

# The Wisdom of Hypatia

## Chapter 3: Sources for Hypatia's Philosophy

### Learning Outcomes:

- You will know the history of Platonism and Neoplatonism from its shamanic roots more than 2700 years ago up to modern times
- You will know where to find a timeline and map that will help you in reading the book
- You will understand how we know what Hypatia taught
- You will understand that Platonism has been influential in Western religion, literature, and art

### Key Ideas:

- Platonism is a continuous spiritual tradition that is at least 2700 years old
- Platonism has roots in the philosophy of *Pythagoras* (6th cent. BCE), who had many of the characteristics of a shaman
- *Plato* (4th cent. BCE) established the Academy in Athens, which continued for 400 years
- *Plotinus* (3rd cent. CE) took Platonism in a new direction known as *Neoplatonism*
- *Porphyry* and *Iamblichus* further developed the spiritual practices of Neoplatonism in the 3rd century CE
- *Hypatia* (4th cent. CE) taught the philosophy of Plato and Plotinus
- Although none of Hypatia's philosophical writings survive, we can know her teachings through the works of her contemporaries
- Neoplatonism was an important influence in the *mystical traditions* of Judaism (Kabbalah), Christianity, and Islam (Sufism)
- The 15th century renaissance, the rebirth of learning and the arts in Europe, was instigated in part by the Neoplatonic teachings of *Plethon* (George Gemistos), a practicing Pagan
- Under *Marsilio Ficino* (15th cent.), the Platonic Academy in Florence was a fountainhead of Neoplatonism in Europe
- The Neoplatonic writings and translations of the "English Platonist," *Thomas Taylor* (19th cent.), were an important influence on the *romantic poets* and the *Transcendentalists*
- There is a "golden chain" of philosophers descending from Pythagoras, through Plato, to Hypatia and into modern times