

Synopsis of platos republic

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Plato also cautions individuals to know the distinction between what is really good and what is merely thought to be good. He also advises not to pay heed to the opinions of the people who do not have knowledge of the good as he considers such opinions to be blind, shameful and ugly (Plato 180, 506c). Next, Plato elaborates on the concept of “the being”; for him, there is an element of intelligibility and visibility in all forms of the being and one needs to have the power to grasp what is intelligible(not intelligible) and what is visible (not visible) in each form of the being. Plato then goes on to establish the connection between sight and light and goes on to explain how these concepts can be applied to the souls of the individuals. Just as one cannot see things clearly in the darkness, the soul cannot grasp the truth in obscurity whereas it can see things vividly when they are illuminated by the truth. Later Plato makes a distinction between images and hypotheses and states those hypotheses are more realistic and original than that of the images that one perceives. For him, understanding forms the highest form of perception, whereas thought, belief and imaging form the second, third and the last respectively (Plato 185, 511d). Belief and imaging contribute to opinion whereas knowledge and thought contribute to the intellect; similarly, “opinion is concerned with becoming, intellect with being” (Plato 206, 534a). Just as being is different from becoming so is intellect vary from opinion, knowledge vary from belief, and, thought to vary from imaging. Plato then purports that philosopher-kings are best suited to govern the state as they have “seen the truth about fine, just, and good things” and are able to “know each image for what it is and also that of which it is the image” (Plato 192, 520c) and goes on to elaborate on the various subjects of training that every such philosopher-king should undergo.