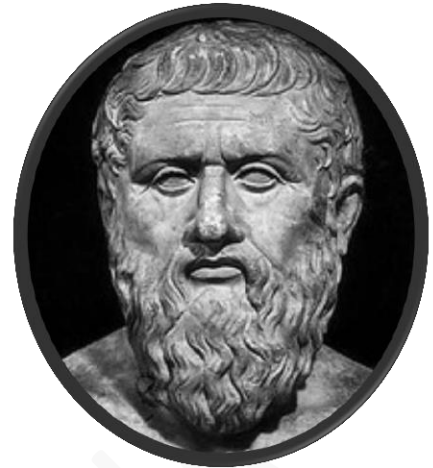


PLATO



- Knowledge is not Perception/
Knowledge is not Opinion
- Ideal Theory of Plato
- The Myth concerning Idea
- Characteristics of ideas
- Comments & Objections
- The immortality of soul, its Proofs
- Transmigration, Bondage & Release
- Soul & Body Relationship
- Idea of God vs Idea of Good
- Plato's explanation of the World
- Significance of Plato
- Epistemology of Plato

Some Quotable Lines:

- ✚ It was through Pythagoras that Plato owned respect for Mathematics and this paved way for Ideal Realism. From Parmenides, Plato derived the doctrine of eternity & changelessness of Ideas and from Heraclitus Plato accepted the doctrine of flow of sensible things [Becoming].
- ✚ Pythagoras was also a religious thinker & hence Plato derived from Pythagoras the doctrine of immortality of soul, transmigration & mysticism.
- ✚ J. H. Muirhead noted that the whole Western philosophy is nothing more than “the series of footnotes to Plato”.
- ✚ Ideas are in itself and of itself, and that is why Ideas are substance. Idea of Good is like that of the Sun. The Sun is not the vision but it is known cause of vision. Similarly, the Idea of the good is the highest reality and cause of truth & knowledge.
- ✚ The sun not only furnishes to visible the power of visibility but it also provides for their generation and growth and nurture, though it is not itself generation. To explain Idea of good regulating all Ideas.
- ✚ Because every pleasure or pain has a sort of rivet which it fastens the soul to the body and makes it corporal accepting as true whatever the body certified.
- ✚ There is a conflict between Plato’s ontology and ethics and His Theology.
- ✚ In Plato’s Metaphysics lies his epistemology.

Knowledge is not Perception:

- ✚ Protagoras, a sophist is said to be the best exponent of the theory that knowledge is Perception. The implication of that is –
 - Home Mensura, Man is the measure of all things.
 - Knowledge is relative.
- ✚ Plato rejects this view and gives various-various arguments to substantiate and finally Propounds The Ideal Theory.

Plato's Arguments:

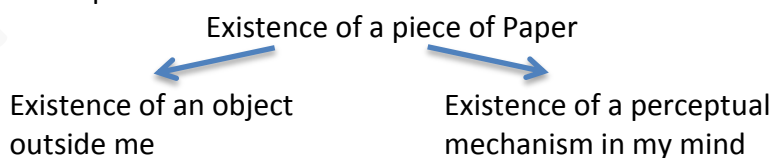
- ✚ No Distinction between truth & falsity:
 - What appears in the perception of a mad man or a dreamer and a healthy man are all true.
- ✚ Self-Contradiction
 - If perception is knowledge and memory is not, it leads to absurdity & self-contradiction.
 - Eg: A man with one eye open and one eye shut, then he knows from his open eye and he doesn't from the closed eye → Contradiction

Other Arguments:

- ✚ Hume, in tradition with Plato's epistemology concludes that sensory experiences lead to ideas which are possible but not necessary.
- ✚ Gestalt psychologists point out that the same object near to us appears bigger than the same object at a far distance.
- ✚ Words such as Equality, Liberty are not subject to perception.

Conclusion:

- ✚ Kant rightly points that all knowledge is Double Cognition, without the subsuming of forms of intuition under categories and finally their synthesis in a unity of apperception, knowledge is not possible.



For Plato: → He gave his Ideal Theory

Knowledge is not Opinion:

- ✚ Besides rejecting Protagoras's theory that knowledge is not Perception, Plato also rejected another prevailing theory that knowledge is Opinion.
- ✚ According to Plato, knowledge is not opinion, either right opinion or wrong opinion. Eg, Government will resign next Saturday; this is not Knowledge even when true. Right opinion is mostly a blind guess and therefore not proper Knowledge.

<u>KNOWLEDGE</u>	<u>OPINION</u>
1. It is always true.	1. It is always false, even when right opinion
2. It is based on reason.	2. It is belief and irrational.
3. Knowledge cannot be changed.	3. A good orator can arouse emotions & change opinions. Eg Election Campaigns.
4. Knowledge of Ideas.	4. Opinion of things & beings of the world.

Conclusion:

- ✚ Opinion is between Knowledge & Significance.

Ideal Theory of Plato:

Q: Why did Plato propound the Theory of Ideas?

Ans: i. Practical world is flux:

In the practical world, there is nothing which is absolute or immutable, food nourishing today may kill tomorrow. From these reflections on the nature of sensuous world, Plato conducted that there could no definite Knowledge based on sense observation.

- ii. To explain the basic question of metaphysics- what is the ultimate reality or substance.
- iii. To synthesize Parmenides Eternal but static view of the world with Heraclitus all is flux.
- iv. To explain the world
- v. To establish an epistemological system after rejecting knowledge as Perception and Knowledge as opinion.

Q: What is Theory of Ideas?

Ans: i. according to this theory, Ideas or forms is the ultimate relatives of the universe & life.

- ii. Idea or form is a mold or pattern after which a thing of the world is fashioned. This mold is eternal, immutable.
- iii. Plato's theory is called Realistic Idealism: Regarding the status of universals, Realism is the doctrine that says that universals have their own independent existence in their own rights.

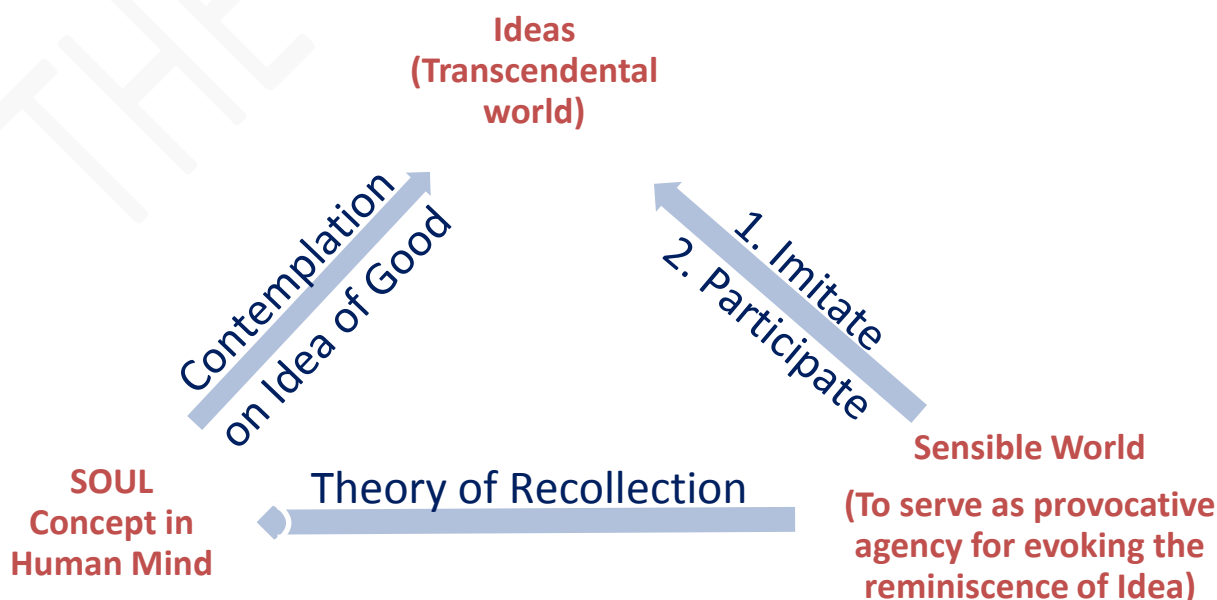
Aristotle was also a realist but he differed from Plato in so much that he says Universals do exist but only in individual things like "beautiful flower".

Note → Other views regarding the status of Universals:

- Conceptualism: It is the doctrine that universals are constructed by the human mind after the observation of particular instances. [View held by British Empiricists]
- Nominalism: Universals are mere words to think about the class of object and they have neither independent existence nor even their existence in the mind. They use Principle of Resemblance.

Features of Ideas

- i. Ideas are said to be substances: A substance is in which is in itself and for itself and does not require the existence of anything for its reality; For Plato Ideas are in itself and for itself.
- ii. Ideas are Universal: They are the common and essential characteristics of things and being of the world. However Ideas as essence does not mean as essential qualities from things observed in the world. Ideas are the essence in the sense that Ideas are real and sensible things are their poor imitation.



- iii. Ideas are eternal and immutable: Eternity may mean that which endures throughout the whole duration of time past, present and future. However Plato's ideas are eternal in the sense that they are timeless pre-existing before time.
- iv. They are unity in multiplicity: Because members of a class are many in number while the Idea is one.
- v. Ideas are any in number: Because as there are things and beings in the world, so are Ideas. Hence regarding number of Ideas, Plato's view is pluralistic.
- vi. Ideas are no known by Perception: We do not perceive the Idea of Equality, Liberty, Cowness et, we perceive men, cows et. Hence Ideas are known by Reason [Rationalism].
- vii. In a way, Ideas are the causes in the sense that they attract things towards them w/o themselves being moved. Eg: Draupadi attracted princes in her Swayambar while remaining unmoved.

Q: How does Plato justify Ideas to be independent & outside this world?

A: The production and decay of things, the a-temporal nature of the world makes becoming a flux which cannot be thought or known. So Ideas are not to be formed in empirical things.

To explain their origin, Plato takes recourse in a MYTH.

The Myth concerning Ideas:

According to Plato, the soul is immortal and in its pristine existence it enjoyed the pure existence. But at present Soul is in bondage and passes through endless cycle of Births & Deaths, till it regains its pristine glorious existence through proper philosophical knowledge by Contemplation on Idea of Good. Thus learning of Ideas is Recollection.

CRITICISM: Myths are not precise concepts and hence Plato could not explain the real relation between eternal ideas and percepts.

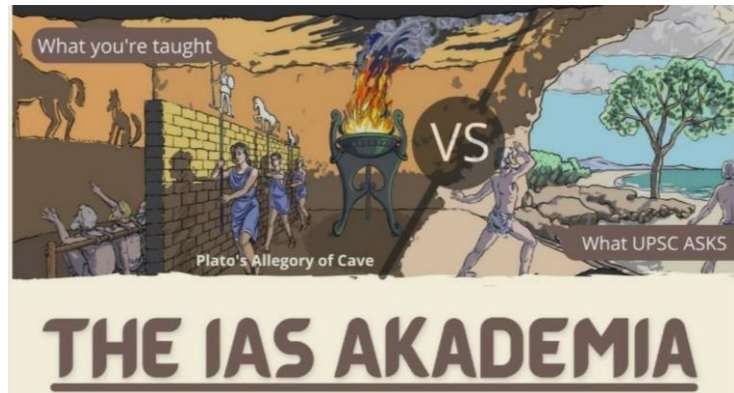
Relation between Ideas & Sensible World:

Plato takes the help of metaphors to explain the relation →

- Copy Theory: Ideas are real and like mold or patterns which things simply imitate them i.e.
 - Ideas= Original Entities
 - Things & Beings= Copies
- Participation Theory: sensible things partake or participate in their corresponding ideas.

Allegory of Cave:

Plato introduced the allegory of Cave in his book Republic to make a distinction between appearance and reality. He says, "Imagine some people living in an underground cave with their hands & feet chained and they cannot move their head to look back.



On the Road above there is fire burning and the Sun. There is a parapet on which puppet show is being played which casts a shadow on the wall that the chained cave dwellers can see. They think this shadow is real and shows real events. When finally one of them sets himself free, walks out & gets dazzled by the glow of the Sun, the colors, He realizes the truth.

Significance: The cave represents the world we see & experience with our sense mistaking appearance to be reality.

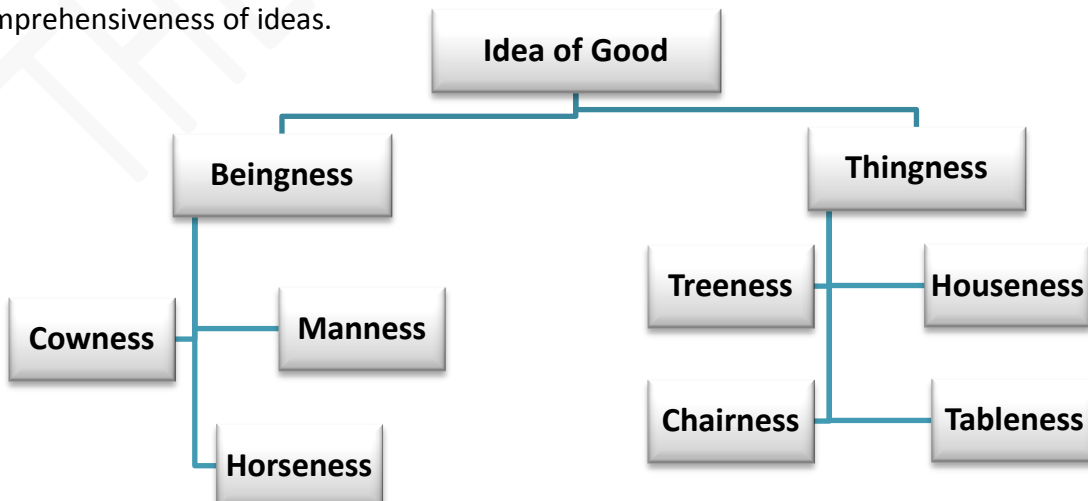
While the world of sunlight is the realm of forms. The escaped prisoner represents the philosopher who had a glimpse of true reality: The Idea of God.

Hierarchy of Ideas:

The ideas belong to a realm which Plato calls "Heaven of Ideas" separate from concrete things and beings of the world. This Plato establishes dichotomy of existence or two-realm Concept:

One of Ideas & another of the Physical world.

Plato intends to arrange the ideas in a hierarchy. The basis of hierarchy is the degree of the comprehensiveness of ideas.



Arguments in favors of Ideas:

Plato had advanced various arguments and Aristotle discusses five of them:

- a. **Argument from Science or Definite Knowledge:** Knowledge and Science must be real & definite, however in the perceptual world it is not so.
 - Eg: Point is that which has No magnitude
 - i. No Such point exists in Sensible World.
 1. Transcendental Existence of know
- b. **The Argument of one over many:** all particular men are called so, because in all of them there is quality of “manliness”. But manliness can’t exist in every particular because then there will be many concepts of the same type which is illogical. Therefore the concept must be singular and atemporal.
- c. **Knowledge of things that are no more:** Eg: Dinosaurs became extinct but we have knowledge of dinosaureness.
- d. **Argument from relations:** No two men are exactly similar to each other, no two circles are alike, and however we recognize men from manness which is the perfect concept.

Interpretation of Plato’s Theory of Ideas:

Zeller has interpreted Plato’s Theory of Ideas from 3 Points of Views:

1. **From Ontological POV:**
Ideas are the ultimate realities with their real existence & not mere mental construction
→ “realistic Idealism”
2. **From Logical POV:**
Ideas are universal and not particular. This is reflected from the impermanence of sensible world.
3. **From Axiological POV:**
The Idea of Good is the highest aim the principle aim of Platonian philosophy is for the soul to regain its pristine glory.

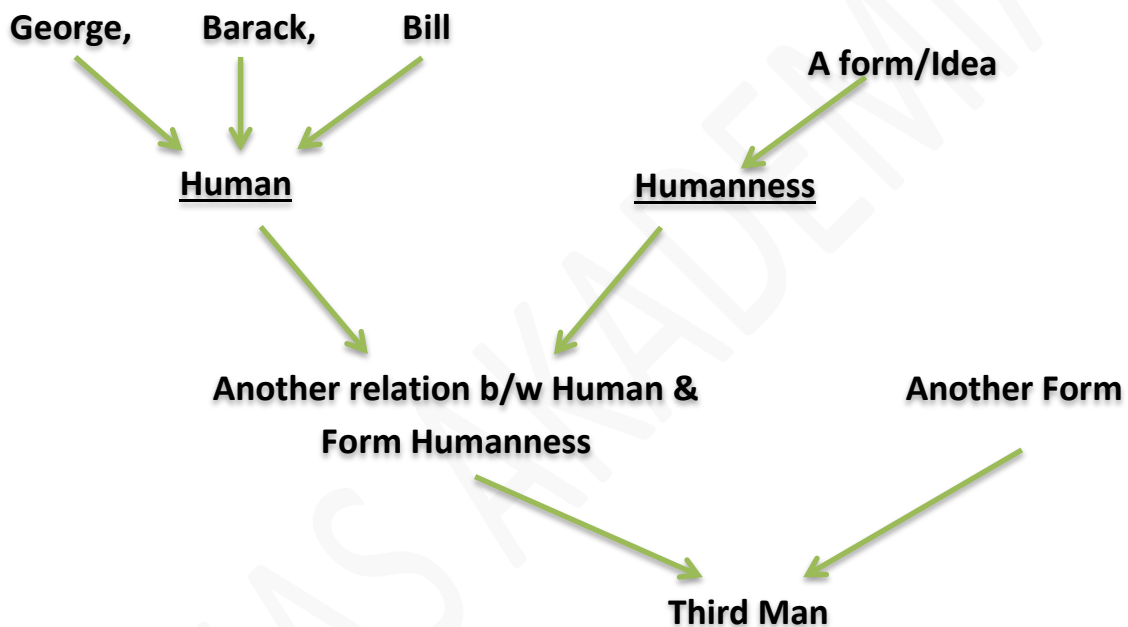
W. T. Stace added 2 more interpretations to it:

4. **Epistemological POV:**
Ideas are the base of every knowledge. There is a difference between knowledge and opinion. While knowledge is certain true and universal and hence can only be of universal, eternal and immutable ideas through reason [Rationalism].
Opinion is based on sense experience and both right opinion & wrong opinion are false.
5. **Mystical POV:**
Ideas are said to exist in a “world of Heaven” and the Idea of Good attracts all towards it w/o itself being moved. A mere glimpse of the Idea of good leads to liberation. Hence Plato like Indian philosophy has soteriological ends to his philosophy.

Comments:

Plato himself was aware of the difficulties concerning his ideal theory and he clearly states them in "Parmenides", in a conversation between Parmenides and young Socrates.

1. **Parmenides asks Socrates**, does an Idea participate in the perceptible in whole or part? If one idea participates in many perceptible, the idea gets divided and if idea participated as parts then it was no longer maintaining its unity?
2. **Participation Theory is open to Fallacy of the Third Man**: Eg
 - a. George, Barack, Bill are Human
 - b. Because they participate in form called Humanness



Aristotle's criticism of Platonian Ideas:

(Note if asked Aristotle criticism of Platonian Ideas it is different from Aristotle's criticism of Plato's Theory of ideas) → How?

Ans: **Aristotle criticism of Platonian Ideas:**

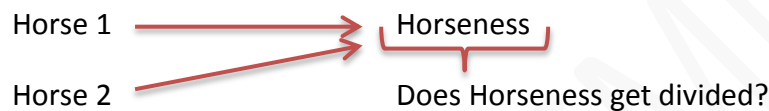
- (i). Ideas according to Plato are substance which can exist in the intelligible world without being instantiated.

However according to Aristotle, idea must exist in particular i.e. individuals. According to him, a substance has 3 elements:

1. Universal
2. Qualities, relations
3. An unknown substratum called matter by itself

And Plato's idea exists apart from individuals w/o qualities or substratum.

- (ii). **Regarding the status of universal/Ideas**: Plato holds a realist view of Ideas as existing in an independent realm called world of Heavens.
However Aristotle says universals do exist but only in individual things. Eg beauty can't exist but in beautiful things.
- (iii). **Ideas are essence** of things according to Plato in the sense that Ideas are real & sensible things are their poor imitation.
However according to Aristotle, no essence of anything can be outside of it without inviting absurdly.
- (iv). **According to Plato** each idea is one and indivisible, non-sensuous



Conclusion: Aristotle is Plato made consistent.

Aristotle's criticism of Plato's Theory of Ideas:

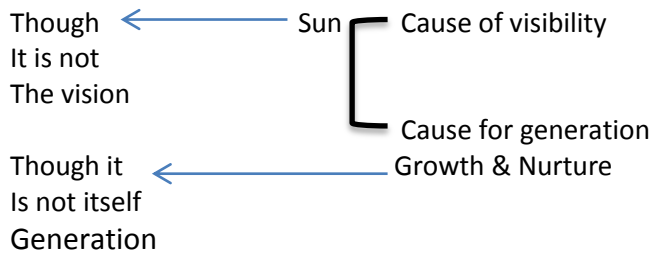
1. **Plato's Theory can't explain the world logically:** Ideas are abstract while things of the world are concrete and again, ideas are unchangeable and can't be the cause of a changeable world.
Plato's view is static, as we find later in philosophy of Spinoza. However, Aristotle point of view is dynamic as seen later in Leibnitz's Philosophy.
2. **Plato's Ideal theory cannot explain the relation between ideas and things: this is an attack on the Participation Theory & Copy Theory of Plato.**
How can things of world which are concrete be shadows of Idea which are abstract?
However Aristotle himself explains the world with pure form which is immutable and abstract and has given this pure form a statue of God.
Actually, Plato fails to explain the world of ideas on account of some other reasons:
Explanation involves 2 conditions:
 - i. A explains B means A must be necessary for B and denial A implies denial of B
 - However the denial of Plato's Theory of ideas does not change the sensual world around us.
 - ii. A must be rational; here Plato's explanation is satisfactory.

Conclusion:

All the criticism of Plato's Theory of Ideas does not make it redundant. As pointed out by Muirhead that the entire western philosophy consists of the foot notes of Platonic teaching.

Idea of Good:

- In Plato's ontology and ethics, we find that the Idea of the Good was highest and all things ruled and guided by it.
- Even in his ethics, the seeker was required to purify him from the pursuit of pleasure & it required contemplation on the Idea of Good.
- In describing the Idea of Good, Plato in his own mystical ways compares the Idea of the Good to that of the Sun.



Therefore the Good controls, guides and over-rules the whole hierarchy of ideas-teleological and not logical.

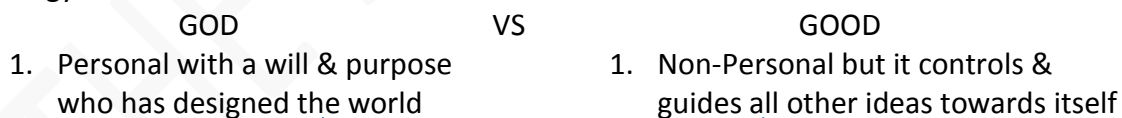
Significance:

- To explain change, First cause → unmoved moves in his hierarchy of Ideas
- To explain Bondage & Liberation
- In his ethics

Idea of Good vs God:

It appears that there are two parts in Plato's philosophy. At the beginning Plato was more occupied with his ontology and ethics and we can find that the idea of Good was highest and all things ruled and guided by it.

However towards the later part of his philosophy, Plato appeared to have given himself to the play of his imagination in theology leading to conflict between Plato's ontology & his theology.



Three relations may be imagined b/w them

- God is cause of the whole system of Ideas including Idea of the Good:** This will contradict Plato's ontology as Ideas are independent & eternal and do not exist in anyone's mind.
- Can Good be the basis of God:** this does violence to the nature of God who is absolute & real or highest reality.
- Can Good and God be equally real:** Contradiction → Only 1 absolute reality.

Conclusion: No harmony between the ontology & theology of Plato

Immortality of Soul, Bondage & Liberation

REVISION IN-SHORTS

Plato Theory of Ideas:

Why He gave:

1. To harmonize Parmenides & Heraclitus
2. Sensible World is in flux, can't be absolute of immutable
3. Epistemological reason: Knowledge pre-suppose an eternal substratum
4. Metaphysical reason: To explain what constitutes the ultimate reality.

Theory of Idea/What is Ideas:

1. Ultimate reality of universe
2. Substance- is itself and for itself
3. Eternal Archetypes
4. Realistic Idealism

Features:

1. Universal
2. Eternal & Immutable
3. Ideas are one & many
4. Realistic Idealism & separate existence in Heaven of Idea.
5. Hierarchical → Highest Idea of Good
6. Know by reason.

Arguments:

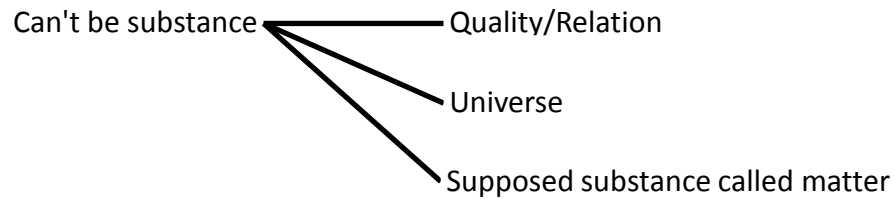
1. ARGUMENT FROM Definite knowledge
 - Point is that which has no magnitude
2. Argument of one over many
3. Argument from relation
4. Knowledge of things that are no more
5. Immortality of Soul
 - Myth concerning ideas
6. Allegory of Cave

Interception:

1. Zellar
 - a. Ontological
 - b. Axiological
 - c. Logical
2. W. T. Stace
 - a. Mystical
 - b. Epistemological

Criticism:

Aristotle + Criticism of Platonian Ideas



Beauty can't be but in beautiful things

Theory of Ideas:

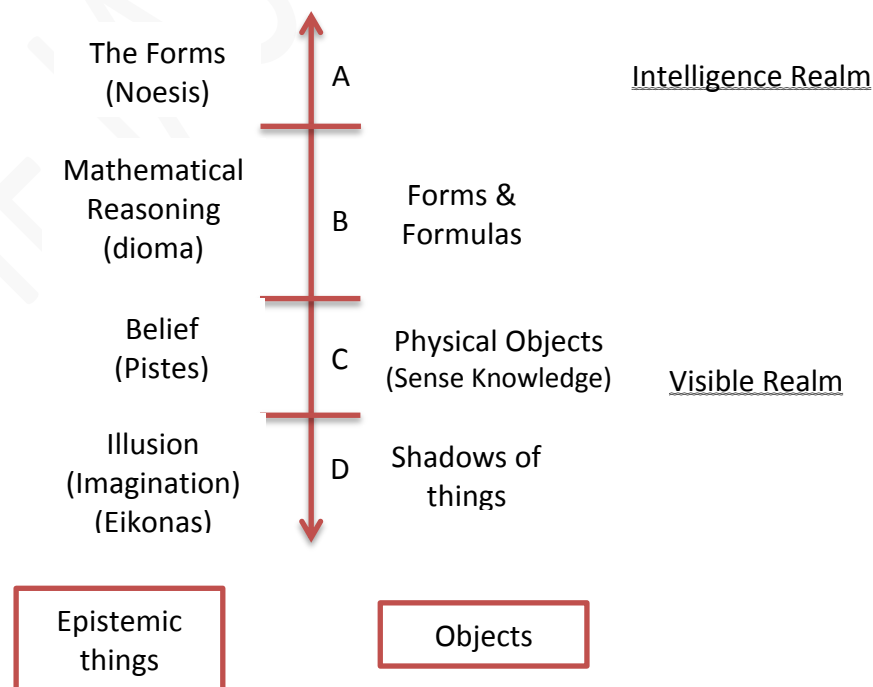
1. Can't explain the world logically
2. Does Idea participate in parts as whole
3. Third Man Fallacy
4. Can't explain diversity and change

Other reasons:

1. A explains B, denial of A is denial of B
2. But denial of Plato's theory has no effect on the world.

Conclusion:

Does not become redundant.



Theory of Divided Line:

C + D → Opinion

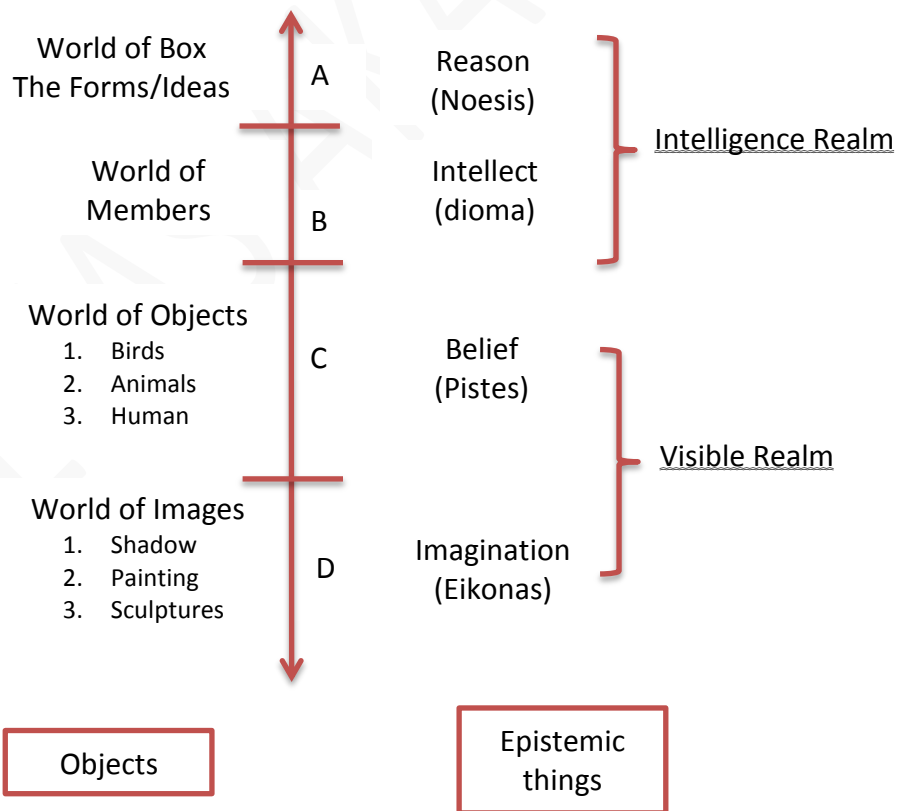
A + B → Knowledge

Definition:

- A visual representation of Plato's ontological & epistemological view of the universe.

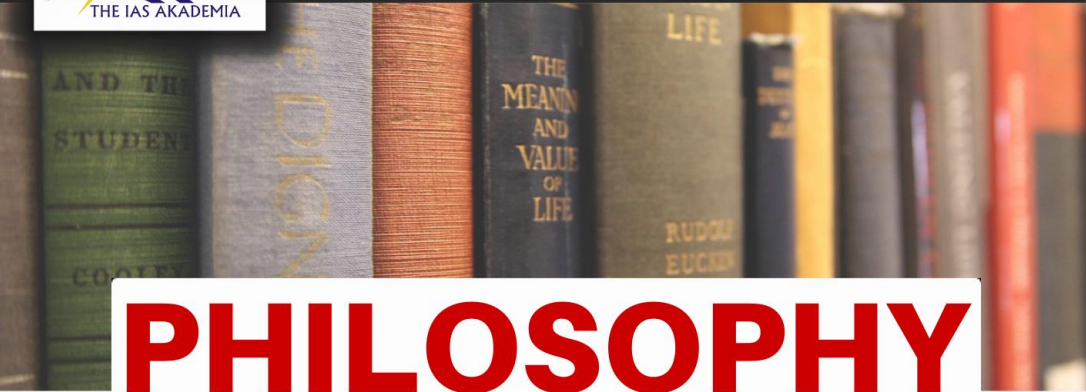
Meaning:

- Ontological
 - Realty is divided into two parts
 - Universal/Ideas called Intelligible Realm
 - Particular/Physical object Visible Real
 - These are sub divided to give realms of Being and 4 realms of Knowing.





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