

Article

A Spiritual Science Interpretation of the Cave of Socrates

Raul Valverde *

Concordia University, Canada
Institute of Consciousness and Transpersonal Psychology, Canada

Abstract

Socrates is perhaps one of the greatest thinkers of all time. He taught that to understand the realities of the spirit world, we would need to look at our internal world rather than the external world, God is within and is only by looking at our interior world that we could understand our spiritual realities. Socrates taught that the starting point to understand the spiritual realities was to realize that what you see, it is not really all that exists but just a shadow cast of the spiritual realities. To explain this important concept of spiritual insight, he used a story that was very popular and made a perfect explanation of his ideas. This is called the allegory of the cave. The paper presents the allegory of the cave of Socrates to better understand human consciousness from the spiritual science perspective. The paper would be of interest to those that want to understand the metaphysical and spiritual science aspects of existence.

Keywords: Greek philosophy, Christian science, scientific God, spiritual science.

1. Introduction

Spiritual science tries to merge science and religion. As humanity becomes more evolved and is in the search of a paradigm that helps to reconcile science and religion, spiritual science has the potential to start to spread around the globe and become the new paradigm for the man of the future that does not longer need organized religions but only support and guidance to discover the God within. The discovery of God is a personal matter that requires more than a lifetime; however, it is the final goal of man to become unified with God. Spiritual science uses concepts from different fields including metaphysics, quantum physics, and parapsychology (Steiner 1999) into a unified system that describes the multi-dimensional nature of man and the universe (Valverde 2018). The humankind is always evolving and what was called before religion becomes science in modern times (Valverde 2019 a).

* Correspondence: Raul Valverde, Concordia University, Canada. E-mail: raul.valverde@concordia.ca

2. The cave of Socrates

Socrates is perhaps one of the greatest thinkers of all time. Although he did not write any book, we know about him from his students and followers that wrote about him (Kahn 1981). Just like Jesus, he preferred the oral teaching rather than writing and like Jesus, he was sentenced to death because of his revolutionary view of God.

At the time of Socrates, Greece was polytheist (Janko 2006). The Greek religion was based on the idea that an Oracle, that was a person that communicated to the Gods, was the one that had the authority to enlighten us about the spiritual world and the desires of the Gods (Kindt, J. 2015). Socrates taught that all humans could learn the realities of God through reason, logic and intuition. This is the use of our left and right side of the brain. Through intuition and a logical mind, he was able to realize the ideas that were followed later by many religions such as the idea of only one God and pre-existence of the human soul or reincarnation. He taught that to understand the realities of the spirit world, we would need to look at our internal world rather than the external world, God is within and is only by looking at our interior world that we could understand our spiritual realities. Socrates taught that the starting point to understand the spiritual realities was to realize that what you see, it is not really all that exists but just a shadow cast of the spiritual realities (Dilman 1992). To explain this important concept of spiritual insight, like Jesus, he used a story that was very popular and made a perfect explanation of his ideas. This is called the allegory of the cave.

Imagine several people that were brought at a very young age to a cave, these people did not know the external world but only the cave and they were shackled and chained so they could not move and were only able to see what it is in front of their faces. In the back, imagine you have people that with candles, they create shadow reflections of objects into the wall that is in front of these people. For this people, what is in front of their face, this is reality. Imagine, that one day, one person takes these people out of the cave for few days, so they can see the real world and send them back to the cave later. Some of these people would start wondering about the realities in front of their face as they have learned about the real exterior world while others would resist to the idea that the world in front of their face is not real and would think that the trip outside of the cave was just a dream. Now imagine that these people are taken in and out of the cave several times until these people eventually learn to unshackle and unchain themselves, so they do not need to go back to cave (Elliott 1967).

3. Spiritual Science interpretation of the Cave of Socrates

The cave represents our physical reality, we come here to learn how to unchain ourselves from all the illusions created by our minds. The chains represent everything that prevents you from seeing the reality and includes economic, political, and religious systems. We created borders, countries and nationalities, and different belief systems and for many people these are real. They strongly believe that nationalities or ethnicities make us different, and they believe that they know their spiritual realities because they follow a belief system. Socrates taught that the only way to learn about spiritual realities, was by learning how to unchain yourself from everything that the humankind has created as illusions and look at the inside of you for the answers. This is consistent with the Gnostic Gospel of Thomas that teaches you to look for the God within as a source of knowledge and guidance (Valverde 2020). Socrates was able to unchain himself from the cave and understand the spiritual realities, he was able to realize that the physical world was nothing more than a cave made for us to learn how to unchain ourselves from the greatest prison of all, our own mind.

It is the mind that is responsible for all the miseries of the world and not the demons, spirits or Gods as the Oracles of Greece used to preach, it is only by taking responsibility of our own actions and learning that our mind is responsible for everything around us that we can escape the cave.

Reincarnation is represented by people leaving and coming back to the cave. This is a necessary process to wake up the mind. This is consistent also with the Gnostic movement that taught that the reincarnation of the soul is necessary for evolution (Valverde 2020).

The secret to unchain yourself is to look at the inside world and not the external world, the human being can understand spiritual realities, but he must master his own mind. It is by freeing your mind from all the fears that are just illusions of the mind, that you will be able to understand your own existence and your purpose in this world.

Your world reflects your own spiritual realities, you manifest what it is in your spirit in the physical world. If you are in harmony and happiness, you will manifest prosperity and stability. If you live in fear, you will manifest problems and hardship in the real world. This is consistent with the quantum consciousness paradigm that has been recently used by scholars to explain the nature of reality (Valverde 2019 b).

The spirit is the one that projects your physical realities, just like in the cave of Socrates. Socrates taught with his own death that we need to beat the greatest fear of all to unchain ourselves from our mind. Socrates was sentenced to death for his own beliefs and teachings. However, he could have escaped death as his followers offered a plan to escape and avoid the death penalty (Gill, 1973). Nevertheless, he decided to take the death penalty because he wanted to show to the world that death does not exist and it is only by conquering this fear, that you can beat all the other fears.

Near death studies have shown consistent evidence of the survival of human consciousness and that states of consciousness define your perception of the afterlife. This seems to suggest that your spiritual evolution and beliefs are what define your reality (Valverde & Swanson 2020). Near death

experiences reveal that people feel out of cave when they are close to death and feel that the real world is nothing more than energy, frequency, consciousness and a sense of unity with the creation. They experience a world that seems like a dream but real at the same time, this is represented in the cave allegory as people leaving and coming back to the cave.

4. Conclusions

The paper presented the allegory of the cave of Socrates to better understand human consciousness. Consciousness is in constant evolution and the cave represents our physical reality that has the purpose to make people more aware about the power of their mind. The mind is responsible for the perception of our physical reality. The mind is immortal but not aware of this reality because is still in the process of waking up the perception that real world is not the cave.

References

- Dilman, I. (1992). Appearance and Reality: 'Only the Ideal is Real'. In *Philosophy and the Philosophic Life* (pp. 28-50). Palgrave Macmillan, London.
- Elliott, R. K. (1967). Socrates and Plato's Cave. *Kant-Studien*, 58(2), 137.
- Gill, C. (1973). The death of Socrates. *The Classical Quarterly*, 23(1), 25-28.
- Janko, R. (2006). Socrates the freethinker. *A Companion to Socrates*, 6, 48.
- Kahn, C. H. (1981). Did Plato Write Socratic Dialogues?. *The Classical Quarterly*, 31(2), 305-320.
- Kindt, J. (2015). Personal religion: a productive category for the study of ancient Greek religion?. *The Journal of Hellenic Studies*, 35-50.
- Steiner, R. (1999). *The philosophy of freedom (the philosophy of spiritual activity): The basis for a modern world conception: Some results of introspective observation following the methods of natural science*. Rudolf Steiner Press.
- Valverde, R. (2018). What is God? A Spiritual Science approach. *Scientific GOD Journal*, 9(7).
- Valverde, R. (2019a). Evolution: A Spiritual Science Approach. *Scientific GOD Journal*, 10(1).
- Valverde, R. (2019b). Quantum Consciousness & Spirit. *Scientific GOD Journal*, 10(3).
- Valverde, R. (2020). A Spiritual Science interpretation of the Gospel of Thomas. *Scientific GOD Journal*, 11(4).
- Valverde, R., & Swanson, C. (2020). The Unintelligibility Approach to Near Death Research. *Journal of Consciousness Exploration & Research*, 11(3).