Ascending to the sun and descending to the moon

On the edge of physical science and metaphysics: revealing the mind in two extreme directions

Content

Introduction

Why do humans seem to be in such a hurry?
To change things faster and faster?
To prove God their capabilities?
Convincing each other their everlasting success?
Do you ask yourself what happens if …?
You look deep enough in the window of time?
To see the spiritual sun rising?
Being conscious of the power to changes?
What happens if there is no interference?
Getting closer to the end of all things?
Finding the blue calm see in the meditation.
And reflections of the moon.

Ascending and descending as process of the conscious mind are returning principles in philosophy and religion.

In this paper we will discuss metaphysical concepts with the mind as starting point. Where does the human mind focus on? Thinking reality seems to be a mixture of experiences, conceptual understanding in a scale from daily life to ultimately the edge of infinity. We think there is one ultimate point of focus and that is the sun. I think there is another edge the mind reflects upon and that is the moon. The metaphor of the sun is a basic principle that we recognize in philosophies. One of the strongest examples is the philosophy of Plato.

Plato invites man to ascend to the metaphysical sun, the true form of reality. In the sensible and visible world, we are stuck in shadows and darkness, according to Plato. Objects we experience are only faint reflections of true forms. But what happens if we cannot ascend to the sun? Therefore, it is interesting to look at results of scientific physical research, the sphere that is according to Plato the world of objects in darkness and shadow, and so, the physical dimension. Where will modifications in matter lead to and what indications are provided from a metaphysical point of view in relation to the mind?

In the paper we will discuss coherence between physics and metaphysics. It is interesting to ask the question what philosophers say about the mind and what moves the mind. And besides metaphysics itself, we will indicate what the relationship is between philosophy and science, in bird's eye view.

We start with the concept of time. The concept of time is important, because this frames the way we interact with reality.

Time is a conceptual and philosophical subject that influences in basic our perceptions and intuition. It has a relation with the philosophy of the mind, because the concept induces the relation between unity (substance) and fragments of experience and understanding.
To discuss this subject, we will search for indications of the way the mind thinks. We will discuss the reliance on mathematical based relations and proportions as principle to judge reality. (Section 1)

Plato said that humans are not educated to ascend to true forms and that there are few that might understand the true form. Therefore, you have to be aware of the fact the mind consists of a visible and intelligible part. If we rely on senses, we are in a degraded reality and in spheres of shadows and darkness. Discovering the intelligible part, makes it possible to ascend to real forms. (Section 2)

So, what happens if human being in general will follow the path of the visible world?

If the objects we experience are parts of a larger substance (Kant) and reflections of true forms (Plato), we think of them as modifications in relation to reality.

The smallest parts we know are quanta. What do the results of scientific research tell us about the subject of modifications in relation to the substance? One of the conclusions is that a basic principle of reality we experience is symmetry. In analogy with Plato, we might say that if it breaks, reality descends and if it restores, reality ascends. Symmetry is identified with sustainability and unchangeability in science, and so decay of symmetry with modifications. By breaking of symmetry, nature will show a lower form of symmetry. (Section 3)

On a much bigger scale, we will discuss the law of thermodynamics. What happens if the time frame is stretched out, ultimately? The physical theory that is applicable in this setting is the law of conservation and entropy. This leads in relation to the philosophical approach, to some considerations.

There is a moment in time that everything, at the end of things, is silent and calm. It is the point that we call absolute disorder. In analogy the mind views the things as a calm blue (frozen) surface. In spiritual terms we meditate to the blue moon. It is the sun that gives the moon its glance, and the mind is in

peace, without modification. This is what I call the blue moon of meditation. (Section 4)

In daily life we are focused on changes and modifications, but in the end, there are two significant boundaries which have a substantial influence on existence in and beyond the visible world. We will discuss this theme in section 5.

In this paper we will discuss the discovering of two extreme anchors of the mind instead of one, philosophical sun. I am not able to prove the assumptions and analogies that are applied. Physical science and metaphysics are somehow related. In this short paper some relations between the two domains are discussed and they are based upon intuitive notions.

E. Heemskerk

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Section 1 Substance as time frame

In this section we will mention a more abstract approach of time, to issue the modifications that occur in reality. This makes it more plausible to compare concepts of physical science (changing objects in space and time) with metaphysical concepts.

The thinking process starts with the concept of substance. We need the concept of substance as a ruling principle in order to experience the world as an objective time order. Kant mentioned substance as an analogy for the relation to reality. Substance refers to the fundamental essence of things and Kant made clear how our conceptual approach applies to things we experience and understand. In that way we make thoughts comprehensible in order to represent all things belonging to the same one single time.[i]

Imagine how we would have experienced and understood reality if there was not a unifying principle. In that case man would have dispersed and incoherent thoughts.

The unifying principle of time provides an objective time order. Changes we experience occur within a frame of time. They are similar to modifications. All events are modifications of one eternally persisting substance.[ii]

What is the abstract thought of this unifying one single substance? We have our intuition to match our experiences and mental processes to the substance. All intuitions are extensive magnitudes, which means that every intuition takes some sequence of time and a part of space. The length of time and shape of space are these kinds of magnitudes, to which we are able to apply the concept of number.
Anything that appears to human mind, allows at least the mathematical treatment that it falls under the concept of magnitude.[iii]

And what we do is judge by synthesis these parts of magnitudes to an extensive magnitude and relate it to the concept of time and space. So, to experience appearances, we start with a substance. Then we experience modifications and apply the window of time and space to understand these

modifications in coherence. It seems that we relate the modifications by mathematical and extensive approach to reality as a whole again.[1]

To summarize. Reason gives us a window of time. Our mind is framed to start with one substance and by modifications in time and space experience events that are ordered and systematized, and unified in a chronological and objective order.

Connection between dimensions. The concepts of modification and substance are important to relate physical laws and theories with metaphysics. The mind is able to connect the visible world with the reality beyond the material world, as we shall see in section 3 and 4.

Preview. The way the mind connects and systemizes reality in objective order, influences the endpoint or anchor of the mind. And one is metaphysical, the metaphysical sun of Plato (next section), and the second is the end of all things of physics based on a metaphysical point of view (section 4).

[1] We should be aware that Kants principles of knowledge are recorded in the 'Kritik der reinen Vernunft'. In the 'Kritik der praktischen Vernunft' Kant makes clear that we have regulative ideas that postulate coherence.

Section 2 Plato's forms and the analogy of the sun

Human beings are rational beings. In Plato's philosophy this capability is illustrated by the analogy of the divided line.

Before we will explain this analogy, it is important to mention that Plato's basic principle is that reality contains forms. These forms are like non-spatial non-temporary configurations. Forms are from another order than the physical, ordinary objects we experience in the visible world.

'Plato here is using the familiar relationship between ordinary objects and their shadows or reflections in order to illustrate the relationship between the physical world as a whole and the world of Ideas (Forms) as a whole. The former is made up of a series of passing reflections of the latter, which is eternal, more real and 'true'. Moreover, the knowledge that we have of the Ideas – when indeed we do have it – is of a higher order than knowledge of the mere physical world. In particular, knowledge of the forms leads to a knowledge of the Idea (Form) of the Good.'[iv]

Plato learns that reality has in basic hierarchical dimensions. The physical is a lower order than the forms and the forms emanate from the idea of goodness, which is similar to pure reality. He uses the analogy of the sun to explain the relationship between knowledge and this pure reality, whereby Plato accentuates they are not the same nor exchangeable.

'Well, what I'm saying is that it's goodness which gives the things we know their truth and makes it possible for people to have knowledge. It is responsible for knowledge and truth, you should think of it as being within the intelligible realm, but you shouldn't identify it with knowledge and truth, otherwise you'll be wrong: For all their value, it is even more valuable. In the other realm, it is right to regard light and sight as resembling the sun; So in this realm it is right to regard knowledge and truth as resembling goodness, but not to identify either of them with goodness, which should be rated even more highly.'[v]

With the analogy of the sun, Plato introduces a metaphysical reality.

'The sun provides not only the power of being seen for things seen, but, as I think you will agree, also their generation and growth and nurture, although it is not itself generation...
Similarly with things known, you will agree that the good is not only the cause of their becoming known, but the cause that they are, the cause of their state of

being, although the good is not itself a state of being but something transcending far beyond it in dignity and power.'[vi]

This analogy of the sun is the first ultimate edge our mind is able to ascend to. The metaphysical sun is the metaphor for reality.

The idea of goodness and the analogy of the sun give us concepts of true reality, because they consist of pure forms, which humans as rational beings are able to understand.
An example of an intelligible form is a circle. We are able to think a perfect circle. In nature itself we will not find a perfect circle. It is not perfect symmetrical. This in an important insight, because we will see that symmetry is a force in nature which sometimes is not strong enough and breaks.

Are we aware of this force and intelligible pure ideas? We are from childhood not educated to see the forms and chained to the shadows of objects in the sensible world, says Plato.

And not alle human beings are capable of ascending to see the sun. For example, to follow the philosophical path and ascend to the sun, you need enough eros to behold the forms and the absolute form of goodness.
So, what happens if we are not able to reach the sun? Is there another route to free us from the abyss of shadows and darkness, an edge we might put an anchor?

Section 3 The principle of symmetry

The philosophers Plato and Kant were not familiar with modern physical laws. It is interesting what physical science shows in relation to space and time.

First, we bring into memory that events are experienced as modifications of substance.
There are two principles in physical science that contain modifications that are worth to mention.

First, the type of modifications, so the patterns and behavior, are different if the scale of matter differs. This is known as the principle of emergence. So, when we relate modifications and compare them, we need to look at their size.[vii] The patterns of behavior in certain areas are comparable or even similar. So, the human mind is able to cluster behavior on symmetrical behavior.
Second, the principle of symmetry is the strongest force in nature.[2] Symmetry is sometimes broken and sometimes restored, and this phenomenon happens according to a limited set of formulas. Physical science shows that there are a few fundamental, simple, universal rules to explain symmetric relations in physics.[3]

In this search for knowledge of physics and things, the theory of quantum mechanics leads to the discussion of the importance of the relation between parts. Instead of the classic approach, that focused on the thing 'an sich'.[4] In the relation, symmetrical judgement is a primarily approach of the mind.

If we apply these principles upon the metaphysical principle of forms, higher reality is more in symmetrical balance. If they lose symmetry, we may speak of a certain decay of a form which consists of relations in time and space (as faint reflection).

We think of things in relation to content, but our consciousness focusses on symmetry, in relation and proportion more than things itself. Indeed, it is the intelligible power of the mind to reveal these physical laws. These laws tend to approach reality in terms of connectivity. And a significant principle to judge connectivity and relationship is symmetry.

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[2] Verstraete, F., Broeckaert, C., Waarom niemand kwantum begrijpt en iedereen er toch iets over moet weten, 2023, Terra – Lannoo, p. 51, 259
[3] Idem, p. 254, 260
[4] Idem, p. 146

Our mindset is focused upon symmetry or the lack of it, identifying levels of forms, material and intelligible. In the previous section, Plato's real forms appear to be forms with high symmetry. The visible and material world, which Plato described as faint reflections of higher forms, are less symmetrical. Moreover, these faint reflections of higher forms are experienced as modifications with fraction of symmetry. This phenomenon attracts the mind, that intuitively judges reality from a symmetrical point of view.

Examples of this principle are: (1) human being tends to build society upon principle of equality and equal rights and freedom; this is based upon the starting point of equivalence, which is in basic an ideal of symmetrical relationship; (2) architecture consists of all kinds of symmetric forms.

So, by revealing the universe and its power of symmetry, we have an indication that we could, in an analogue's way, relate to metaphysics and ascend to the sight of Plato's sun.
Is mankind able to build symmetry in the physical dimension and bridge the gap towards the intelligible domain? An example of an application that is a result of physical science on quantum level, is an a-symmetric breach: the atom bomb.
But this result was not a breach in the quantum level itself, it makes a catastrophe possible in the classic physical level of common experience.
A breach in symmetry is revealed in the visible world, leading to disorder and chaos. The mind judges relationships from an ideal and symmetrical point of view, but he is aware or capable of breaking symmetry too. Is it possible to detect a law on a bigger scale that fits this tension in time and space? Like previous analogies of symmetry in ideal forms and physical dimension, the physical law confirms such a tendency. In the next section the principle of entropy will indicate a relationship between the modifications by breaches of symmetry and the increase of disorder.

Section 4 The principle of entropy

The laws of thermodynamics are fundamental principles in physics that describe the behavior and transformation of energy in physical systems. These laws provide a framework for understanding and predicting the behavior of energy and its relationship to other quantities, such as temperature, pressure, and entropy.
The most important two parts of the law are the law of conservation of energy and entropy.

The first law of thermodynamics (energy conservation) states that energy cannot be created or destroyed in an isolated system. Instead, it can only be transferred or transformed from one form to another. The total energy of a closed system remains constant.
The second law of thermodynamics (entropy) introduces the concept of entropy, which is a measure of the disorder or randomness in a system. It states that the entropy of an isolated system tends to increase over time unless energy is supplied to maintain or decrease it. This law helps explain why some processes are irreversible and why systems tend to move towards a state of maximum disorder or equilibrium.[viii]

First, the information we exchange with matter, seems to be connected somehow to this law of entropy. Physics is strongly connected to the theory of information.[5]

Second, when things come to an end, there are mental forms but no physical reflections. The state is comparable with one substance, a state of maximum disorder or equilibrium as is stated earlier.
Does the mind gaze at a blue ocean of nothingness? In this universal reflection, there are no modifications and without modifications (as mentioned in section 1), there is only substance, if everything stands still, in a symmetrical balance. The substance we think in ultimo and extremo, is one abstract form, different from Plato's ideal form. It is an analogy of the moon applied in the bounded and connected area of physics and metaphysics, indirect reflecting light by the metaphysical sun. The sun empowers the reflection on the surface that looks like the blue moon of meditation. This is the meditation of mental static form, because there is no exchange of information (in restoring or decay of symmetry) and mental thought like we are used to have, because of the first point.

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[5] Verstraete, F., Broeckaert, C., Waarom niemand kwantum begrijpt en iedereen er toch iets over moet weten, 2023, Terra – Lannoo, p. 301

Section 5 Discussion

The concept of time is similar to a window that enables the mind to connect and order information in relation to the physical and metaphysical dimension. The starting point is static, and Kant's philosophy shows a relation between the one substance and the dynamic dimension of modifications. Subsequently, this theory is applied on the ideal forms, based on the philosophy of Plato, to get access to a spiritual source. This is the idea of goodness and with the analogy of the sun, we are ascending to the first ultimate and extreme force of reality that contains both the physical and metaphysical dimension.

Is this the one extreme edge the mind might connect to, in analogy of a divine origin of existence? Is it possible with insights from the faint reflections of intelligible reality, we might reveal another entry point as anchor at the edge of consiousness of the mind? What happens if we descend instead of ascending to Plato's sun? Do we stay in darkness and shadows?

In the paper are principles discussed that have analogues and coherent meaning in both dimensions. Mathematical proportions are in both dimensions valid, according to Plato and Kant. The principle of symmetry is a strong force in the physical and metaphysical dimension.

In general, symmetrical relations are connected to the concept of beauty in art and architecture, for example. But symmetry might be broken too. In the dynamic dimension of physics, a specific physical law explains the development of decay of symmetry. In the extreme edge which is revealed by the mind in relation to physical end of all things, we see a blue static ocean.

When I think about analogies of the sun and the moon, the thought strikes me that the more western oriented currents search for the sun and want to erect themselves, and not by the mind, but by physical modification (which is influenced by the law of entropy). Thereby collecting energy to pass and unify parts to be a rising sun. But it might be more a reflection of the mind in applying this intelligence to the physical sphere, than a creation in the shadows of the senses. Maybe we have to consider this only might increase entropy in the end and fastens the breaches in symmetry …
The static view of the end of all things, opens a possible entrance to approach religious currents from another point of view. The everlasting discussion about the priority of religions might be valued in another light. The

monotheistic religions seem to ascend the metaphysical sun. To me it might be a consideration that the eastern religions take the reflection of the moon as ultimate contemplation.
Next to the direction of the mind to ascend to the sun, descending to the moon seems to enable a contemplative edge and anchor. The ultimate reflection of pure reality of the light of the sun on the blue ocean of static balance in the end of all things, might be similar to the patience and wait for the emptyness and nothingness, when heaven and earth are in symmetrical unity. Who knows?

Sources

[i] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZNEBndW5E5M
[ii] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1KUw9iHGPYk
[iii] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tCCCqhpMNyA
[iv] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Analogy_of_the_divided_line
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