

Three reasons and a shadow

Philosophical entries to the psyche

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1 INTRODUCTION

First, I give you three reasons to act according to the ratio as a human capacity beyond the physical. Second, I give you a shadow to withdraw consciousness out of the acting centre of the psyche. Why is this contradiction interesting? If behaviour is an indication of the psyche, should we say mankind has the advantage of reason or the disadvantage of thinking in enlightenment?

What is the motive for the question? If I read a history of mankind and discuss the development of mankind, the question rises if mankind will be able to develop a kind of divineness. Does humanity bear fruit (in the end)? I will not be able to answer this question completely; I will only give a few hints based on the view of several authors. I study philosophy, so I look for patterns in the (meta) physical world. Indeed, religions struggle with this tension too. But, instead of philosophy, the struggle shifts more towards the afterlife. In this contribution I emphasize the meaning of the psyche in the (meta) physical life. The psyche is the centre of man which dominates the way man feels, relates to reality, to others and judges life. Therefore I go back to the roots of western philosophy (Plato, Aristotle), modern philosophy (Kant) and analytical psychology (Jung). In order to focus on the psyche, I will concentrate on this theme and shall not discuss the theories and concepts integrally broadly, but only their (for me) relevant parts.

Besides sharing my enthusiasm exploring philosophical and psychological concepts, I think philosophy can be an asset to human life. It is important to ask questions about the fundamentals of mental and ontological life. In that way man can find a solid base for his actions, otherwise he will be absorbed by accidental events and experiences. The turbulence of the western society seems to be conflicting with a harmonious lifestyle. Maybe this article gives an opportunity to reflect on life. The interpretation of each author will be concluded with a reflection on contemporary developments.

In order to search for reason in our existence, I first discuss the theory of Plato. He proclaims a compound concept of the elements thinking, temperament and desire. To Plato, there is nothing above intellect. Second, I describe the philosophy of Aristotle. He stands for a reasonable forming principle of the body. The third theory to proclaim the human psyche is reasonable is the philosophy of Kant, a founding father of the period of enlightenment. He stresses the unity of the thinking subject. But can mankind trust on the strength of reason to reach enlightenment? The question itself gives reason to doubt. Too much light leads to bigger shadows, the psychologist Jung might have said.

I chose the three philosophers for their rational concepts and Jung for his abduction of the holy grail of reason. To reduce complexity, I describe the concepts of the authors separately. The theories of the authors are complex. I have tried to direct the concepts in a scientifically responsible way. Although I have an academic degree in philosophy, I have not followed all formal stipulations. The article is originally written in Dutch, and translated into English, although some parts are slightly adapted. I hope you enjoy the read.

EH, 1 February 2015

2 REASONABLE ELEVATION OF THE PSYCHE - PLATO'S IDEA

Introduction

Plato proclaims that man is a rational being, capable of abstract thoughts. By reason he is able to develop divine, metaphysical thoughts. The foundation of these rather solid thoughts is based on abstract rational forms. And so, the visual world that is revealed to man is not the real world, but an image of abstract representations or archetypes. The things and properties man sees around can only be perceived by reason. Plato distinguishes two worlds: the changing, apparent world and the unchanging, invisible rational world of forms. The last world causes the apparent world. The human psyche has potentially a drift which provides him access to the world of ideas. Plato values the visible world lesser than the world of ideas. The visible reality is like a faint reflection of the world of Ideas. His philosophy is therefore dualistic. The lower order is only meaningful by existence and emanation of the real ideal world. Plato classifies the man who breaks out of the dungeon with its shadows as a better man: the philosopher. The philosopher is enriched with eros, a drift that leads to the use of reason and elevates the psyche by providing access to the world of ideas.

Elements of the psyche

Plato distinguishes a difference in quality between two distinct elements of the psyche. The elements are each other's opposites and are classified in a dissimilar order. These elements are related to the psyche. The first element is the rational element which ensures harmonious unity. It optimizes the balance between mental and physical training. It is supposed to lead, because it is sensible and caring to the whole psyche. The second element is temperament, which can be compared to the power of the will. Temperament should obey and support the rational element. These two elements will be forged through a combination of mental and physical training, and merged to a harmonious unit.

In addition to these two elements Plato recognizes a third element: desire. Desire covers a great deal of the psyche and demonstrates insatiable material needs. The two previously mentioned elements should keep this element under control, in order to prevent that it fills the human being with physical pleasure and material needs. If that fails, the third element of lower order extends into and integrates the areas of the other elements. Therefore the rational element and temperament should be developed and tested in their operation. Domination of desire causes obstruction. Harmonious unity is at danger then. A balanced co-operation between the various elements is therefore important. Especially the rational element and temperament could protect the personality very well. The deliberative, rational element gives instructions. The temperament implements decisions by using his power of will. Whether in pain or joy, temperament keeps man to the orders of the rational element. The relatively small part of the psyche that provides leadership, oversees the interests. Discipline then indicates the construction of consistency according to the principles of the higher elements, without doubt or revolution.

The performance or operation of the psyche is therefore at least as important, if not decisive, for harmony. Harmony does not overcome us, but is mainly acquired by training. Competition for priority between the elements causes chaos and disorientation and could lead to revolution in the psyche. If one part is to seize power without natural and suitable power, we might call it a cause of evil. This disturbance of harmony can be applied to both the individual and society.

Psychological imbalance represents a source of conflict. This is an important statement, because man tends to project his problems on his environment. Moral quality is apparently a kind of well-being, a good condition of the psyche. An ideal psyche resolves

conflicts in the source, the inner. Does this ideal exist? No, not in practice. It is simply in the nature of things that the practice never achieves the same degree of purity as the theory. [1]

Ideal beyond appearance

Man strives for an ideal psyche. The path man chooses in order to achieve this aspiration is problematic. Often he does not understand the concept 'value'. Defining pleasure as valuable is a mistake for example. After all, there are disadvantages in the pursuit of pleasure. Our efforts should focus on the unchangeable truth. The term value is too often assigned to a variety of variable and accidental experiences. Therefore man is too easily distracted by appearances which are not real i.e. ideal. Why does man copy corrupt concepts and objectionable behaviour, but to please our environment? In that case, man denies his psychological well-being. We must deny the claim such perceptions are right and positive for the psyche. We should not be satisfied maintaining a fake world and admit to appearances, but aim at fixed value.[2] With regard to the question where to find the value, Plato is resolute. We will find the knowledge in the immutable forms.

Unchangeable, objective forms

In the search for real knowledge, the world of the abstract rational forms and the visible world man experiences are separated. Sensed experiences and appearances are dependent on the world of ideas, the rational and general concepts. Beautiful things exist with the concept of beautiful, Plato states. Therefore, he claims, beauty exists. First we have the concept; next we apply the concept to the object. We are able to give things an (abstract) value. In addition to a concrete object, there is also an idea of an unchanging concept (the idea of beauty in this case). If man denies the existence of objective knowledge, he's constrained to limited and subjective opinions. Opinions are characterized by a lack of necessity and stability. Opinions about things waiver between ignorance and knowledge, as they are related to changing matters. By conceptualisation opinions evolve into pure thought, non-sensible forms. We can argue about taste, but the idea is pure and metaphysical. The foundational knowledge of forms needs no account and requires no [[?]]justification for itself.

To ascend to the world of ideas, man can apply the dialectic method. By thinking abstract thought in a dialectical way, man is able to unify rational concepts. The dialectical process can be characterized by a common search through dialogue, to accomplish the general truth. The dialectical process transforms the particular into the general and gives man the ability to apply the general to the particular. A multitude of distinct things is aggregated to one denominator. Many things can be traced to beauty or goodness. In this way, man has the ability to understand the essence of things. Seeing (accidental things) and thinking (abstract concepts) are distinct areas. The concept horse is original and primary with respect to the animal we experience as a thing.

Participation of the psyche in a metaphysical reality

The human functions of sensibility and thinking foster the elements of the psyche. Earlier it was stated that man strives for an ideal psyche. This requires training and development. In that context, Plato uses the analogy of the cave. In 'The republic' Plato describes the cave as a prison, an analogy for ordinary thinking. [3] He uses the analogy to state that physical objects and physical events are shadows of their ideal perfect forms, and exist only to the extent that they are derived from perfect forms. Like changing shadows are produced by physical objects, physical objects are fleeting phenomena caused by pure forms. The psyche acquires insight into the divine forms, by remembering these forms.

The things that present themselves to our senses are like shadows. However, because man is born in prison, he does not understand immediately that the world is a lower reality.

Although he strives for abstract forms of things, it is not easy to avert from the shadows in the cave, in order to understand that things themselves are not the real world. He has to ascend from the cave to the aperture, turning away from the concrete objects and elevate his psyche to the world of ideas. What are these ideas? The Greek word *eidos* means picture or shape. Ideas shine on the ordinary things of everyday life, similar to the power of the sun.

If the psyche elevates and ascends even further, it reaches the Idea of the highest good. Only if man climbs out of the cave he will be aware of the idea of goodness and is able to project this mental vision on the lower world. The idea of the highest good is above all the highest aim. The idea of goodness can be compared with the meaning of the sun to the visible world. The sun gives the visible not only the ability to be seen, but also gives growth, nutrition and maturity. The idea provides the ability, but is not identical to growth. Things we perceive are shadows of perfect forms. [4] Things participate in these forms, but should be assessed as a lower order of reality.

If man understands the reality of ideas, he learns to use his mind and ascends step by step to the concept of the idea of goodness. He even might reach the pure emanation of the idea, while the psyche is receptive to the strength and sharpness of the intellect. He is able to elevate himself from the twilight world of creation and decay of things. This attained intellectual understanding provides the ability to remember the ideal reality. [5] He will be taken by the insight that all forms and all being participate in the idea. All forms, and hence all being, participate in the good. In the *Timaeus* Plato suggests that this account of the metaphysical priority of goodness could be developed into a cosmological theory explaining the origin of the universe. Later Platonists, especially the Neo-Platonists, developed this strand of Plato's thought into a full-fledged cosmology involving the emanation of all things from the Good and their return to it. [6] Plato's philosophy includes the cosmos. By gaining knowledge of the world of ideas we discover a harmony of the spheres.

The destiny of the psyche

When man understands the illumination of the Idea of goodness, he is able to develop understanding of the relation between the visible objects and the original images. Development is possible because man can remember the world of ideas and pure forms. From this genuine point of view, Plato judges the visible world. He appraises philosophy and the meaning of life. The perfect man is a philosopher. The philosopher is associated with a man who has the capacity and is selected to fulfil a leading role in society. He is the example to mankind. He understands, and is disciplined to prefer, a metaphysical, best way of living. For the sake of all, he should rule the world. So, philosophy leads to a more stable society. But Plato thinks it has spiritual consequences too. In a spiritual way, Plato refers to redemption of the psyche, a release of the psyche from the prison of the mortal body.

Conclusion

Plato promotes thinking in abstract ideas and pure forms. They represent a divine but static reality. The rational intellectual man is able to remember these images by using reason. Man lives in a twilight zone, but his ignorance is striking. *Eros* is the emanating instinct, whereby man is able to get access to the world of ideas. Furthermore, thorough philosophical training could lead to the understanding of pure rational intellectual forms. His reason and intellect make it possible to get access to and to participate in the metaphysical ideas.

Reflection on current development

Modern patterns of communication (mass media) makes it more difficult for human mankind to reach for these divine forms and ascend to true knowledge. Too much we are regulated by appearances instead of search for moments of contemplation and remembrance.

Introduction

Aristotle founds the reality on empirism. He finds the universal in particular things. I mentioned above that Plato philosophizes the universal exists in mental ideas; things are related to them as examples. Aristotle thinks mental forms are enclosed in the biological fundaments of variable species, and proclaims a teleological understanding of nature. The understanding of the psyche too is founded on the telos (the aim) of the body. In the thing we find the manifestation of the essence. The subject is actual in the development of the body. The psyche is the rational form and is essentially his own goal because the psyche is the cause of the realization of the body. The subject receives meaning in actualization of the object (the body). The concept of telos is logical, with a metaphysical, rational inscription, as I shall explain.

Priority to the particular

In contrast to Plato, Aristotle emphasizes the reality of things instead of abstract ideas. According to Aristotle, the empirical reality has priority and not the abstract concept of ideas. Aristotle does not regard the form as a prevailing reality above the existing multitude of things, which exemplify the metaphysical idea. Such ideas offer no explanation for this world with regard to the movement that occurs in it, Aristotle proclaims. [7] He gives priority to the particular over the general and thus thinking can be derived from empirical observation. Man compares the particular conceptually, categorizes formally, to assess general conclusions. Man therefore is inclined to follow the inductive method. Plato argues that there are universal forms which cannot be found in particular things. For example, it is possible that a particular goodness does not exist, but goodness is still a proper universal form. Aristotle disagrees with Plato on this point, arguing that all universal forms are instantiated. Aristotle argues that there are no universals above existing things. According to Aristotle, if a universal exists the world should be predictable because the things are derived from a pure form. Therefore, only in the thing itself the way the particular thing will develop is enclosed.

Causes of existence

Aristotle's book 'The first philosophy' deals with fundamental questions about the first principles of reality. These fundamental questions are related to the term metaphysics. Metaphysics is defined as the search for transcendence of physical reality. The primary causes of being are related to matter, but are not matter itself. Matter inhibits the development of a being to its telos, the fulfilment of the form. Motion can best be seen as the articulation of a potential state of particular being. Referring to the potential, this is what a thing is capable of doing, if the conditions are right and if not prevented by something else. The potential exists to achieve the end and the end (telos) is the reason of change. Actuality is the fulfilment of the end. We could speak of actuality when man is doing an act he should do to reach his end.

Matter resists the actualization of possible forms. Matter is unrealized ur-mass. In the existence of things, called beings ontologically, matter acquires actualization. Forms are imprinted in beings, giving self-contained power, but are thus limited by matter. So a particular substance is a combination of both matter and form. According to Aristotle, the potential being (matter) and the actual being (form) are two of a kind. To be more specific, Aristotle distinguishes several types of causes: the material, the shape, the efficient cause, and the final cause. The psyche is the form and the telos of the body. Aristotle emphasizes the unity of the body and the psyche. [8] In this theory, reason is a central feature of man. Reason is a function specific to human being, i.e. an activity of the psyche (soul). This activity of the

psyche should be the aim of human action and leads to happiness. This activity requires a good (ethical) character, and refers to virtue and excellence.

Man is body and psyche together, because form and matter realize existence through realization of a conceived plan. The mould or form has priority according to Aristoteles, because the form, and not the material, determines the actualization of being in the end. [9] Final causes guide all natural, biological processes.

Being and goodness are exchangeable if it is in act, achieving and fulfilling its telos. The psyche forms the body. Aristoteles uses the term 'entelechy'. But speaking logically, there should be a fundamental power which activates the chain of cause and effect. Therefore, Aristoteles introduces the principle of the first mover. The body and psyche are receptive to the first principle, but only at distance, as a first starter of the chain of cause and effect. This logical spiritual mover determines human life, and has a transcendent status. So the spirit does not belong in essence to the realm of the human being. [10] The spirit is a metaphysical power.

The biological origin of the psyche

Aristotle sees the psyche as an essential principle of the body. The psyche is mortal, because it perishes with the body. [11] This is based on the premise that the psyche is formative power of the body. Man is part of the objectified reality, because its meaning is embedded in the process of actualization. When man passes away, we can no longer speak of realization of an aim. The subject itself has no legitimacy other than biological and the being will perish and disappear. So Aristotle emphasizes the origin of a natural, biological life. Intellect is an instrument that helps man to adapt and provide an immanent plan, to reveal his psychophysical existence in an optimal way. Man is a rational animal, because his body is natural and biological and the intellect provides the opportunity to accomplish his form, the psyche. So reason is a deduced forming principle. The first mover is therefore a supra-personal, divine spirit. Thomas Aquinas, the scholar who has elaborated Aristotle's philosophy in Christian concept, argues that man has a personal spirit which is immortal. [12] The intellect and reason are therefore combined themes in philosophical and religious studies. I distinguish between psyche and soul. The psyche provides study in the relation to the reality. The soul is an important theme if man questions the immortality of the psyche or human spirit and his salvation.

The problem of unifying the contradiction between thinking and senses

Aristotle's philosophy is criticized by Heidegger, amongst others. [13] He argues that the ontology of Aristotle is an ontology of things, and is also applied to people. Man is a thing plus psyche, but this does not cover his being. Man has an independent psyche and might use his intellect in a reflective way to assess and change himself. The reaction of Aristotle at Plato's conceptual theory, the logical element of his biological and spiritual chain of cause and effect, seems to be dominant in this perspective. Carlos Steel in an interpretation of Nietzsche refers to a domination of reason which is introduced by Plato and leads to Aristotle's logic reaction. Perhaps by the introduction of the contradiction between reason and senses by Plato and Aristotle, thinking went wrong. Plato's domination of the world of ideas sacrifices the individual to the general concept and on the other hand Aristotle's logical power leaves less space for contradictions. [14] Instead of a philosophy of teleology, which shows a development to perfection, Nietzsche advocates a return to the origins, preceding the distinction of reason and senses. On the other hand, Kant proclaims a distinction between reason and the world as it appears to us, as we shall see next.

Conclusion

Aristotle emphasizes the empirical reality of concrete things. The psyche is a rational forming principle, focused on the development of the biological body. As far as the psyche is in act, it is good, busy as forming principle of the body. The psyche and body are two of a kind and inseparable. The rational nature of man dominates the physical development and reason legitimizes itself in the actualization of the body. Aristotle introduces a logical spirit, a first mover, without personal interaction with being. By itself, outside the chain of cause and effect, man is meaningless.

Reflection on current developments

The capacity of the human mind to avoid sickness and physical problems, in the last century until nowadays is an example of the striking thoughts of Aristotle. Man is more and more directed to dominate and act on material and body, with reason as leading instrument. But critical are the questions: does man become a thing instead of a being and inhibits this state of the mind a more religious way of living? And, is man able to hold on to an ethical or maybe religious way of living? On the other hand, Aristotle emphasises the relation of reason with happiness, ethics and virtues. Are we able to understand how to live reasonable with reason as the highest authority?

Introduction

The grounding of Kant’s perspective on the psyche is the autonomous reason. He starts with the central question: what can I know? Man has an autonomous reason, because reason is the dominant power for the way we interpret experiences. Experiences are structured by necessary and integral features of the mind of man. Examples are integral rational concepts of time, space, cause and effect. These are categories of understanding. Man is therefore not capable of knowing the experienced ‘thing’. That man cannot assess the ‘thing in itself’ (so called transcendental object) is an important statement in Kant’s epistemology. This limitation of our knowledge provides on the one hand a world of experiences of objects we do not know in essence (phenomenal world), but on the other hand creates a noumenal world that he does not know but can think. In this thinking which is not dominated by the phenomena, he is free (of thought) due to reason which provides the framework of (all) possible experiences.

However, pure mental concepts have absolutely no meaning except objects of experience. The relation of concepts and experience restrains our imagination. These concepts are mixed, because they are based on experiences through sensory perceptions which are conceptually processed. The blank conceptual image makes it on the other hand possible to apply thoughts in the world of possible representations, which are essentially empty. As far as reason is applied to experience, he processes sensibility and concepts. As far as reason thinks pure, reason is accommodated to a world of possible representations. And this is the sophisticated and complex philosophical basis of Kant’s work. The theory is rather complex.

What is the psyche according to Kant?

In Kant’s philosophy, reason dominates the way man structures thinking. But in the end reason is bothered by questions she cannot disregard, because these questions are metaphysical embedded in reason herself. Kant calls the basic concepts of metaphysical inquiry ‘ideas’. Unlike concepts of understanding, which correspond to possible objects that can be given in experience, ideas are concepts of reason, and they do not correspond to possible objects of experience. The three most important ideas with which Kant is concerned in the so called transcendental dialectic are the soul, the world (considered as a totality), and God. The peculiar thing about these ideas of reason is that reason is led by its very structure to posit objects corresponding to these ideas. These ideas cannot be ignored, because it is the reason’s nature to unify cognitions into a systematic whole. Reason requires these ideas of the soul, the world, and God, in order to complete the systematic unification. (In fact, reason is in her logical use an ability to conclude, distinct from the ability of intuition and the ability of understanding). One important question man asks himself by reason, is the question of the immortality of the soul (which I further call psyche). The psychological idea makes man think he should unify all psychological appearances so that they are implications of the psyche. The I of ‘I think’ is always represented as subject. It is not possible to imagine this as a predicate of another thing. On the other hand, something can only be cognized as a substance when it is given as an object in an intuition (‘Anschauung’), and there can be no intuition of the I itself (thus representations of objects itself). Hence, although we cannot help but think of the I as a substantial psyche, we can never have cognition of the I as a substance, and hence knowledge of the existence and nature of the psyche is impossible. ‘I think’ should not be mistaken for a cognition. The judgement of the ‘I’ as substance, distinct from the external world, would be a transcendental illusion. Kant refers to reason’s inescapable tendency to posit unexperienceable and hence unknowable objects corresponding to these ideas as “transcendental illusion.” To solve this problem, Kant introduces postulates of reason, because all activity of reason is directed to three problems only: God, the psyche, and freedom. Connected judgements lead

for example ultimately to the problem of the psyche and the postulate of reason: the immortality of the psyche. And in the same way, but practical thinking, man has to apply his thoughts on the phenomenal world. He has to ask himself, to know what ought to be done practical. As this concerns our actions with reference to the highest aims of life, we see that the ultimate intention of nature in her wise provision was really, in the constitution of our reason, directed to moral interests only. Kant also argues that his ethical theory requires belief in free will, God, and the immortality of the psyche. Although we cannot have knowledge of these things, reflection on the moral law leads to a justified belief in them, which could be judged as rational faith. Thus in answer to the question, “What may I hope?” Kant replies that we may hope that our psyche is immortal.

A rational act is a moral act

In the introduction I claimed that behaviour can be seen as an act of the psyche. In this context, Kant’s philosophy is very interesting. Kant’s ethics are grounded on the notion of a categorical imperative, which is a universal ethical principle. It means that one should always respect the humanity of others, and that one should only act in accordance with rules that should be valid for everyone. Kant argues that the moral law is a truth of reason, and hence that all humans are bound by the same moral law. Pure practical laws, given by reason a priori, dictate what ought to be done. Morality is the supreme good. Thus in answer to the question, ‘What should I do?’ Kant replies that we should act rationally, in accordance with a universal moral law. Happiness is subordinate to morality. But beware of the extreme conclusion that morality would be equal to the complete good, which it is not, because morality does not encompass all humans’ desire.

The transcendental self

Although Kant would state that there is no empirical way of observing the self, ‘the I’ assumes a logical necessity of the self by the observation of different perceptions of the external environment over time. By uniting these general representations into an integral representation, we can see how a transcendental self emerges. Man is conscious of the identical self in regard to the manifold representations that are given to him in an intuition because he calls them all together his representations.

Reason is the highest authority

Reason must subject herself to critique in all its activity and cannot restrict the freedom of critique through any prohibition without damaging itself and drawing upon itself a disadvantageous suspicion. Upon this freedom rests the very existence of reason, which has no dictatorial authority, but whose claim is never anything more than the agreement of free citizens, each of whom must be able to express his reservations, indeed even his veto, without holding back. At the other hand, man is responsible for his acts. Man should use his mind, so his acts should not be dominated by what we for example nowadays could call the pressure of social media.

Metaphysical revolution

According to Kant’s ethics, the ultimate aim is to become perfectly moral. However, Kant holds that moral perfection is something that finite rational agents such as humans can only progress towards, but not actually attain in any finite amount of time, and certainly not within a human lifetime. Thus the moral law demands an endless progress towards complete conformity of the will to this moral law. This endless progress towards perfection can only be demanded of man if his own existence is endless. That presupposes the belief in the immortality of the psyche. An important question is when is man conscious of the authority of

reason? In other words, why should man follow the regulation (categorical imperative) of reason instead of natural impulses or instincts? Kant indicates that it is incomprehensible when man is directed to the legislative reason. He describes a revolution as if man is experiencing emptiness. [15] Man does no longer prevail experience. The perfection by which he acts, is considered a duty that never could be classified as experience. The ability of humans to deviate from this inner law is actually an inability. [16] Kant argues that there is only one thing that can be considered unconditionally good: a good will. A person has a good will insofar as it is based on intentions, founded on a self-conscious respect for the moral law, regarding one's duty. The value of a good will is related to the principles of intentions; not in the consequences of the actions. So reason is the highest authority. According to Kant, religion is therefore a derivative of the moral law. Moral perfection presupposes God.

Conclusion

The psyche is an idea, a reasonable and ultimate judgment, which leads to the postulation of the immortality of the psyche, in the end. But this concept should not be taken for a substance, because that is classified as a transcendental illusion. The 'I think' is confirmed by the integral observation of representations over time. The concept of the existence of man is reasonable appointed to the ultimate form of reason itself. Kant subordinates man from a practical point of view under the reasonable law of the universal categorical imperative. The legislative reason should be the centre on which man acts in the world. The ethical law should dominate our life, although Kant is conscious that the moral law does not encompass the complete goodness of man.

Reflection on current developments

With Kant, the discussion of the psyche is more dedicated to the subject in comparison with Plato and Aristoteles. The psyche balances between two worlds and its consciousness seems to be diffused. But Kant makes a strong appeal for common sense, for a universal ethic law which man should use in order to ban (extreme) practices which are based on illusions of the mind. Those thoughts could lead to sick behaviour. Man shifts from philosophy to psychology because he strives for a diagnosis of sick behaviour instead of the more problematic metaphysics.

Introduction

Instead of active concepts of rationality, Jung defines the psyche as passive existence. In contrast to the former authors, Jung does not think man is capable of understanding reality integrally. Reason is a conscious part of the human psyche, but it definitely does not contain all experienced material. Reality is more a process of identification of individual human existence with the universe as a whole. The psyche contains largely unconscious mental content. The unconscious is autonomous and severely affects the life of man. Jung proclaims that man cannot know the truth; the conscious is enclosed by the unconscious. In the unconscious are hidden secrets, belonging to an area which is inaccessible for the conscious. The unconscious can be translated by an explanation of symbols and expresses itself through dreams on psychological disorders and manifestations. Especially religious contents are typical exterior processes to the conscious part of the psyche. So a person is not master in its own house. The integration of the psyche with the unconscious is a process of transforming the personal and collective unconscious into consciousness. Important examples of these processes and tensions in the psyche of man are the persona (or mask) and the shadow. Jung calls them archetypes.

Consciousness and psyche

Jung distinguishes between conscious and unconscious processes. Psychical conscious contents which are directly related to self-awareness (I-consciousness) are observable. Jung calls the I-consciousness the ego. The ego is the conscious part of ourselves and is identical to the real and understandable world. As far as contents of consciousness are not related directly to the ego, they do not belong to the ego, but to the I-personality. This larger whole that is more than the ego, is the ‘self’. The self is the centre of the total, unlimited and undefinable psychical personality. On one hand the psyche as phenomenon can be considered as a part that relies on experience. On the other hand the psyche is a part or an integral area of the self, in so far as it is classified as unknown experienced material. Man does not understand experiences, so man has no power to conduct his behaviour integrally by consciousness. Almost always experiences and facts contain something unknown. The totality of an experience only concerns the conscious part of the experience and the unknown is divided and leads to complexes. According to Jung, the aim of man is individuation, a psychological process of integrating opposites. Man is aware of these opposites if he listens to his conscience. Conscience enables man to get to know impersonal forces. We experience these forces by the dark side of the psyche. Thereby the personal and collective unconscious is brought into consciousness (by means of dreams for example) to be assimilated into the whole personality. The process of individuation encloses the integration of the conscious with the unconscious, while still maintaining their relative autonomy. Jung considers individuation as the central process of human development and of religion too. It is the journey to discover the self and thereby the divine. The platform to reveal knowledge of this process is related to heredity.

Heredity as the basis of objective contents of consciousness

Dreams appoint similar problems of mankind. The problem of the psyche and thus the limitation of human consciousness expresses itself in dreams. Dreams point out that the human psyche is incomplete. By explaining the meaning of dreams we are able to bridge the contents of consciousness of different man. The individual is different and differentiates itself in its development in comparison to the other. However, he does not develop into a solitaire subject. Dreams are partly unique. However, the underlying motives of the dreams are

generic. Jung calls those motives archetypes. He derives this conclusion from the fact that archetypal images are reproduced even if the possibility of direct circulation is absent. Heredity ensures reproduction. So Jung formulates a scientific basis for conscious knowledge: heredity.

Archetypes

The collective unconscious is seen as a transpersonal aspect. The unconscious is related to aspirations of archetypes which are deeply anchored in the human psyche. Archetypes can be distinguished by analysing symbol patterns. They can be described as inherited symbol patterns, rooted in experiences of mankind. The collective unconscious is regarded as a reservoir of latent images that refer to the first stage of development of the psyche. Further clarification can be given by comparing archetypes with instincts. An archetype is like an instinct, not personal and inherent to the human species. The difference is that instinct is a natural drift and archetype is a psychological inherited image. While the content of the collective unconscious is formed from archetypes, the personal unconscious consists largely of complexes. There is similarity between the meaning of archetypes to the collective unconscious and the meaning of the complexes to the personal unconscious.

Confrontation with the shadow

Two major archetypes which Jung describes are the persona (called 'the mask') and the shadow. Jung argues that we hide our true face behind the mask, the dark side of our personality. A mask pretends individuality, even if it is no more than a well-played role through which the collective psyche is expressed. It is a compromise between the individual and society as to what a man should appear to be. The confrontation with this shadow requires courage. By facing our dark sides, man is able to develop consciousness. But what lies behind this consciousness? Jung claims that factual investigation to myths of different tribes and cultures shows that motives are related to impressions of the human mind which are not acquired by tradition, but by heredity. [17] As such, the shadow is a collective image. Its origin is unknown. We should learn to live with a great question mark that defines and controls our lives. Although our mind cannot understand the form of his own existence because we miss the Archimedean point we cannot hold on to, he exists anyway. 'The psyche exists, it is existence itself'. [18] As a result, Jung introduces a great powerful autonomous question mark: the unconscious.

Autonomy of the unconscious

Jung proclaims that man cannot know the truth; the conscious is enclosed by the unconscious. In the unconscious are hidden secrets, belonging to an area which is inaccessible for the conscious. The unconscious can be translated by an explanation of symbols and expresses itself through dreams and psychological disorders and manifestations. Especially religious contents of consciousness are for the conscious part of the psyche typical exterior processes. They are based outside the individual. They have no relation to an act, but follow from an undetermined unconscious source - also known as numinosum. The numinosum governs man and makes man essentially victimized. A person is not master in its own house. Man is a victim of creation. He can be characterized as ill as far as he is incomplete. Jung refers in his diagnosis to sick manifestations as a consequence of discontinued complexes. [19] The autonomy of the unconscious makes man a dependent and imperfect, incomplete being. The unconsciousness of the individual is substantial, so he is not able to judge his capacity to make decisions. [20]

Rejection of the categorical imperative as consequence of imperfect judgement

Jung states that the criterion of ethical action can no longer be the categorical imperative. What man thinks and judges as 'good' does not empower man to avoid the so-called evil. If you recognize that evil is real, then the good has to be one half of the contradiction. Good and evil are the two halves of a paradoxical whole. This means in practice that good and evil lose their absolute character and that gives a convincing argument that both involve a judgment. [21]

But the imperfection of human judgment makes we cannot be sure that we always maintain the correct opinions. If man does not understand the problems of the psyche, he should stick to outer rules and laws of which he can derive certainty to an extent. Man should therefore be raised. The subjective experience should have priority in education and socialization above general well-known and merely historical facts. We learn about ideals that can never be realized. These ideals are taught by people who also never will fulfil them either. [22]

There is no such thing as a philosopher's throne. Man is not able to solve his state of imperfection and sickness by conscious reason. There is no ethical base on which man can found his behaviour. The good is not bad for itself; the fact that man cannot depend on it could have evil consequences. Man should not assume that goodness overcomes evil. Jung interprets the evil excesses with the Russian people - the lash of the communist regime of Stalin - and that of the German people - World War II and the Holocaust – as the manifestation of evil. Experience shows that the good has a dark side, with which we have to deal. [23]

Reorientation

Jung's scientific approach is based on phenomenology. Phenomenology distinguishes everyday reality from the world of transcendental subjectivity. The natural world is the everyday, common world in which we live and work if we do not practice phenomenology. The world of the transcendental subjectivity is the same world but from a phenomenological point of view. It is the world that is perceived directly if abstracted from the objective reality of causal relationships of objects of consciousness.

The phenomenology changes the criterion of verification and truth. Kant's philosophy is centred within the subject. The world is unfolded from the subject's point of view. Jung places the dominant point of his phenomenology aside from the conscious point of view of the subject. We could say Jung leaves the totality open. The problem of ethics and metaphysics can be reduced by obtaining insight of the self. Moreover, according to Jung, just a few men are able to conclude that the problem is rooted in the long-forgotten psyche of man. [24] Jung proclaims that according to Christian dogmatic perception God is at least in each of the persons belonging to the trinity a totality. Therefore He is also undividedly present in every part of the outpoured Holy Spirit. So every man can participate in God. On this way the total complex of opposites (the *complexio oppositorum*) of the image of God enters into the human psyche, not as a unity, but as a conflict, because the dark half of the image is confronted with the existing assumption that God is light. [25] Individuation is a process or journey of transformation to meet the self and the divine by integrating the shadows and light. We could say spiritual experience is essential to discover the potential of the self, to avoid sickness. In that way it stimulates well-being. Because Jung relates the human psyche to the self and God as totality, he relates individual human life with the universe as a whole.

The religious experience refers to the totality

Man has the ability to develop psychical conscious contents of the totality and the divine by experiencing the numinous. Identical to some Cristian authors, Jung gives priority to conscience. The bad conscience is like a vehicle to explore the unconscious in us. Conscience enables man to get to know transpersonal forces. [26] We experience these forces through the dark side of the psyche. Jung works from the experience of the dark side of our psyche, which causes conflicts within us, to the totality. Through experience, we are able to enclose the divine for our conscious directly. Man should restore the relationship with the divine. And this includes the integral human, not only the conscious reason. Dogmas must be internalized. According to Jung, the psyche moves through the self, the totality of all psychic contents inside. This awareness can be achieved by working on complexes and shadows, leading to integration of the conscious part of the original psyche. Jung calls this process of recovery individuation. Man is able to regain his own self by liberating the self, both from the deceptive cover of the persona, and from the power of unconscious impulses.

Conclusion

Jung interprets experience on a direct, phenomenological way. Knowledge founded on reason is less important, because the experience itself refers to an area which we are not able to control. A philosophical base on which man can rely on to act and behave, has disappeared. Man is not master in his universe, but a victim. The way to overcome his weakness and sickness is to regain his whole self, working on complexes and shadows. The light of Plato (for example) should partly be neglected, because it could deceive us as if the psyche is united instead of divided by light and darkness.

Reflection on current developments

We could say that in the development of the philosophy of the psyche, the position of the authors shifts towards inner representations and images (Kant and especially Jung) and away from an exterior legitimation and aim of life (Plato, Aristotle). The classical authors might give less priority to the mental problems of this modern time. I suggest we should decrease our attention to the material world, and spend more time with contemplation. We have learned there is no ultimate justification in the way we think, so we can only assume justification and legitimation of life. But all authors speak of a general founding of our path of life, so we should hope, balance and work with discipline on this path. If you agree, we might hope for development of human in a balanced spiritual and material way. So, we should strive for the truth through introspection and act accordingly in the world of shadows and illusions.

6 CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

I assert that the four authors have a different point of view on the psyche. For example, the classic authors Plato and Aristotle incorporate the psyche within a more ontological philosophy. Plato sees the fundament of in the world in ideas: bright, mental concepts. Aristotle balances the function of the psyche and body. Psyche and body are two of a kind. In addition, the psyche according to Aristotle is grounded in the physical nature. Kant's philosophy is stuck in the middle, between an in nature grounded psyche and a more metaphysical concept. Reason is related to experience and images, but does dictate our thoughts itself, instead of an exterior force. Jung claims man is not able to get grip on his life and behaviour, because the unconscious force overrules our mind-set. The psyche has to be integrated with this undefined influence, which has to be discovered by religious experiences.

By analysing the four theories, which I have specified to the psyche, claims about the psyche are controversial in two ways. First, the theories are different as regards their starting points (ideas, things, reason itself, phenomenological experience), which have impact and consequences on the concept of the psyche. Second, and not mentioned earlier, the period in which the authors lived, is different, but influences the way the authors interpret the world and reality. Plato philosophizes about a new metaphysical world beyond successors, who founded their philosophies on earthly elements as ether, fire and water. Aristotle experiences another fundament than his predecessor. Kant seeks for a clear starting point in metaphysical theories. And Jung is influenced by his predecessor Freud and gives a personal boast to the analytical psychology with new concepts of the unconscious. One of the central problems is given in the question: is man able to understand his psyche in a rational and conscious way, so he has a criterion to build his life on? And if there is not a criterion, is his conscious strong enough to strengthen him to act in virtue and dignity?

Psychological and philosophical theories of the four writers have in common that there is more in life than only physical and sensible experiences. The philosophical theories suggest man should use his ability to reason, and so man is accountable for his behaviour. This philosophical path is not easy to follow and to understand, but leads to a metaphysical understanding of life. Before this point of no return, man lives his experiences, hereafter lies another more solid, normative world beyond physics. According to Jung, we have to integrate experiences of an unknown reality in our lives to make our psyche complete.

All authors do refer to a metaphysical world, i.e. a world beyond the visible nature. But man is absorbed by the flood of information and communication nowadays. And the realm of the metaphysical world is one of simplicity, silence, discipline, perfection and patience. I conclude man has to turn around to see this world of perfection, and not only focus on the fast moving world of money, status, attitudes. Secondly, I want to conclude that all writers leave a door open to the existence of the divine. Philosophy is different from religion, because it does not suggest someone has the mandate to speak on behalf of God. But, for example according to Kant, we have to assume God because in the end we cannot live without thinking of God. In other words, we need to acknowledge that these thoughts are integrated properly in our lives and our psyche integrates the two worlds with prudence. To stimulate our well-being, happiness and virtue.

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[1] Plato, page 197

[2] Plato, page 238

[3] Plato, pages 233 – 257

[4] Priest, page 10

[5] Plato, page 242

[6] Original text of MacDonald, S., *Being and Goodness*, page 4; "In the republic Plato had asserted that all Forms, and hence all being, participate in the Good, and in the Timaeus he at least suggested that this account of the metaphysical priority of goodness could be developed into a cosmological theory explaining the origin of the universe. Later Platonists, especially the neo-Platonists, developed this strand of Plato's thought into a full-fledged cosmology involving the emanation of all things from the Good and their return to it".

[7] Aristoteles, page 47

[8] Peursen, page 95

[9] Aristoteles, page 37

- [10] Peursen, page 99
- [11] Froe, *page 25*
- [12] Peursen, page 100
- [13] Froe, page 23
- [14] Aristotle, page 55
- [15] Jaspers, page 145
- [16] Jaspers, page 120
- [17] Jung in 'Psychology and religion', pages 80 -81
- [18] Jung in 'Psychology and religion', page 33
- [19] Jung in 'Psychology and religion', page 34
- [20] Jung, 'The evil in the current world', pages 258 – 259
- [21] Jung, 'The evil in the current world', pages 257 – 258
- [22] Jung, 'The evil in the current world', pages 258 – 259
- [23] Jung, 'The evil in the current world', pages 256 – 257
- [24] Jung, 'The evil in the current world', pages 259
- [25] Jung, 'The evil in the current world', pages 262
- [26] Jung, 'Psychology and religion', page 79