



HISTORY OF THE ACADEMY (387 BC – 88 BC)

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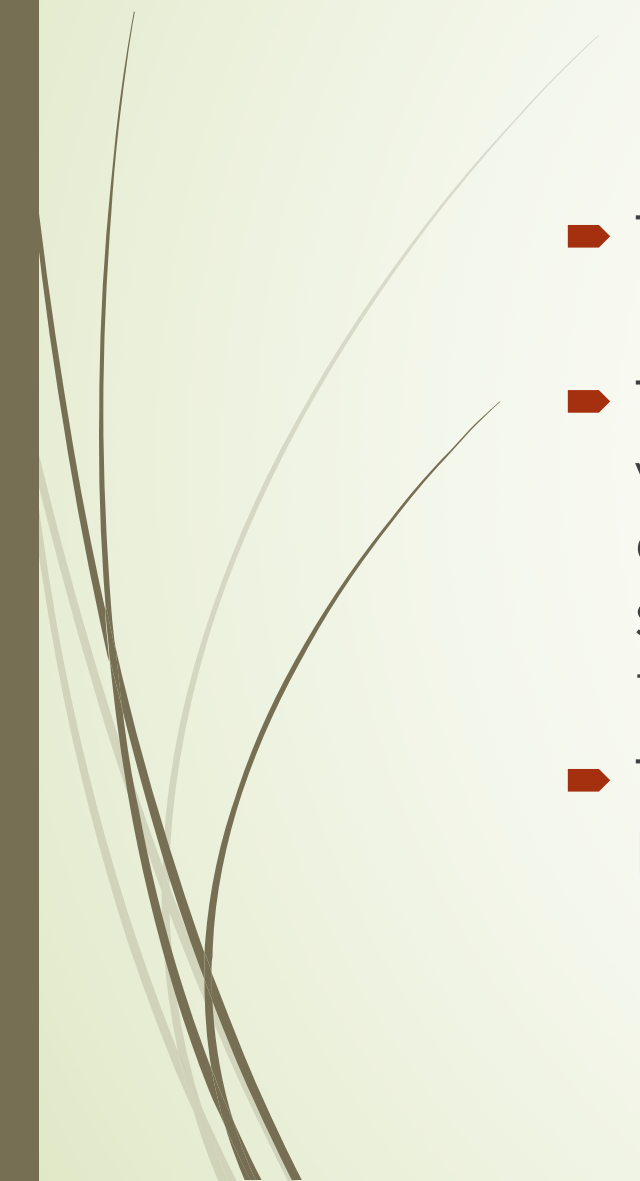
The Platonic Academy

- This is a photo of the archeological remains of Plato's Academy.
- The Academy was founded outside of the cultural center of the world at this time: Athens, Greece.
- This seemingly small place would have profound impacts on learning across the globe centuries after its close.





The Platonic Academy: Origin

- The word “Academy” is derived from the Greek term “Academeia” and the Latin term “Academia”.
 - The school was named after the site upon which the scholars would meet for instruction. The original location featured an olive grove, a park, and a gymnasium. This gymnasium was sacred to the mythological hero Academus, from which the term “academy” is derived.
 - The first academy was created by the renowned philosopher Plato in the year 387 BC.
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The Platonic Academy: Purpose

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- The primary purposes of Plato's academy was the worship of the "muses", who were Greek goddesses of music and poetry, and the development to become a Greek statesman, which required an education.
 - The students were taught by the "scholarch", who was the headmaster of the Academy. Plato served as the first scholarch, but there were over 10 scholarchs in the history of the Academy before its destruction.



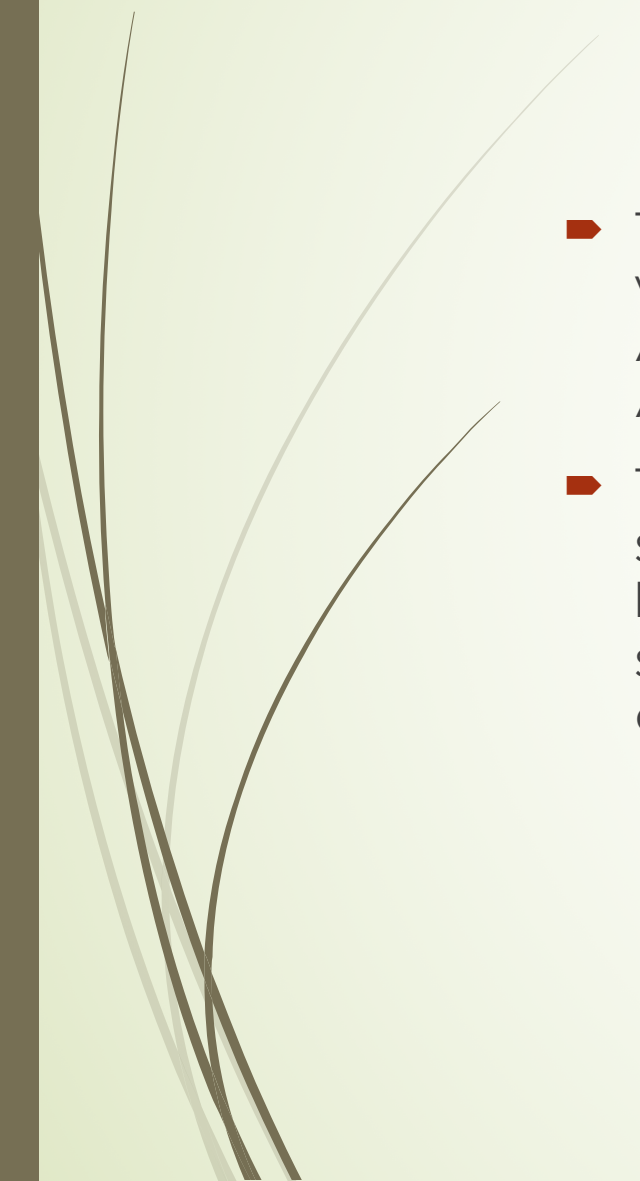
The Platonic Academy: Purpose

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- The curriculum of the Academy would change over its history, but the primary topics of discussion included the sciences, dialectics (the art of learning through informed debates), mathematics, and orature (learning to speak to groups effectively through speeches and recitations).
 - Another key purpose in the Academy was to inform the students about political matters in order to help them become proper Greek statesmen in their future. Thus, many of Plato's works include discussions about government and politics.



The Platonic Academy: Development

The Old Academy

- Throughout the history of the Platonic Academy, there were several eras which were marked by different philosophical standpoints during the Academy's evolution. Historians divide these eras into three parts: the Old Academy, the Middle Academy, and the New Academy.
 - The Old Academy was the beginning era, which included Plato's time as scholarch and his immediate successors, who taught the Academy through lectures and arguments on many topics. The Old Academy philosophy sought to attain knowledge in many aspects and believed that there were absolute truths which could be proven through mathematics and science.
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The Platonic Academy: Development

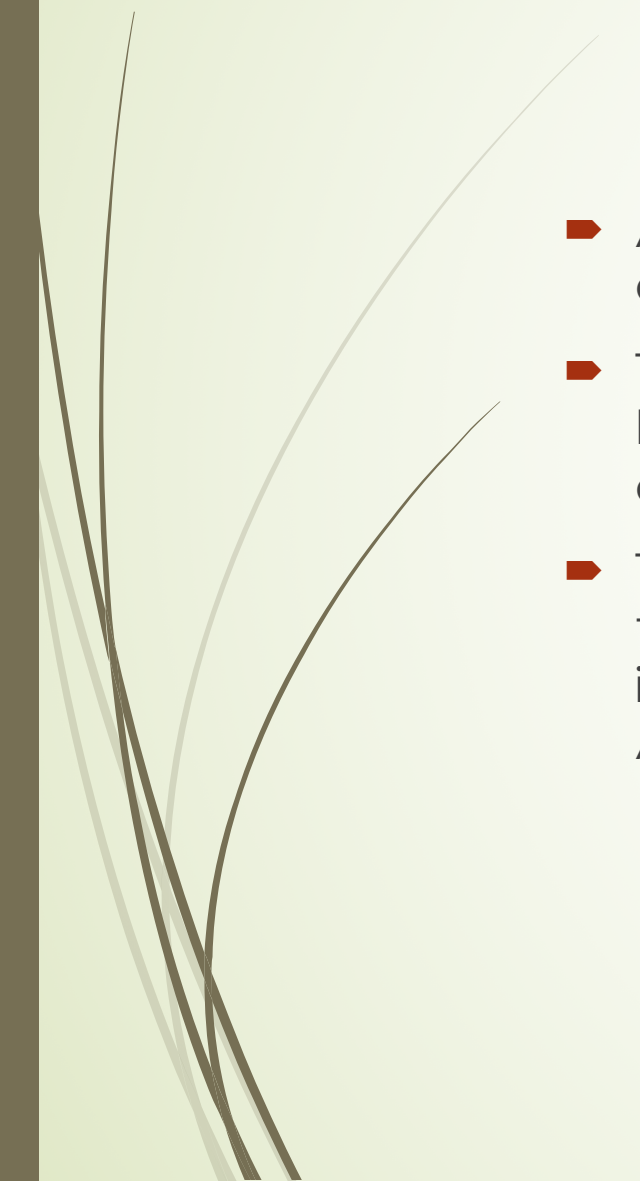
The Middle Academy

- The intermediate stage of the Academy, the Middle Academy, was the most liberal and unorthodox era of the Academy's history.
- The Middle Academy scholars taught that any knowledge cannot be absolutely true. This philosophic principle is known as skepticism, and relies upon each individual to use his beliefs to decide if any knowledge is true or not.
- The Middle Academy lasted almost as long as the Old Academy, approximately 111 years (266 BC—155 BC). While its influence wasn't as great as the beginning of the Old Academy, its endurance for over a decade make it an important part of the Academy's history.



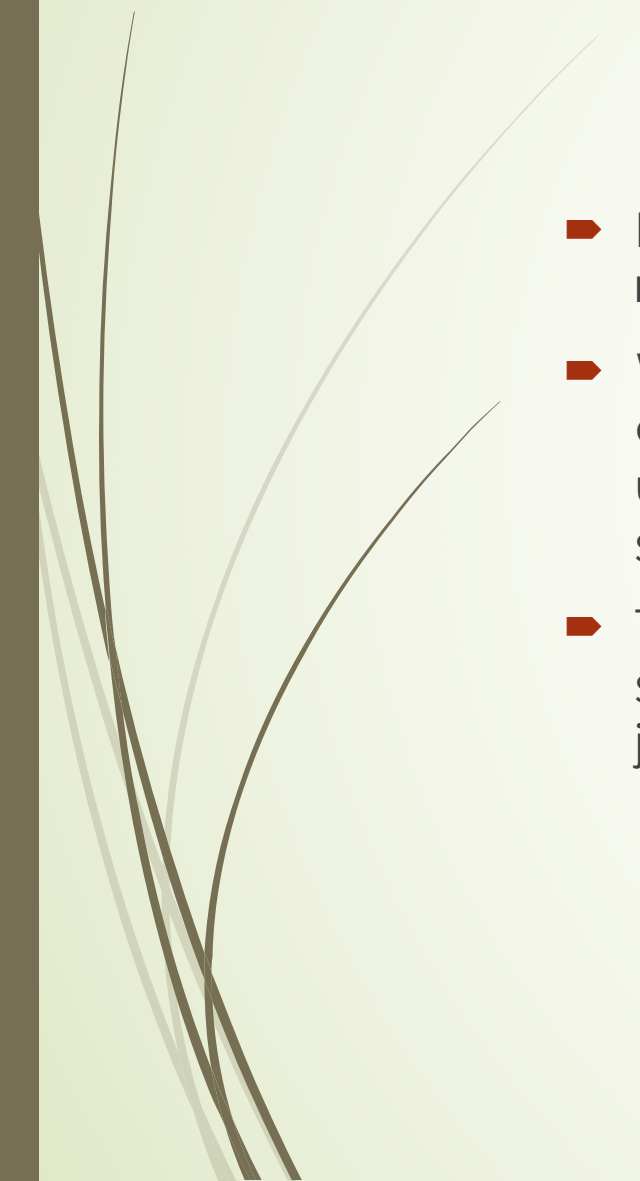
The Platonic Academy: Development

The New Academy

- After the end of the Middle Academy, the New Academy era was established.
 - The New Academy strove to go back to the original philosophy started by Plato when he founded the Academy, which sought to learn knowledge and believed that there were absolute truths.
 - This era only lasted 67 years (155 BC—88 BC). While it was a short period toward the end of the Academy's existence, it was very influential because it marked a return toward Plato's original philosophy when he founded the Academy.
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The Platonic Academy: Destruction

- Plato's Academy came to a sudden end in 88 BC, when Lucius Sulla ransacked and destroyed it in his siege of Athens.
 - While reconstruction of the actual Academy itself was never accomplished, a group of philosophers known as the Neoplatonists would use Plato's Academy in the Roman era and create a new Academy very similar to the original.
 - The Neoplatonic Academy lasted for several decades and was taught very similarly to Plato's, with a scholarch leading the teaching and passing on his job after his death.
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The Platonic Academy: Influence

- ▶ Plato's Academy founded over 2,000 years ago still has a profound effect on modern day education.
 - ▶ The Academy had the distinction of being the first recorded place that could be used for students to gather and learn about various topics with a group of their peers.
 - ▶ The Platonic Academy set the foundations for later academies, universities, and schools to develop, which had a vast impact on the amount of knowledge and learning that was available to students of various ages and backgrounds.
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