

Paradoxes of the Simile

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This presentation offers a critique of Plato's first systematic synthesis of epistemology, ontology, psychology, ethics and politics diagrammatically explained in the Simile of the Divided Line at the end of *Republic* Book VI. The critical points concern Plato's account of intellectual intuition (*noesis*) of the Forms with no explanation of how the human mind can experience this quasi-mystical state, the inconsistency between his view of the societal functions his ideal state requires the three classes to perform and their respective cognitive and practical competences he recognizes, and the dogmatic narrowness of his perspective on the theoretical options competing with his theory on issues that concern him. A question is posed that may have an *ad hominem* point. Is it not probable that instead of learning from Socrates the view of teaching as midwifery of knowledge Plato himself constructed and attributed it to his mentor because doing so would serve his professional self-interest? This presentation concludes with what is thought to be a correct assessment of Whitehead's pronouncement that Western philosophy subsequent to Plato can be considered to be a footnote on him.



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4:00 p.m.

Seminar Room 280F

Inamori International Center for
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