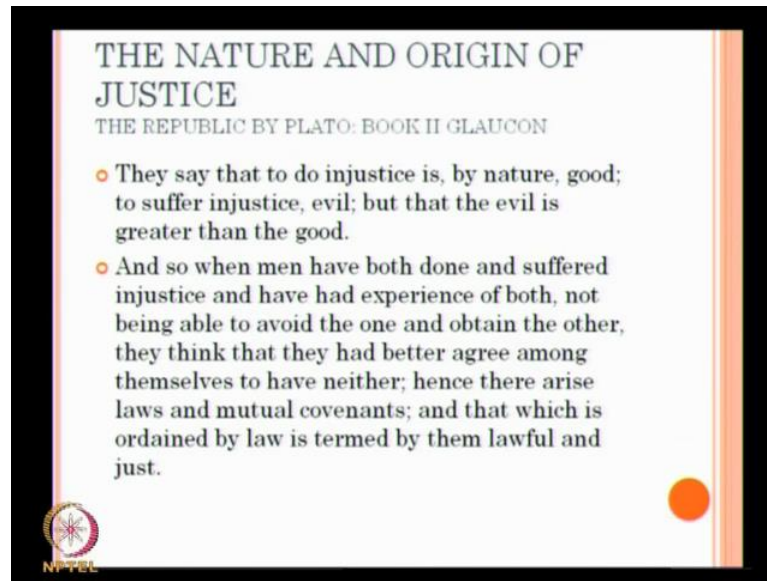
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And now we will address very very concrete question the notion of Justice I am taking of this question because this is going to occupy a major space in the discussion philosophical discussion of philosophical position of 2 great philosophers Plato and Aristotle in the subsequent lectures.

So, the question of like justice is initiated here and here there is an interesting view to put forward might is right accident makes might there is no universal factor which decides and determines what is right, it is just accident that makes might and might is right and this is held by Callicles another sophist called Thrasymachus would say that might makes right.

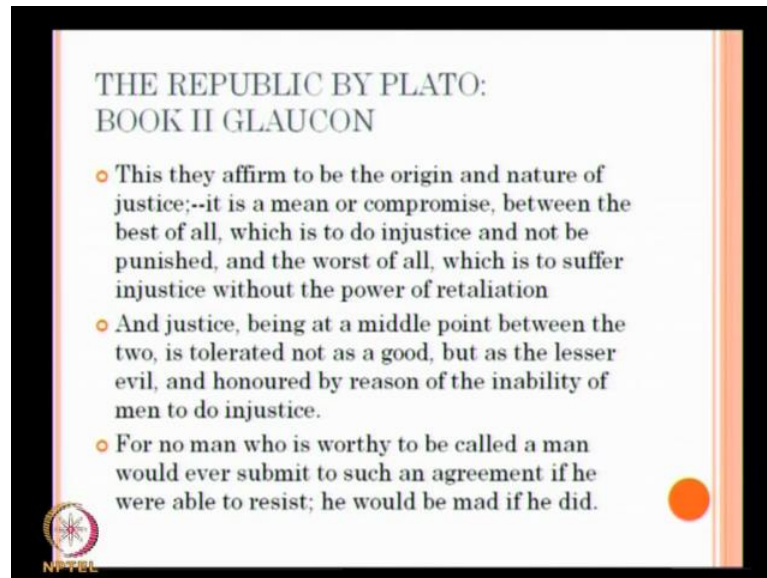
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There is an argument here the nature and origin of justice which is narrated by Plato in his republic book 2 what it says is that they say that to do in justice is by nature good to suffer in justice evil, but that the evil is greater than the good and so, when men have both done and suffered injustice and have had experience of both not being able to avoid the one and obtain the other. They think that they had better agree among themselves to have neither hence there arise laws and mutual covenants and that which is ordained by law is termed by the lawful and just.

It says that the primary assumption is there that do in justice is by nature good and to suffer in justice is evil. So, if I take advantage over another person by stealing is computer or pen or something and doing in justice to him, but that is good for me, but for that person suffering in justice is evil so, but that is not possible for human beings and normal circumstances to always experience good experience pleasure. So, what they have done is they have come to an agreement to do away with both justice and injustice.

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THE REPUBLIC BY PLATO:  
BOOK II GLAUCON

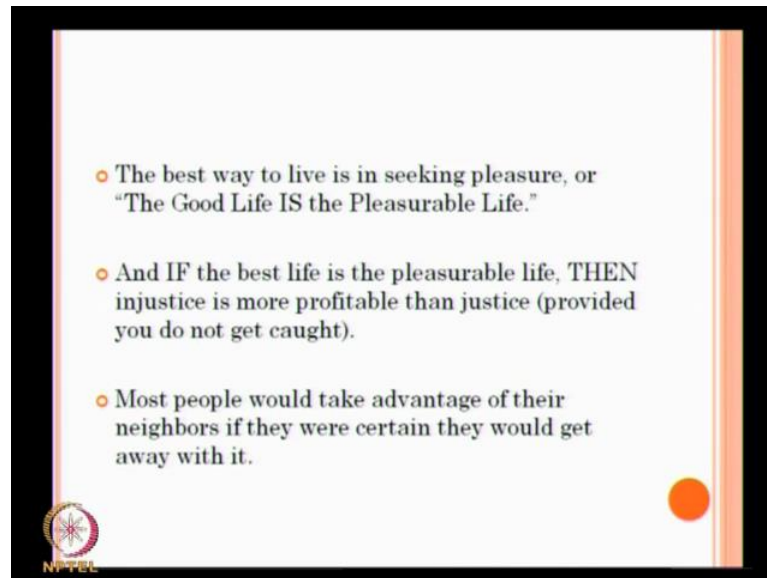
- This they affirm to be the origin and nature of justice;--it is a mean or compromise, between the best of all, which is to do injustice and not be punished, and the worst of all, which is to suffer injustice without the power of retaliation
- And justice, being at a middle point between the two, is tolerated not as a good, but as the lesser evil, and honoured by reason of the inability of men to do injustice.
- For no man who is worthy to be called a man would ever submit to such an agreement if he were able to resist; he would be mad if he did.

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This they affirm to be the origin and nature of justice it is a mean of compromise, justice is nothing but a mean a compromise between the best of all which is to do in justice and not be punished to do injustice and get away with that not to be punished, but that is not possible, that is not humanly possible because if I do injustice another person suffer injustice and there is a possibility that I might be caught then the consequences will be very bad.

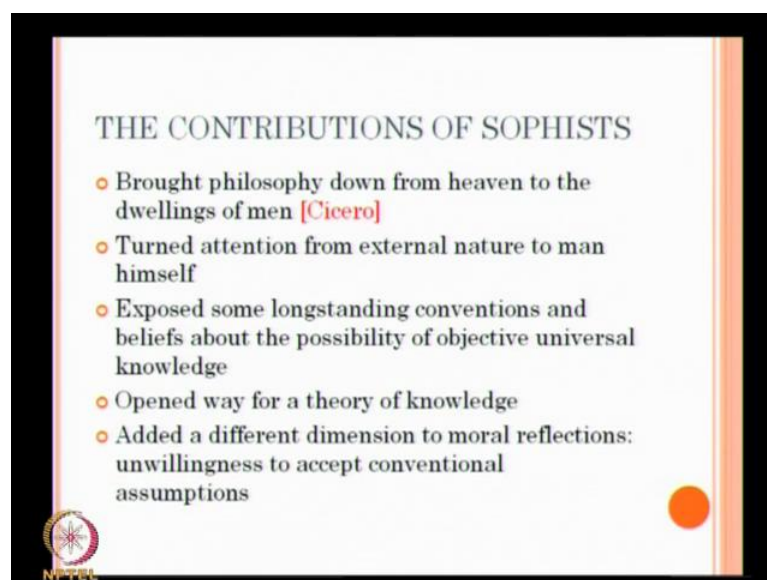
What I do is that since I do not want that to happen I have decided to arrive at a compromise with everyone in the society which is to do injustice and not be punished and the worst of all which is to suffer injustice without the power of retaliation. And justice being a middle point between the 2 is tolerated not as a good, but as the lesser evil and honored by reason of the inability of men to do injustice. For no man who is worthy to be called a man would ever submit to such an agreement if he were able to resist he would be mad if he did. This is the position about justice I repeat the last line for no man who is worthy to be called a man would ever submit to such an argument this sort of a compromise, if he were able to resist he would be mad if he did.

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And the best way to live the sophist conclude is in seeking pleasure or the good life is the pleasurable life and if the best life is the pleasurable life then injustice is more profitable than justice provided you do not get caught you get away with that. Most people take advantages they are neighbors if they were certain they would get away with it. So, this is that conclusion. So, they do not believe in any fundamental positions moral positions.

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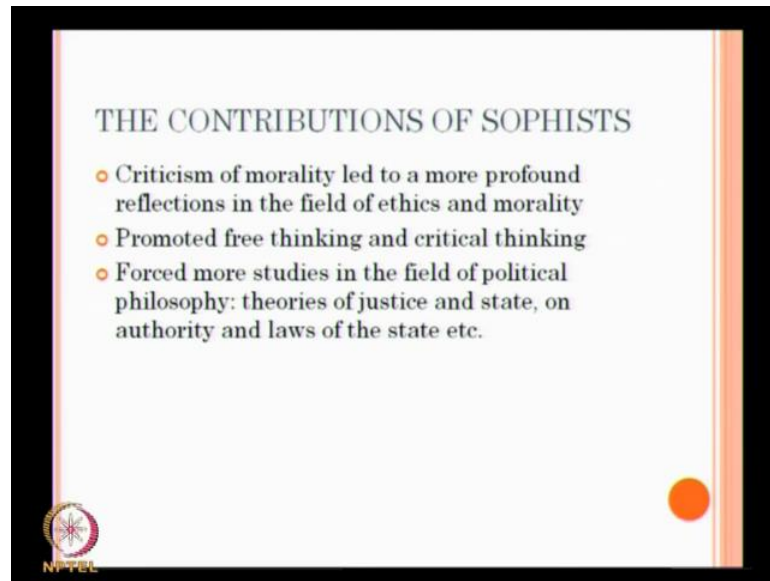
And this is something which Sophisticus kind of moral relativism moral skepticism and moral nihilism which we would find in subsequent lectures how people found it

objectionable and try to counter it particularly people like Plato and Aristotle. And now to some up we will some of the important contributions of sophist it brought philosophy as this is Cicero's opinion will philosophy down from heaven to dwelling of men, from issues like what is the ultimate substance what is the fundamental substance whether change is real or permanent are real all such highly intellectual abstract issues philosophy were concerned with these sophist brought them down to earth to the problems of man to individual man and focus on man the individual man turned attention from external nature to man himself.

Now, man becomes the object of philosophical enquiry man becomes man occupies the center of philosophical contemplations here expose some longstanding conventions and beliefs about the possibility of objective universal knowledge rather they question very very concept of such a knowledge such knowledge and truth which are universal which are which are transcendental under and questioned some of the longstanding assumptions and conventions opened way for a theory of knowledge. If knowledge is so shaky if knowledge is nothing, but based on certain conventions then you have to think about and naturally this is led to a kind of kayos, this is led to lot of controversies and subsequent thinkers have invested a lot of time on examining the nature and function of knowledge.

So, theory of knowledge as a discipline emerged out of this kind of crises which sophist have taken us added a different dimension to moral reflection unwillingness to accept conventional assumption. So, moral reflections which were present, which were based on certain assumptions about right and wrong good and bad where questioned by these thinkers.

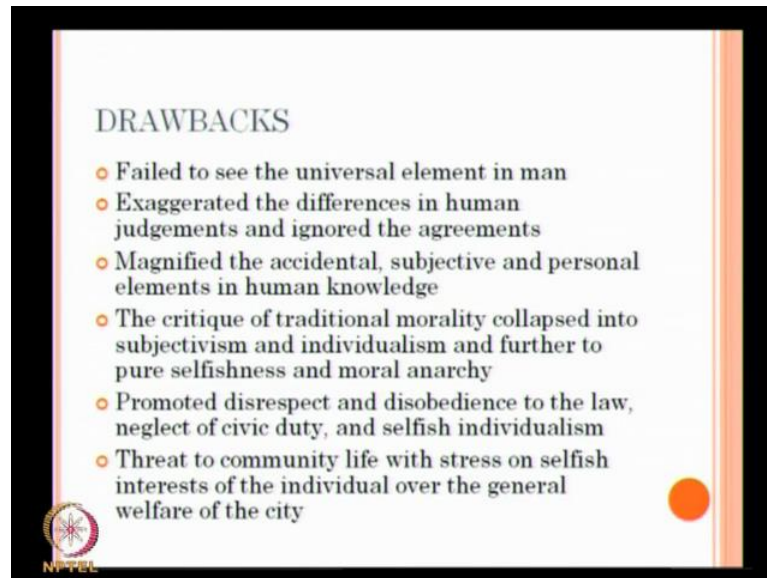
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Again criticism of morality led to a more profound reflection in the field of ethics and morality. So, now, onwards you can see that philosophers take up this problem and we will find that the Plato the most important issue is the concept of justice that is at the center of philosophical problems and even today ethics is a major concern for philosophers and this is began from sophist. Promoted free thinking and critical thinking forced more studies in the field of political philosophy theories of justice, theories about state, theories about the authority, the concept of authority and laws of the state etcetera, etcetera. These are the new avenue new study domains which the sophist posed often for further enquiries.



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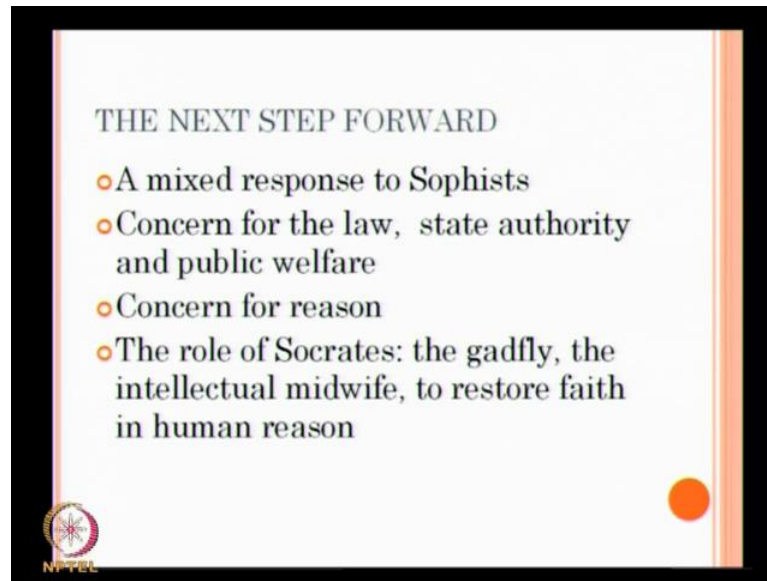
### DRAWBACKS

- Failed to see the universal element in man
- Exaggerated the differences in human judgements and ignored the agreements
- Magnified the accidental, subjective and personal elements in human knowledge
- The critique of traditional morality collapsed into subjectivism and individualism and further to pure selfishness and moral anarchy
- Promoted disrespect and disobedience to the law, neglect of civic duty, and selfish individualism
- Threat to community life with stress on selfish interests of the individual over the general welfare of the city

And before we wind up we will have very brief look and the drawbacks which will actually take us to the next section which will discuss in the next lecture. They failed to see the universal element in man they were emphasizing on the individual on the subjective and failed to see the universal, they exaggerated the differences in human judgments and ignored the agreements. They magnified the accidental the subjective and personal elements in human knowledge and totally neglected the universal aspects. The critique of traditional morality collapsed into subjectivism and individualism and further to pure selfishness and moral anarchy that is a situation which we will find when Socrates arrives into the seal promoted disrespect and disobedience to the law neglect of civil duty and selfish individualism.

These are some of the very very sad consequences very objectionable consequences of the sophistic movement and they threat to community life with stress on selfish interest of the individual over conceptions of general welfare of the city.

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Now, with this we will go to the next step, in the next lecture. We can see that there is a mixed response to the sophist generally definitely have raise some very important questions and the contributions are immense no doubt about it without sophist probably some of these important issues which we discuss in philosophy today would never taken up at all. And concern for the law state authority and public welfare was something which prompted later philosophers to counter the positions of sophist and there is a concern reason because these people have totally done away, under might the role of reason in the perused of truth and knowledge and here comes the very important role of one of the greatest thinkers in human thought Socrates the gadfly, the intellectual midwife which we will discuss in the next lecture to restore faith in human reason. In the next lecture we will see the contributions of Socrates and other important philosophers for now.

Thank you.