

Essay on animism and the contributions of thales, essay



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Anaximander, And AnaIn the early times, before the beginning of human civilization and development of

philosophy, people believed in the idea that Gods, who basically controlled every

individual aspect of human existence, controlled the world. Some primitive people

believed in the idea of Animism, or Hylozoism. (The belief that everything in the

universe, especially material objects, have some kind of sole or is a living being.) These

people believed that rocks, trees, and water had some kind of sole. Animism can still be

seen today in Native American tribes as well as the Aboriginal people of Australia.

Although the Greek culture didn't believe in Animism, an Ionian named Thales

adopted this idea in his own way. Thales was born in the Greek city-state of Ionia in the

mid 620's(BC.) Thales did not only study knowledge philosophy, but also practiced

science, history, engineering, geography, and politics. Thales was the first of his time to

propose theories of a primary substance that causes change, and supports the universe.

Thales believed that water was this substance, and the essence of life. He also believed

that it was made up of small Gods. Although his theories didn't prove to be right, such as

spontaneous generation, or the theory that earthquakes were caused by waves, Thales is

considered to be the father of philosophy.

Anaximander was another Ionian who happened to be a philosopher. He knew

Thales but disagreed with him in his theories. Anaximander wasn't only a philosopher,

but a scientist and inventor. He is even credited for creating the first sundial.

Anaximander believed in the theory of " apieron." Apieron is the unlimited, indeficit,

indestructible substance out of which individual things are created with and destroyed.

Although he believed apieron was real, he also believed that it was unexplainable. It

would be like saying that the letter W explained the alphabet. He also believed that the

formation of the world was due to the separation of opposites, and that the opposites were

constantly at war. With these factors, he believed that moderation is the key to success.

Although some of his theories were proved wrong, Anaximander was the first person to

brush the theory of evolution and was the father of Astronomy and cosmology. Many of

Anaximander's accomplishments are still regarded today.

Anaximenes was another Greek philosopher who lived around the time of

Anaximander. He was Anaximander's most notable student, but disagreed with

Anaximander on many levels. Anaximenes disagreed with the notion of apieron, but

went back a generation of thought to Thales ideas on the substance of which life is made.

Anaximenes' ideas were much different from the ideas of Thales because Anaximenes

believed that air was the ultimate substance, rather than water or apieron. Anaximenes

introduced the ideas of condensation and rarification. To prove this theory he said that

when air is rarified, it becomes fire, but when air is condensed, it would become water.

Anaximenes was also credited as the first person to perform a scientific experiment. It

stated that if one held his hand near his mouth and blew with tight lips, the air would be

cool, however, if he blew on his hand with an open mouth, it would be warm.

Through this slow evolution of thought while new generations of philosophers debated the ideas of their predecessors, philosophy was able to advance as quickly as the human societies that incorporate philosophies.