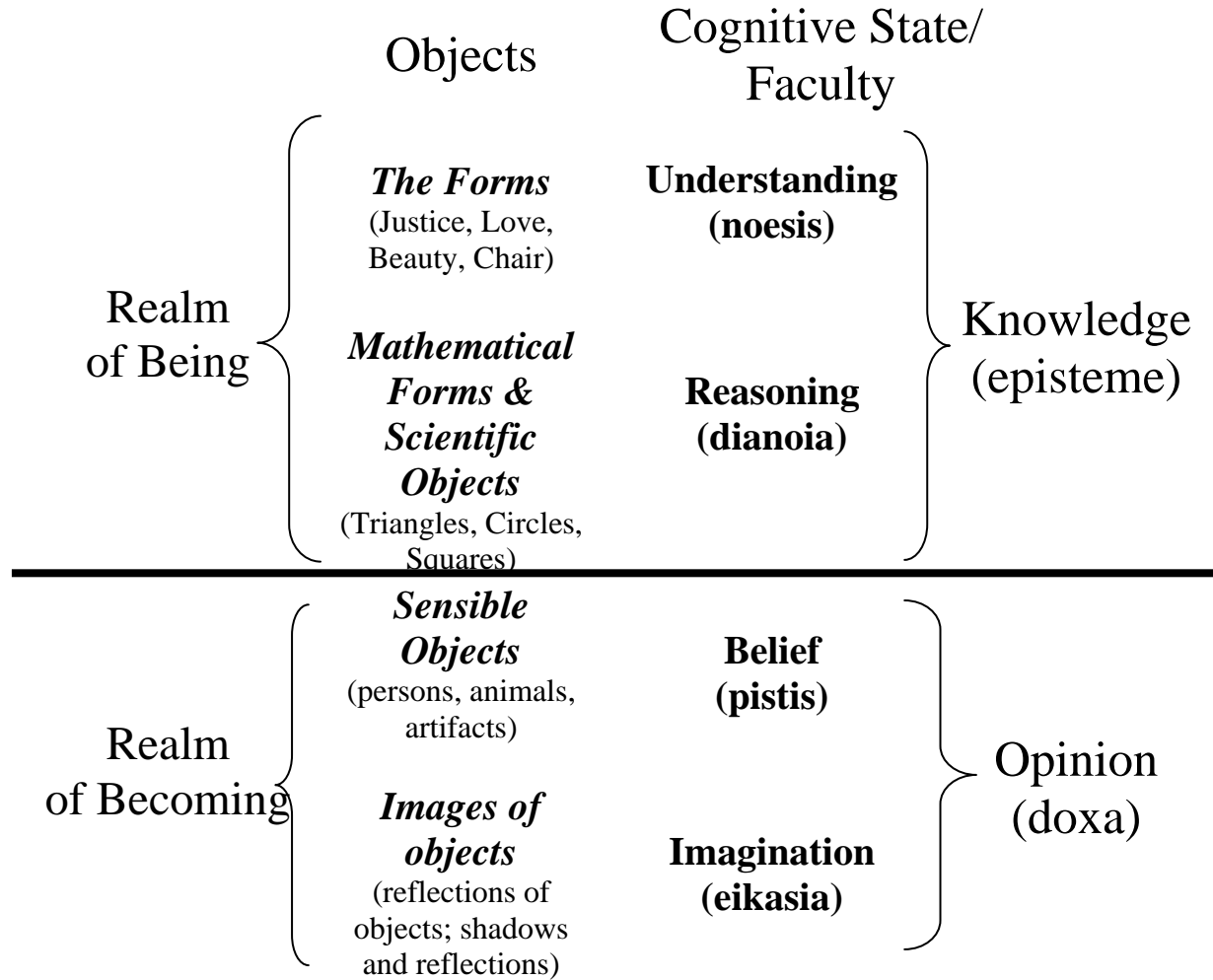


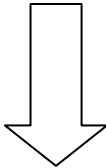
The Good

Metaphysical
Realm



Epistemological
Status

START ON THIS SIDE



In this metaphysical realm

to grasp objects

when we use this cognitive faculty

we attain this epistemic status

BEING

FORMS

UNDERSTANDING

KNOWLEDGE



4

3

2

1

Metaphysical
Nature of reality

Ontological
Kinds of things

Cognitive
The mind

Epistemological
Knowledge

In this metaphysical realm

to grasp objects

when we use this cognitive faculty

we attain this epistemic status

BECOMING

SENSIBLES

BELIEF

OPINION



There are four concerns you must keep distinct in your answers. This is particularly true for Plato. We achieve knowledge only under certain circumstances. "Knowledge" isn't in the metaphysical realm of Being nor is it the realm of Being. There are things in that realm. They're called Forms. Forms are not the realm of Being. They're in the realm of Being. Forms are not "knowledge". We have knowledge of the Forms. We attain this knowledge when we use the faculty of the understanding to cognize or apprehend those intelligible objects called Forms. The faculty of understanding is not "knowledge". It's something we use to attain knowledge.

- A question about what is most real is asking you to address a metaphysical concern for the philosophers.
- A question about what can be known is asking you to identify the objects about which we can attain a particular level of epistemic certainty.
- A question about how we achieve a particular epistemic status or state is asking you to discuss the mind and its faculties.
- A question about the possibility of knowledge is asking you to speak to whether there are grades or degrees of "knowing".

For Plato it is impossible to answer any one of these questions without somehow addressing his metaphysics, epistemology and psychology. The challenge is to explain what's going on without collapsing all the critical distinctions that need to be made.