

What way did philosophy of plato influence psychology philosophy essay

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In the ideals and methods of today's psychological medicine, the general psyche of the human mind has been influenced by historical and cultural forces, and various perspectives through time. Philosophers such as Plato has developed many methods and types of thoughts in understanding the human psyche that has greatly influenced the many defined concepts of psychology as known today. In Plato's question how we know what Is? Is the underlying fundamental question that relates to the human psyche. As individuals, how do we really know what to know? For example, if you do not understand in how to tune a musical instrument, you will have to ask fundamentals questions in order to understand how to tune a musical instrument. As in the human psyche, Plato's asks the same question in order to understand the concept in how people know. Psyche is based on the theory of justice that has six fundamentals aspects such as: " faculties", " principles", " activities", " aspects", " instances" and " levels". Their nature and role have been characterized in ways influenced as much perhaps by the connotations of these terms as by the details of Plato's text. Subsequently, Psychology has been developed from the origins of the earliest philosophers such as Plato; an Athenian born Greek philosopher that believed that people were a " blank slate" at birth which can be changed to anything through their life time depending on the influence of surroundings (Various). In his quest of finding the true essence of the human psyche and the pursuit of the maintenance of the soul, Plato has philosophized through the teachings of Socrates within various concepts such as: Metaphysics " Platonic realism", Theory of Forms." Platonism" the basis of Metaphysics is referred to the intellectual consequences of denying, as Socrates often does, the reality of

the material world. Plato's " metaphysics" is understood as Socrates' division of reality into the warring and irreconcilable domains of the material and the spiritual (Taylor, 1936). The theory has been of incalculable influence in the history of Western psychology, philosophy and religion. Similar to Socrates's idea that reality is unavailable to those who use their senses is what puts him at odds with the common man, and with common sense. Socrates says that he who sees with his eyes is blind, and this idea is most famously captured in his Allegory of the Cave, and more explicitly in his description of the divided line. According to Socrates, physical objects and physical events are " shadows" of their ideal or perfect forms, and exist only to the extent that they instantiate the perfect versions of themselves. Just as shadows are temporary, inconsequential epiphenomena produced by physical objects, physical objects are themselves fleeting phenomena caused by more substantial causes, the ideals of which they are mere instances (Taylor, 1936). Second philosophical concept that has influence modern psychology is the theory of forms. It is Plato's belief that the material world as it seems to us is not the real world, but only a shadow of the real world, as depicted in Socrates Allegory of the Cave. Forms are based on archetypes or abstract representations of the many types and properties (that is, of universals) of things we see all around us. The sensible world we know today was based on belief that the physical perception is a rendering or copy of the true perception (Moline, 1981). Past philosophers believed that we are born into world of ignorance that we cannot truly see the meaning what is truly is, as depicted in the Allegory of the Cave. This concept of rendering reality is called forms, that physical objects and physical events are " shadows" of

their ideal or perfect forms, and exist only to the extent that they instantiate the perfect versions of themselves. Just as shadows are temporary, inconsequential epiphenomena produced by physical objects, physical objects are themselves fleeting phenomena caused by more substantial causes, the ideals of which they are mere instances (Moline, 1981). As a result, as depicted in "The Allegory of the Cave," Plato shows how the mind influences perception that has greatly influenced Western psychologists such as Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung. Hence the men in Plato's fable are used to show that one should venture out and become more educated because if not, one will slip back into a less cognitive state of mind (Crossman, 1936). In comparison, Sigmund Freud believed that a person's dreams are fulfilled wishes. These wishes are unachieved accomplishments that the individual dwells on. He proves his theory by referring to a controllable dream of his about thirst. He believed that because he ate salty food before bed, he could fall asleep, dream about drinking, and wake up satisfied. Freud thought that the dreams are able to compensate one's unsatisfied wishes (Crossman, 1936). They are actually thoughts that the mind has gathered while a person is awake. The mind, as thought by Freud, is able to twist real observations in a way which pleases the individual in an unconscious state. Both Plato and Freud have valid portrayals of how the mind works. By presenting their information in a story-like fashion, the reader is able to better relate to and comprehend the otherwise somewhat complex issue. Since Freud is a psychologist, one may wonder if he had similar views as Plato when it came to developmental psychology and the development of cognitive thinking. Additionally, Carl Jung's idea of the Collective Unconscious is so in alignment

with these earlier ideas from Plato. The notion of Absolute Forms, for example, along with Jung's methods of systematic inquiry foreshadows Jung's theories of archetype and the analytic process investigation (Livingstone, 1935). According to Jung, the Collective Unconscious exists as a kind of repository for dreams, archetypes, symbols, and myths. Yet like Plato before him, Jung's intuitively derived understanding needed empirical verification if it was to be taken seriously. Thus, in his autobiographical memoir, *Memories, Dreams, and Reflection*, Jung sets out to explain exactly how he arrived at his notion of the Collective Unconscious and archetype through his journey of self-observation (Livingstone, 1935). Both Carl Jung and Sigmund Freud, two of the greatest psychologist/thinkers of the twentieth century, used the term "unconscious" but each defined it differently. The one thing they agreed on, however, is that the unconscious is that part of the psyche inaccessible to the ego. It is only when the ego drops its guard such as in dreams that the unconscious expresses itself. But here the similarities between the two men diverge. To Freud, who had been Jung's teacher, the "unconscious" contains that which is repressed or forgotten while remaining within the individual psyche. It becomes a sort of repository for forgotten things of one's past. It is exclusively personal in nature and belongs to the individual person alone. In other words, it contains no commonly held or universal archetypes such as understood by Jung. Jung maintained, on the other hand, that yes there is something like Freud's "personal" "unconscious" but this merely rests or floats upon an infinite "collective unconscious" which does not at all derive from the "personal unconscious" (Livingstone, 1935). Instead it comes to the individual as a part

of something universal in nature. Its " contents and modes of behavior," says Jung, are essentially " the same everywhere and in all individuals." This is not to say that it expresses itself the same in all individuals only that the archetypal patterns are universally present. The actual psyche is known only by its contents. In other words, it is seen only by what the individual actually expresses through action. But with the collective unconscious no such expression is available except through dreams and the various archetypes that make themselves known via behaviors and obsessions. The personal unconscious, according to Jung, is far greater than storage for past traumas and emotional history as Freud would contend. Instead, it serves as a pathway to the collective unconscious and is constantly being fed by those deep reservoirs (Livingstone, 1935). All great ideas and concepts have been derived from the great thinkers of the past. As in Plato, one of the greatest and foremost prodigies of Socrates has influenced some of the brightest minds of psychology such as Sigmund Freud and Carl Jung. The ideals of forms and meta-physics have evolved the basis of modern psychology as we know today.