



# PLATO'S REPUBLIC

Twilight 2024

Part 2 | Week 2

The analogy of light and the Divided Line



## Some key Greek terms introduced in the *Republic*

**Αρετη** *arete* | excellence, virtue, well-being

The four cardinal virtues (tradition?) are wisdom, courage, temperance & **justice**.

**Δικη/δικαιοσυνη** *dike/dikaiosune* | just/justice, right, righteousness “doing right” as in “doing the right thing.” For Plato it is about balance and harmony.

**Καλος** *kalos* | fine, fair, beautiful, noble | hence, *kallipolis* or “beautiful city”  
(mentioned in class but not in Bk1)

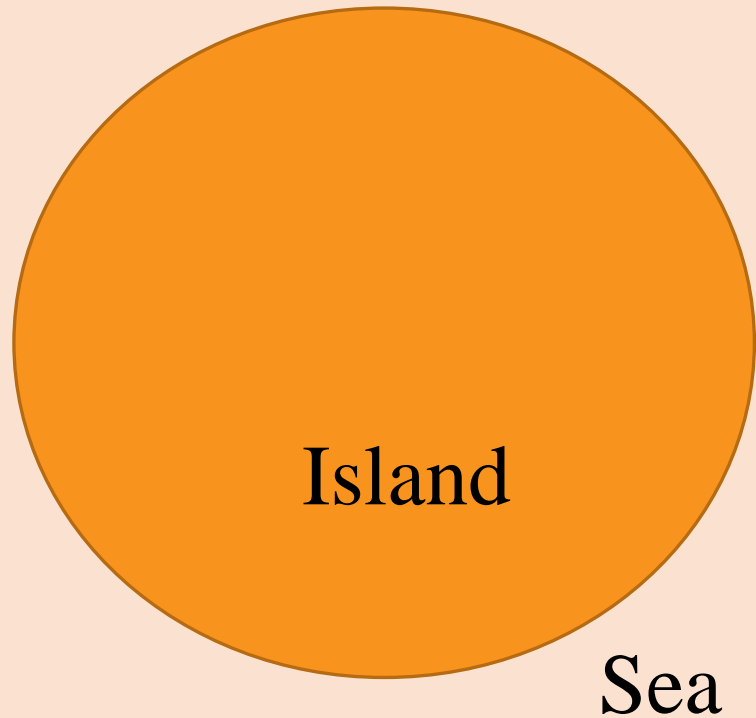
**Λογος** *logos* | of speech | reason, an account of something  
| of reality | relation, the sameness in difference, mathematical ratio,

**Τεχνη** *techne* | art, craft, skill | for example the art of the tailor or the physician.

**Ψυχη** *psyche* | animated life (breath), soul

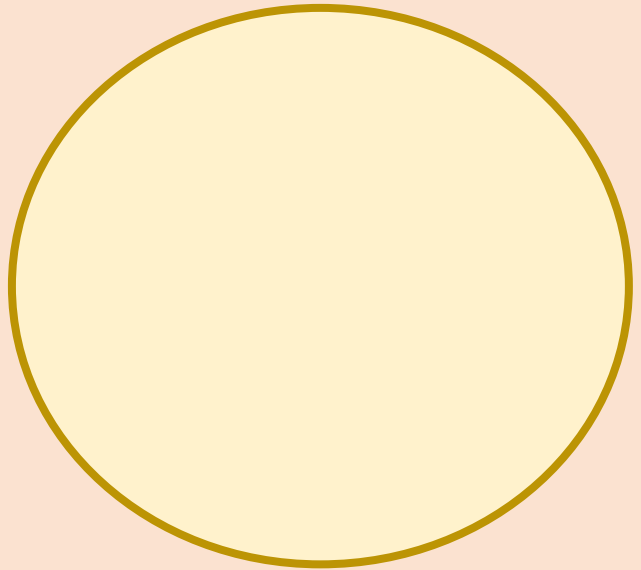
**Δοξα** *doxa* | belief, opinion

# One as an Opposites: The island is one



- Three-in-One: The *shore* distinguishes between *island* and the *sea*.
- A *same/other* differential value
- The other is 'in' the same as what it *is not*.

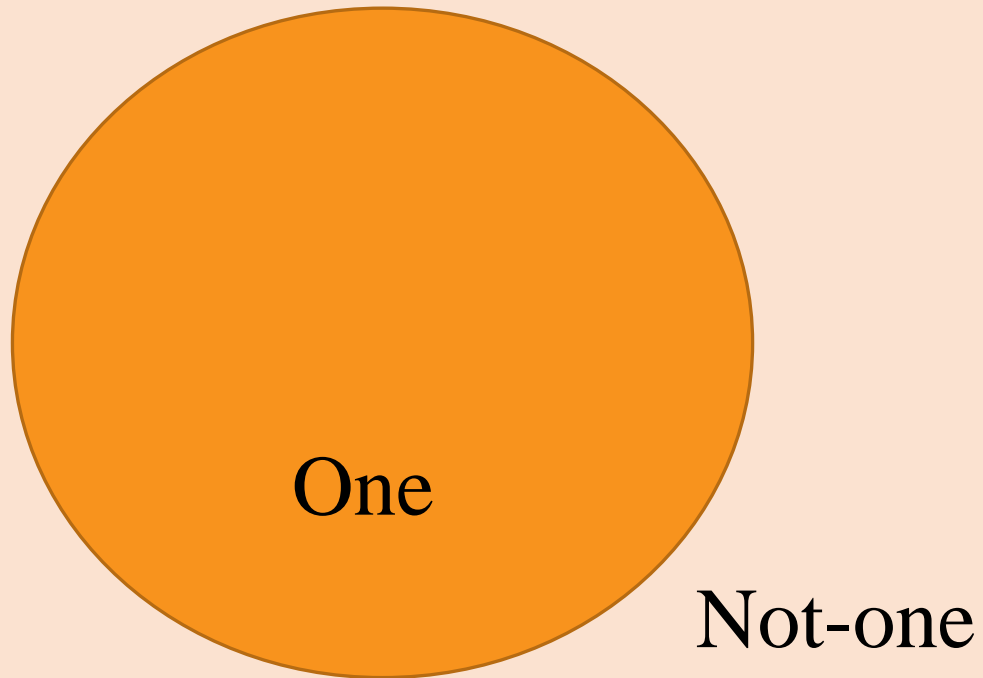
# One as an Opposites



*Using geometry to express one as an opposite:  
the distinction of inside from outside*

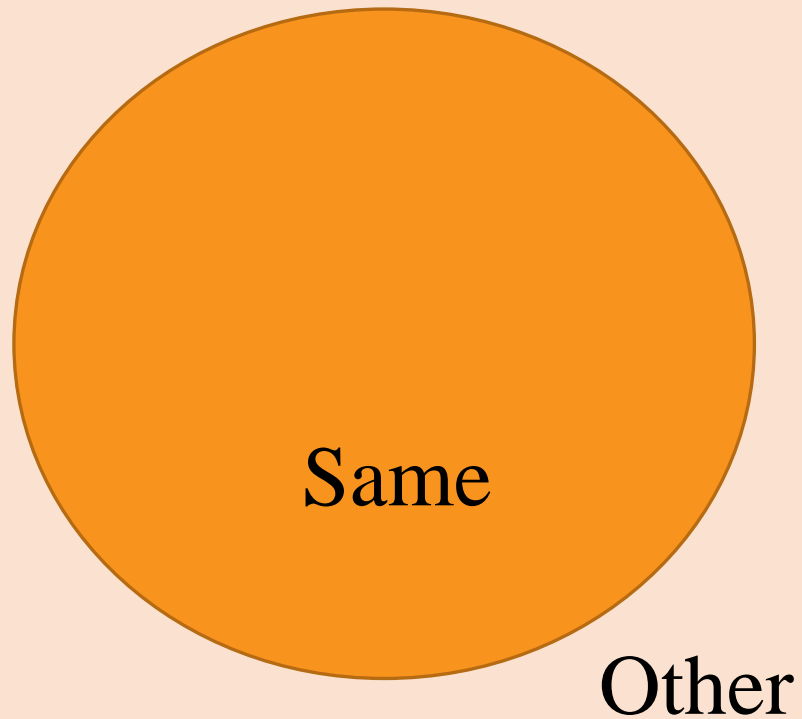


# One as a complementary opposites



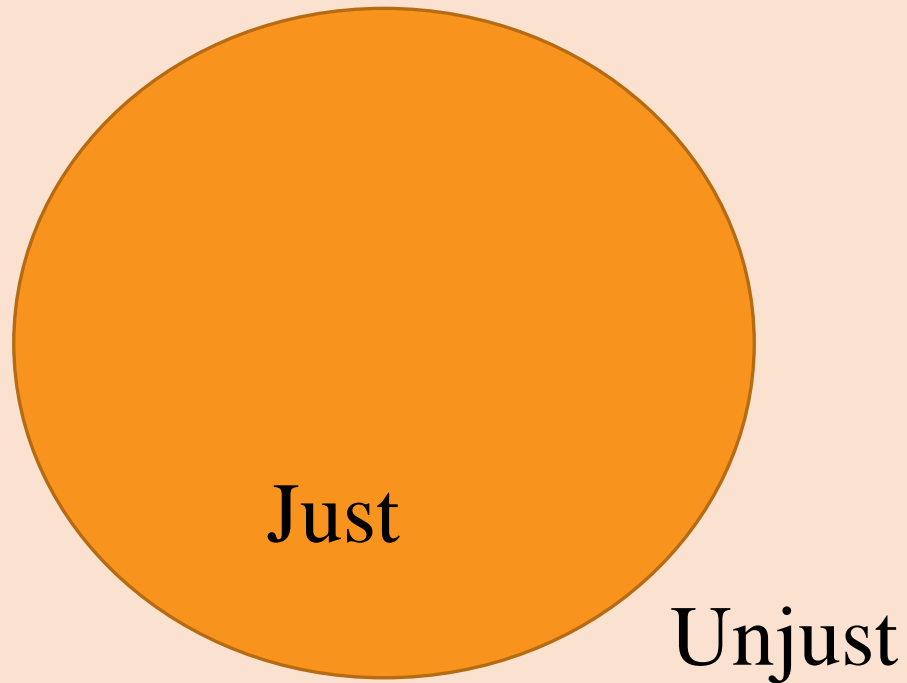
*Using geometry to make a distinction of one thing from its negation: One/not-one*

# One as an Opposites: The other-in-the-same



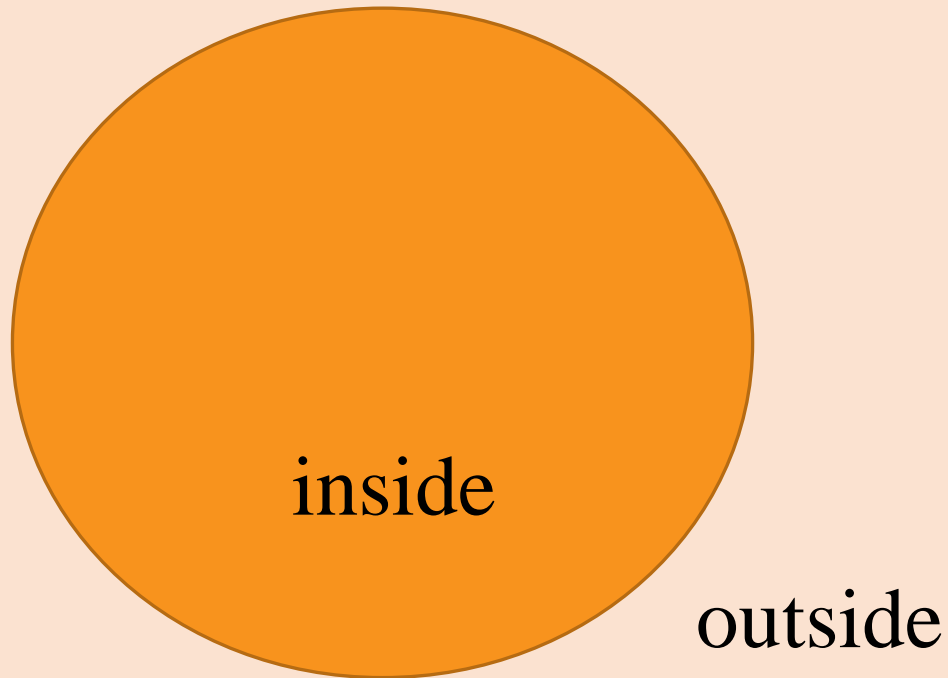
- Three-in-One: The *distinction* between *inside* and *outside*.
- A *same/other* differential value (an asymmetry of value)
- The other is 'in' the same as what it *is not*.

# A form as an Opposites: Justice is one



- Three-in-One: The *distinction* between *inside* and *outside*.
- A *same/other* differential value (asymmetrical)
- The unity of the form is in the distinction

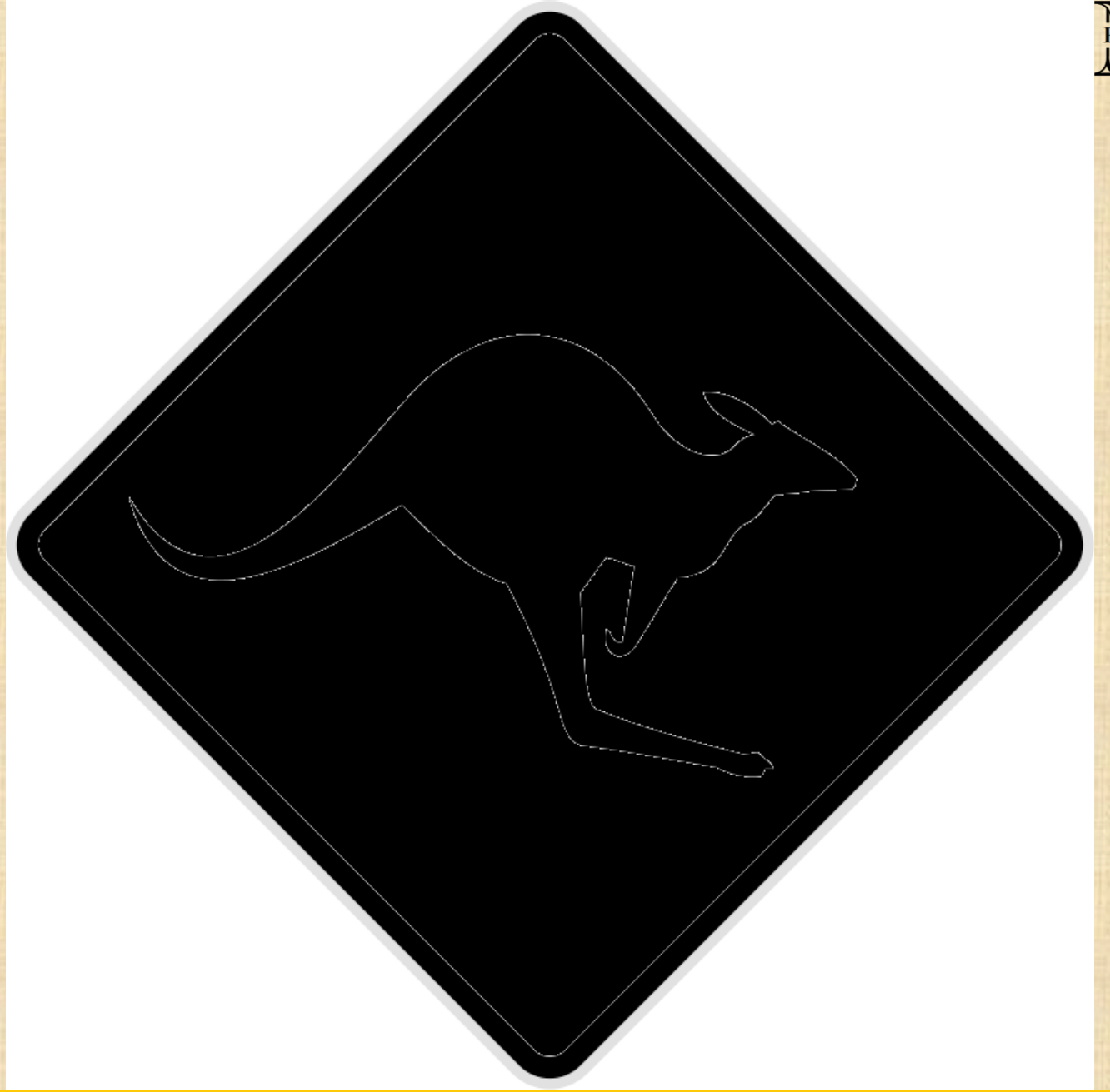
# One as a complementary opposites



*Using geometry to make a distinction  
of inside from outside.  
The distinction is like a cut.*



# Foreground / Background



# Foreground / Background



# Foreground / Background



# Opinion & Knowledge & Truth

In Plato's works, the difference between knowledge & opinion is given in various ways. Perhaps Plato is not always consistent. However, we can find some consistency to a general definition.

**Opinion is a *representation* of the underlying reality.**

The representation could be: a linguistic account (a *logos*); a representational image (iconic symbol) or an example (partaking).

**Knowledge is where you *know directly* the absolute object.**

The absolute object is the absolute reality or formal nature of whatever is under consideration.

**Truth is by *correspondence*.**

This is a very ordinary notion of truth, e.g., "HiFi" means the recording has "high fidelity" to the original. Likewise in a linguistic account: where your account of *what-you-are-talking-about* is a *true-to-it*. This could be *true to* sensual reality. But when you have this *absolute knowledge*, you can speak the truth about absolute reality *qua* the formal essence. That is the higher truth, or absolute truth, which is how Plato sometime uses "truth."



# Raphael's School of Athens





# The Sun and Sunlight Analogy

*Just as*

The Sun is to things visible to the eye,

*So*

The Good is to invisible forms seen by the mind's eye.

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**a is to b as c is to d**  
**1 : 2 as 3 : 6**

# The Sun and Sunlight Analogy

*Just as*

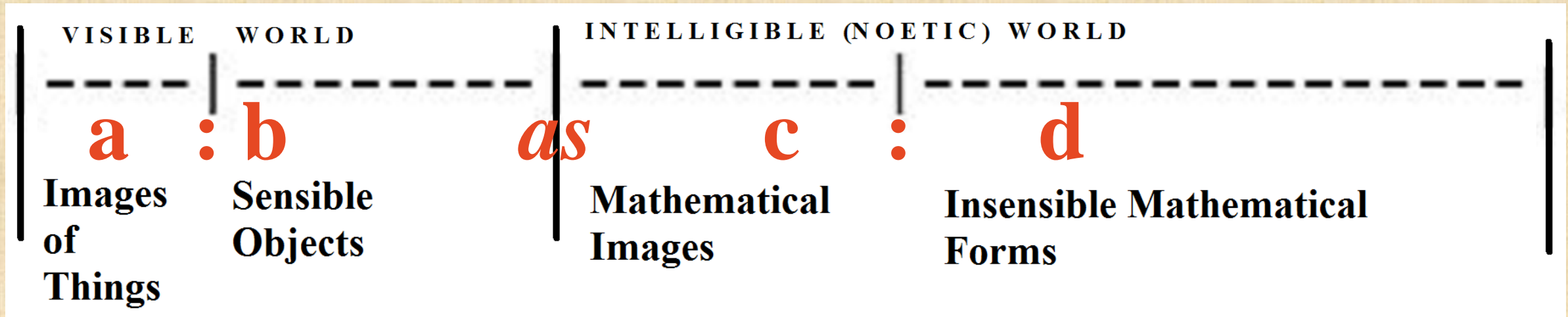
Shadows of visible things *are to* visible things,

*So*

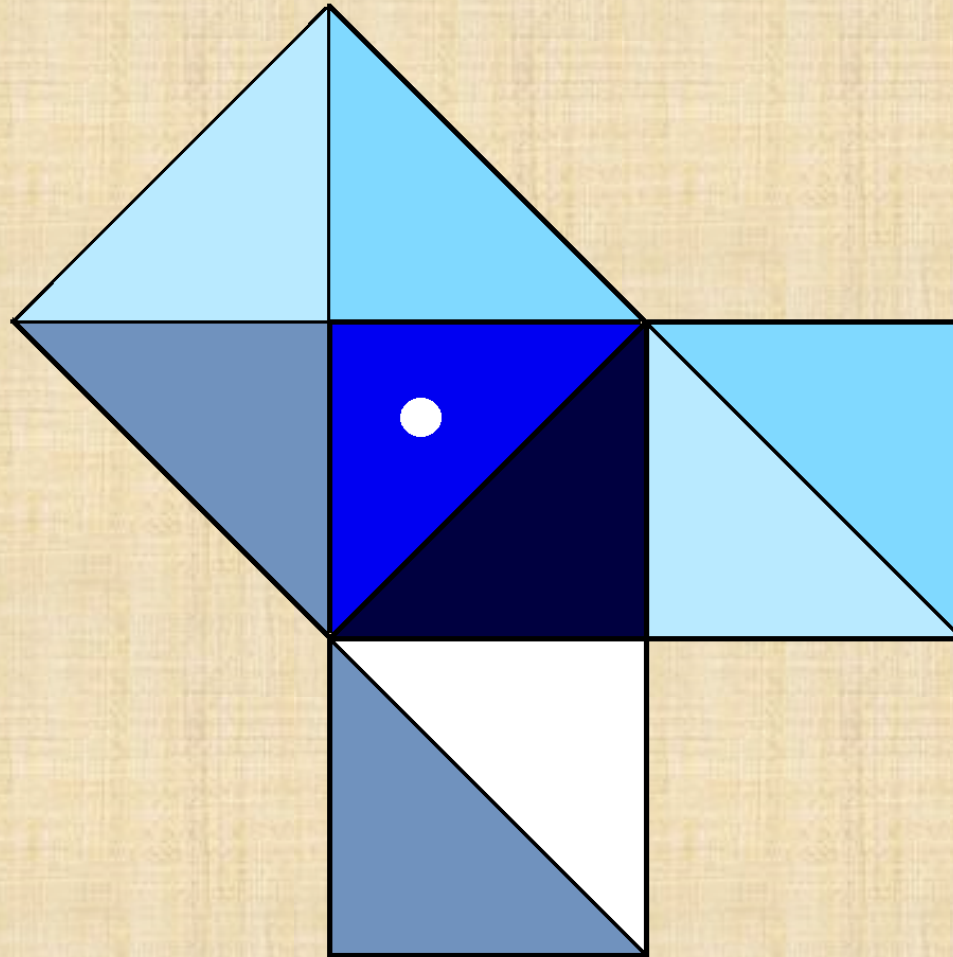
Geometric diagrams *are to* forms.

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# The Divided Line as a continuous ratio



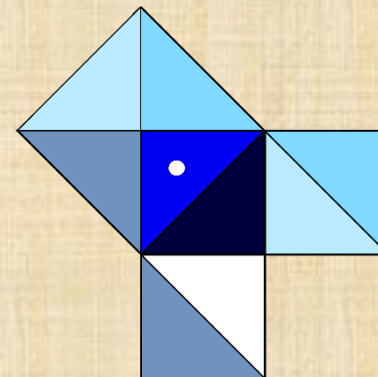
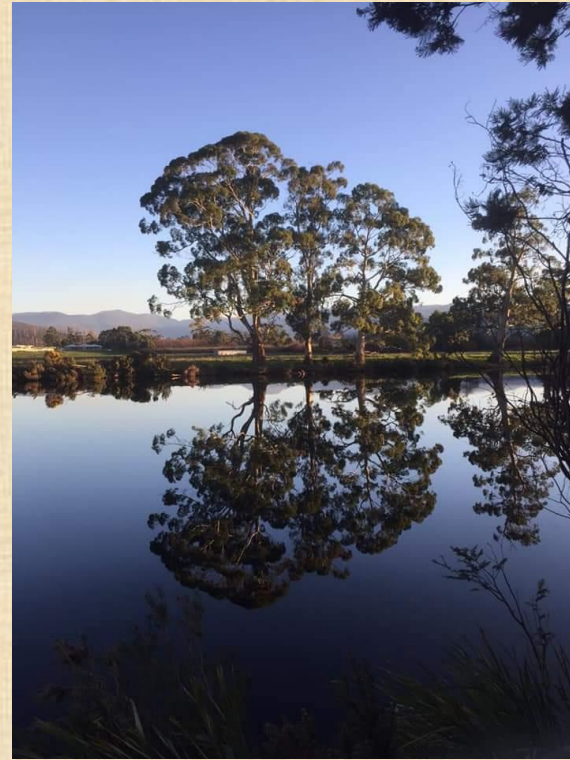
Geometric Diagrams are sensible things used to express the insensible their form



# The Sun and Sunlight Analogy

*Just as reflections of visible things are to visible things,*

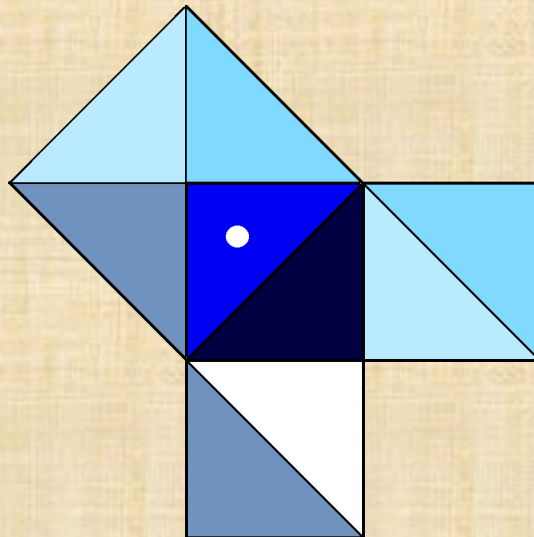
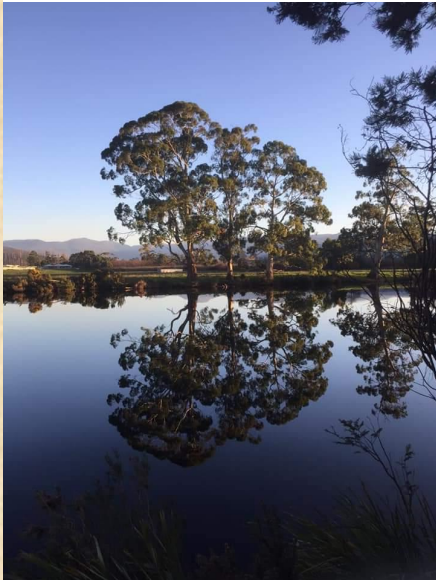
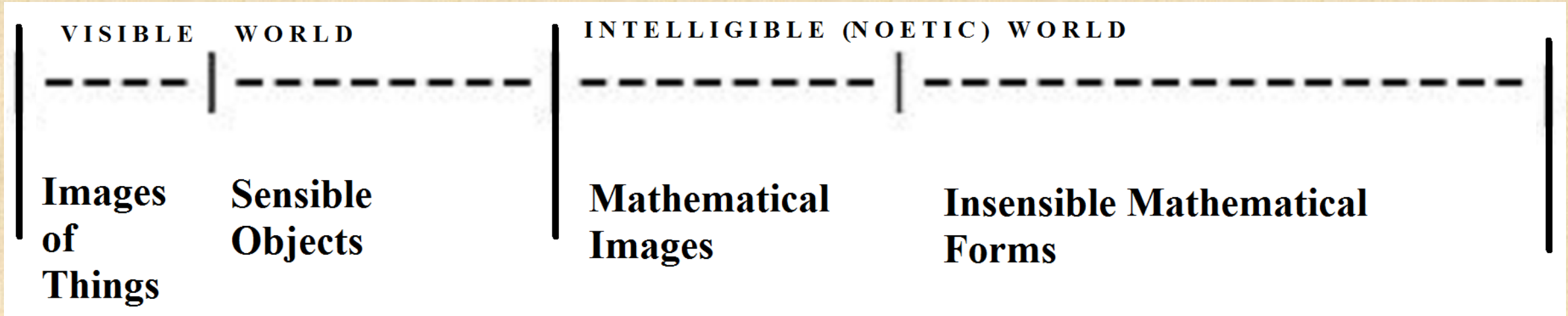
*So geometric diagrams are to forms.*



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# The Divided Line

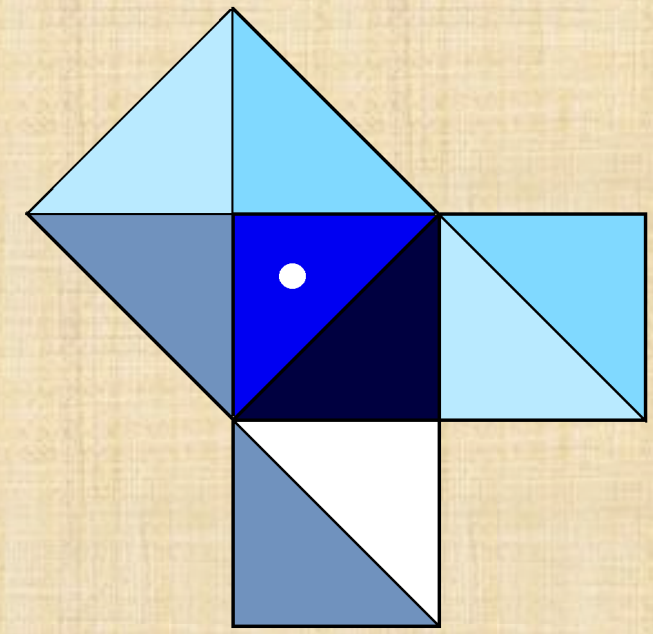


# Geometric Diagrams are *visible things* used to express their *invisible form*.

Geometric examples of 'two'

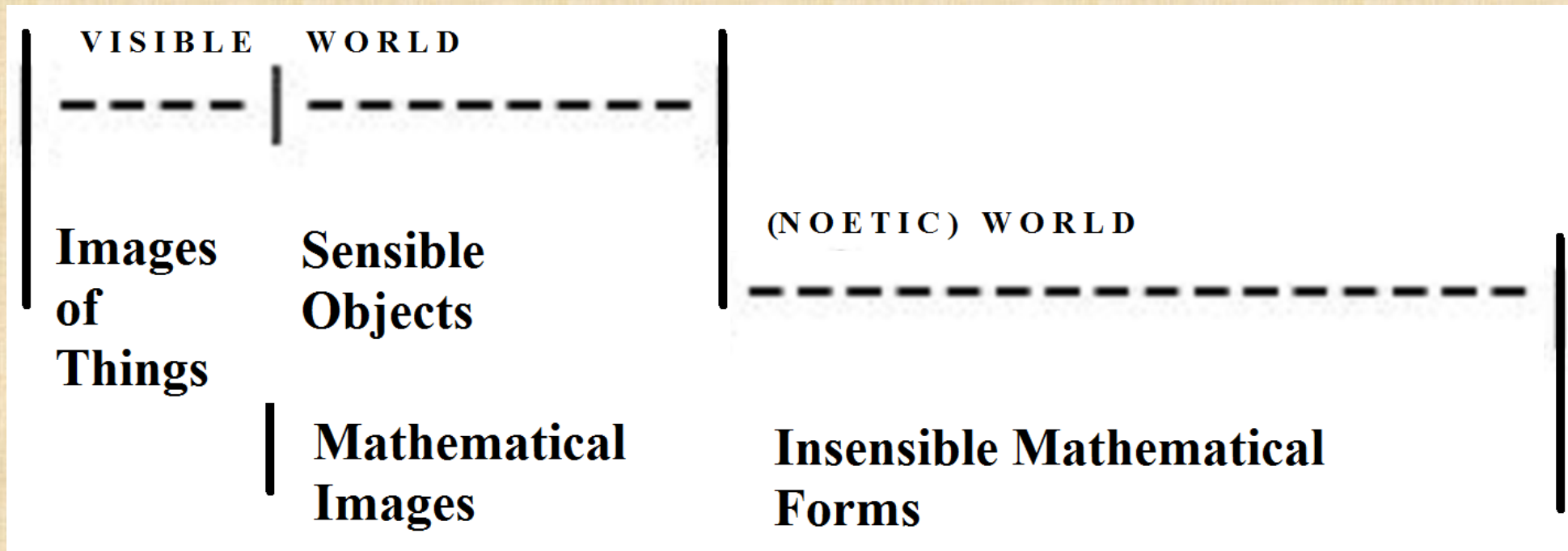


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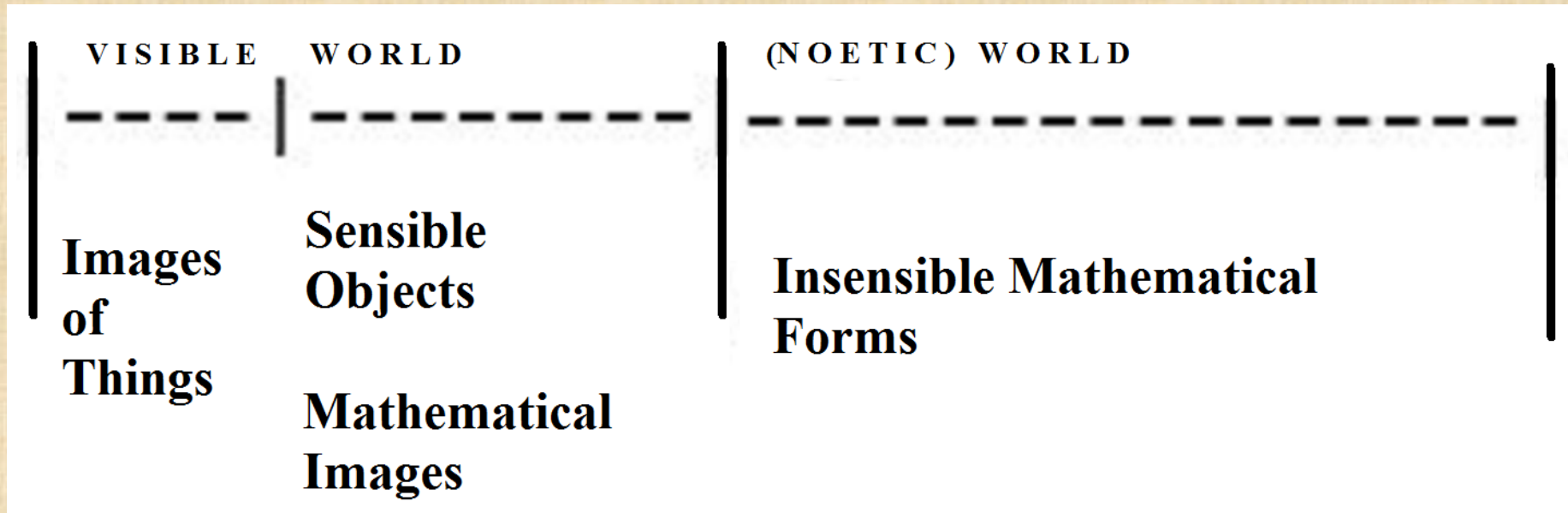


This is like the diagram drawn by the slave boy in Plato's *Meno* to demonstrate learning-as-recollection.

# The Divided Line as a continuous ratio



# Divided Line reduced to a 3-term proportion



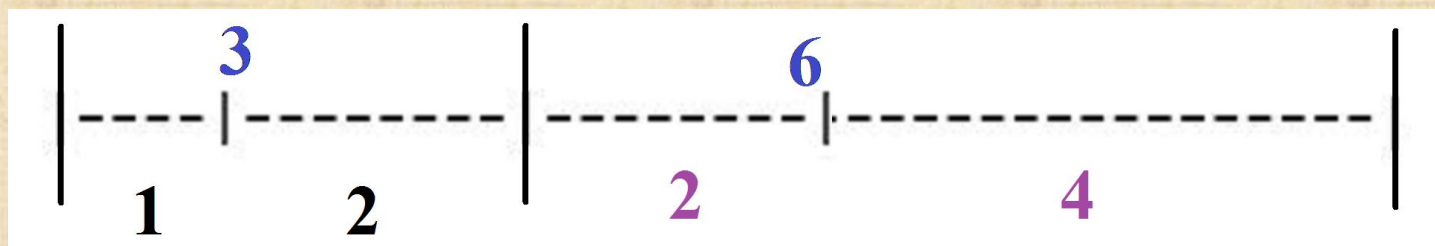
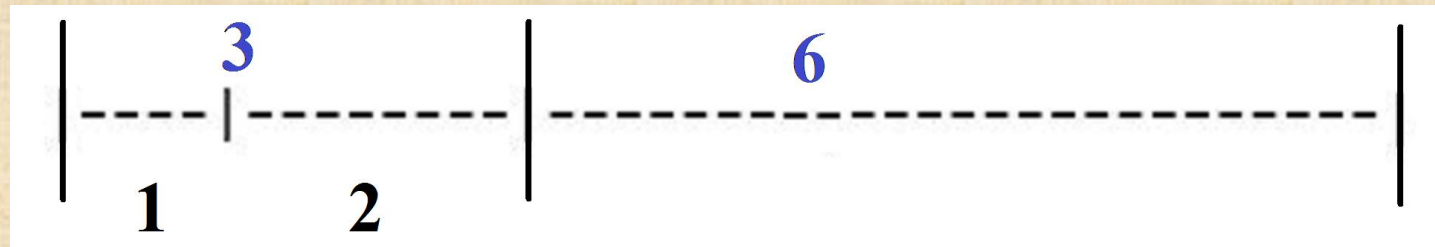
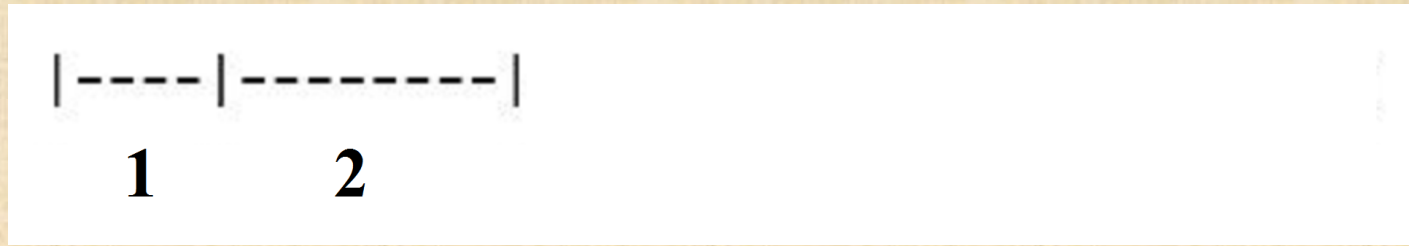
*Just as images are to visible things so visible things are to forms.*

Like a “geometric ratio” e.g., the double:

*Just as 1 is to 2 so 2 is to 4...*

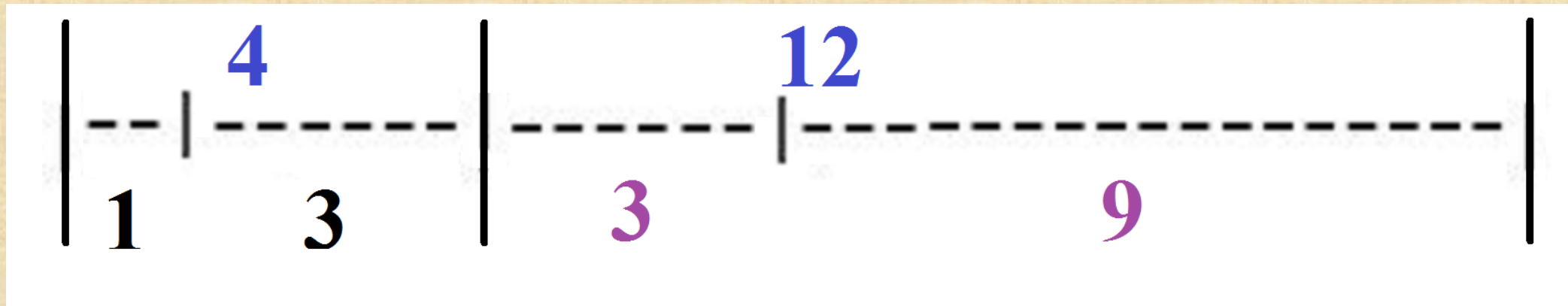
*Just as 3 is to 6 so 6 is to 12*

# The Divided Line in the double ratio



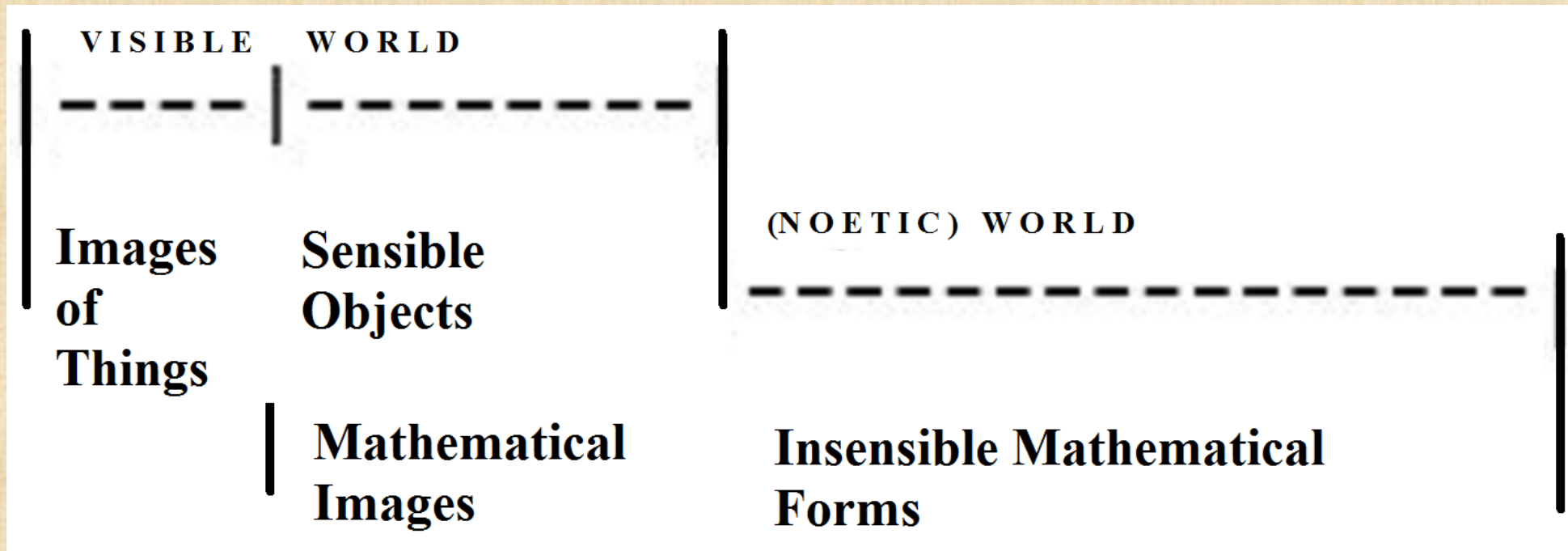


# The Divided Line in the triple ratio

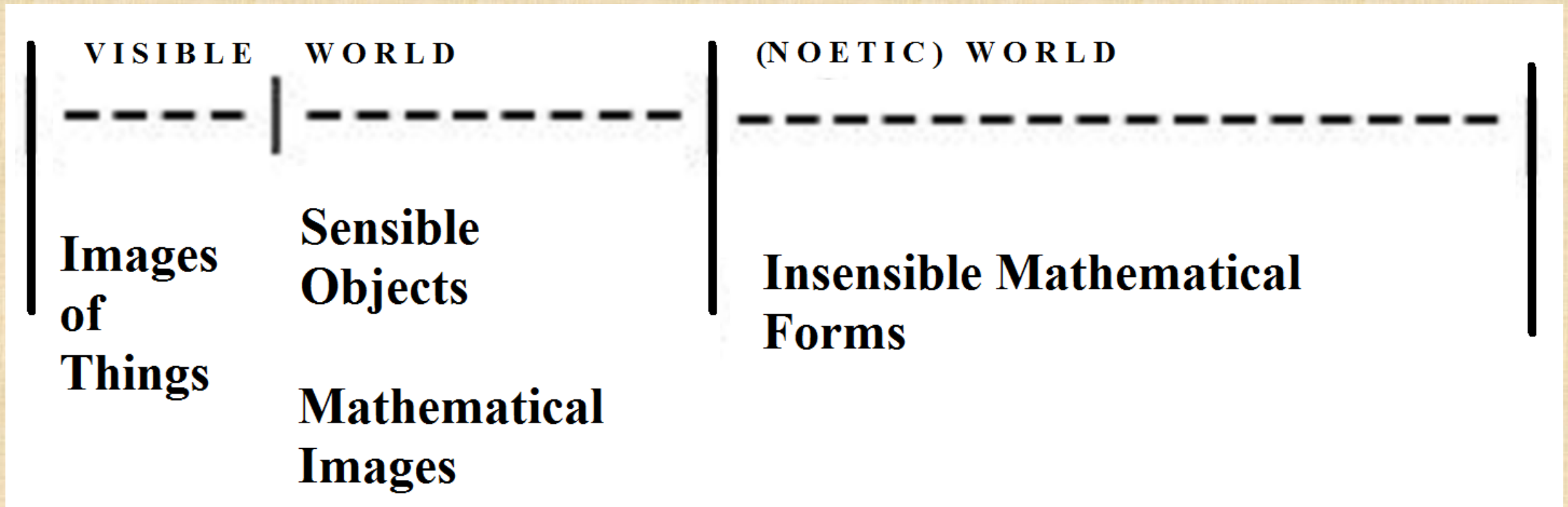


*No matter where the first cut is made, the middle terms (here 3 & 3) must always be the same.*

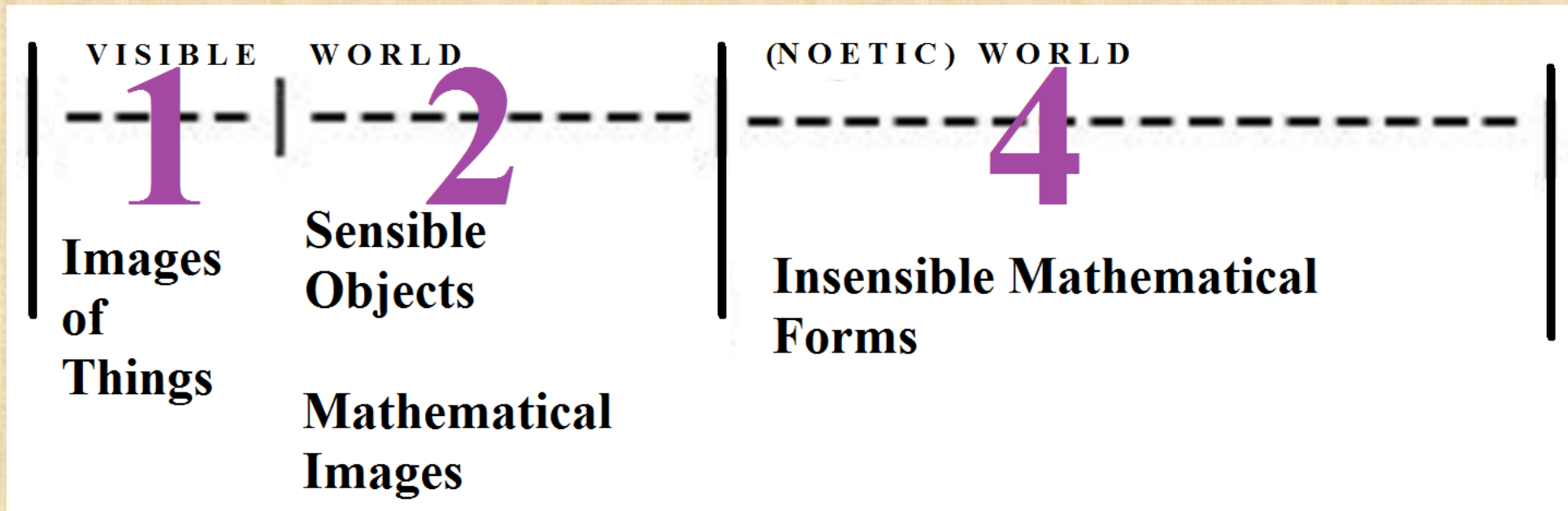
# The Divided Line as a continuous ratio



# Divided Line reduced to a 3-term proportion



# The Divided Line as 3-term proportion (e.g., double)





Ratio = *logos*


Proportion = *ana-logia*


# Counting Syllables

## Homeric Hexameter


  
 Over the sea, past Crete, on the Syrian shore to the southward,

  
 Dwells in the well-tilled lowland a dark-haired Aethiopian people,


  
 Skilful with needle and loom, and the arts of the dyer and carver,

  
 Skilful, but feeble of heart; for they know not the lords of Olympus,

  
 Lovers of men; neither broad-browed Zeus, nor Pallas Athene,

  
 Teacher of wisdom to heroes, bestower of might in the battle;

  
 Share not the cunning of Hermes, nor list to the songs of Apollo,

  
 Fearing the stars of the sky, and the roll of the blue salt water.



# Hierarchy of Knowledge

