

# Summary of the platos allegory of the cave

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Summary of the Plato's Allegory of the Cave Introduction Plato's Allegory of the Cave is also popularly known by the of Analogy of the Cave or the Parable of the Cave or simply Plato's Cave. This illustration or the allegory is found in the work by the great philosopher known by the name "The Republic". The allegory is used to explain the place of nature in the education system and our want for it. The Allegory of the Cave appears as an imagined dialogue between the teacher of Plato, Socrates, and his brother Glaucon. This allegory can be found in the initial section of Book VII.

#### Plato's Allegory of the Cave: Summary

Plato's Allegory of the Cave evolves from the precognitive base that human minds can think and relate to the objects about which they are unaware or are even intimated about their realm of forms.

Plato takes the refuge of a hypothetical experiment to establish his theory of forms. He takes an example of the prisoners who are chained in a cave since their childhood and are totally unaware about the forms. The only thing that appeared before their eyes was the wall of the cave. Behind the area of their captivation a huge fire is lighted, and between the position of the prisoners and the fire, there is a parapet mend for the puppeteers to walk. The people who are behind the prisoners hold up objects, and the shadows are casted on the wall of the cave before the prisoners. The prisoners are not able to get the glimpse of the objects held behind them. They only get the shadows to see. The prisoners see the shadow and hear the echoes of the objects held behind them, but they do not get the glimpse of the original objects. Plato says that these prisoners would oversight appearance with reality and misjudge the forms of the objects. The prisoners shall take the names of the objects whose shadows they see, but to see the real objects they are

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referring to the need to turn their heads around which is not possible for them. Plato, thus, wanted to contend that the terms we use in our language are not merely “ names”. They are in fact names of those things which do not fall before our vision but we can comprehend them only with our minds. Next, Plato says that if the prisoners are released, then they would be able to turn their heads to see the real objects and, therefore, realize their error and in the real sense, and only then the prisoners would be able to grasp the objects. The implication of these terms in our real life lies in the point similar to the turning of the prisoner’s head and comprehending the real objects through grasping it with our minds.

Plato intends to describe through the Allegory of the Cave that it is very essential for the human mind to attain the understanding of the objects at the reflective realm. But despite this fact, it is quite true that the ability of the human being to think and speak depends on the understanding of the forms. The prisoners might mistake any object with the name of some other object if they are really not aware about the name of that particular object that they have seen. And in a very similar fashion, human minds might obtain the knowledge of the concepts by our inherent and perceptual experience of our physical objects. But at the same time, human mind might mistake any object if it is thought that the concepts human mind is grasping is equal with the objects perceived.

#### Bibliography

Cohen, S. M. (2011). The Allegory Of The Cave. Retrieved from <http://faculty.washington.edu/smcohen/320/cave.htm>