

What is the relation between the divided line and the allegory of the cave from b...

[Philosophy](#)



Lecturer: Relation between the divided line and the allegory of the cave The divided line is a simile developed by Plato with the aim of explaining his theory on how knowledge functions and how individuals come to have knowledge as well as clarity of the soul. On the other hand, the allegory of the cave explains the divided line simile in that the line simile simply implies that there are four types of knowledge that range from those which are less dependable in terms of giving the truth, all the way to the best. These include imaginations, beliefs, trust and understanding as well as gaining knowledge through reason which is the highest and last (Baird 500-520). According to Plato, the bottom two; imagination and belief, can be perceived as simple opinions and are different from one person to another (Baird 500-520). The two are found in the physical world and are discoverable through senses that can be mistaken making the truth that is associated with these two vary from one person to another.

The next two, which are understanding and reason, are in existence to seek truths in the meta-physical world making them collectively true. The type of truth associated with understanding included that of mathematics, maxims along with definitions, and even though they are artificial, they are questioned. The best way to achieve truth of knowledge is through reason which actively questions issues in the environment. In Plato's view, reasoning brings understanding of the forms and forms possess the ultimate truth. Plato implies that goodness and love are products of reason but this love is not identical to the kind of love that is perceived in the present day. Love as explained by Plato is the desire for something that is not possessed, and this motivates people to get what they do not have.

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The allegory of the cave explains the route one must take in order to achieve this knowledge and how individuals are bound in the cave of imagination where the shadows that are on the walls are the truths. The people who create the shadows are those in positions of power who have the belief that they are conversant with the truth and attempt to utilise it in corrupting the masses into giving them more power. Fire stands for an imperfect good while love represents a self-good that is supposed to bring more power to them. An individual inside the cave should be able to see further than the shadows and turn in the direction of the fire while identifying that the objects seen in the hands of the puppeteer may seem true but are not actually true.

When a person leaves the cave, he will be blinded by the light and will not be in a position to view the truth clearly in the initial instance. He will initially have to look at the truth through a reflection of water and these truth will be similar to those in mathematics and maxims. Even though what an individual will see when he gets out of the cave are truths, they are truths that will not take the person far. Nonetheless, the person will eventually have the ability to see things that that are in the surrounding by themselves and learn them. The surrounding things correspond to the forms, the ultimate and the true forms of the representations that were within the cave making the person see truth only through the light of the sun, which symbolizes good.

In simple terms, the line simile is the manner in which we perceive the lay out of the order of truth and its workings in reality while the allegory of the cave explains how the society looks in regard to outline of knowledge. It also explains how to find the way if a person has the will to go through the pain of leaving all the preconceived ideas of truth behind, and taking a journey of

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the actual truth.

Works cited

Baird, Forrest. From Plato To Derrida. 1st ed. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 2011. Print.