

HUL 754: The Philosophy of Plato  
Ist Semester, 2018-19  
Assignment #1

Arudra Burra

August 16, 2018

### **Instructions**

1. This is an open-book, open-notes take-home assignment. Please submit your assignment on moodle by noon on Tuesday, September 4.
2. Try to state your answers as clearly as possible, and make sure to edit, proofread, and revise your answer before you submit it. Cite to Stephanus numbers when you refer to a Platonic text.
3. Please stick to the assigned texts (including secondary readings) as far as possible: if you do choose to read an outside source, please acknowledge it.
4. *Your written work must be your own.* Feel free to discuss the questions with others, but make sure to acknowledge them.

### **20 marks, 1500-2000 words**

One commentator on the *Crito* has said that its arguments are “interestingly bad rather than uninterestingly good.”

Discuss.

HUL 754: The Philosophy of Plato  
Ist Semester, 2018-19  
Assignment #2

Arudra Burra

October 25, 2018

### Instructions

1. This is an open-book, open-notes take-home assignment. Please submit your assignment on moodle by noon on Tuesday, November 13.
2. Try to state your answers as clearly as possible, and make sure to edit, proofread, and revise your answer before you submit it. Cite to Stephanus numbers when you refer to a Platonic text.
3. *Your written work must be your own.* Feel free to discuss the questions with others, but make sure to acknowledge them.

### 25 marks, 1500-2000 words

One commentator on the *Republic* has said:

The richness of the book can be seen from the very different interpretations that it has produced. Plato has been seen as a revolutionary, a conservative; a fascist, a communist; a fiercely practical reformer and an ineffective dreamer. Some of these interpretations are more fanciful than others, but they all have *some* footing in the text.

Examine the *Republic* in light of *one* of the contrasts listed above (revolutionary/conservative, fascist/communist, practical/dreamer). Where in the text do you find a “footing” for both sides of the contrast? Even when both sides of the contrast are presented, is one of them a more plausible interpretation of Plato than the other? Why or why not?

For the purposes of this assignment, it is enough to look at Books II-V of the *Republic*. You may also find the secondary literature in your course packets to be of use. However, you are not required to consult the secondary literature.

HUL 754: The Philosophy of Plato  
Ist Semester, 2018-19  
Assignment #3

Arudra Burra

November 14, 2018

## Instructions

1. This is an open-book, open-notes take-home assignment. Please submit your assignment on moodle by Midnight on Tuesday, November 27.
2. Try to state your answers as clearly as possible, and make sure to edit, proofread, and revise your answer before you submit it. Cite to Stephanus numbers when you refer to a Platonic text.
3. *Your written work must be your own.* Feel free to discuss the questions with others, but make sure to acknowledge them.

## 1 25 marks, 1500-2000 words

One commentator on the *Republic* has said:

The richness of the book can be seen from the very different interpretations that it has produced. Plato has been seen as a revolutionary, a conservative; a fascist, a communist; a fiercely practical reformer and an ineffective dreamer. Some of these interpretations are more fanciful than others, but they all have *some* footing in the text.

In your last assignment you were asked to examine the *Republic* in light of *one* of the contrasts listed above (revolutionary/conservative, fascist/communist, practical/dreamer). Now pick one of the other two contrasts and answer the same questions: Where in the text do you find a “footing” for both sides of the contrast? Even when both sides of the contrast are presented, is one of them a more plausible interpretation of Plato than the other? Why or why not?

For the purposes of this assignment, it is enough to look at Books II-VII of the *Republic*. You may also find the secondary literature in your course packets to be of use. However, you are not required to consult the secondary literature.

## **2 10 marks, 800-1000 words**

The allegory of the Cave in Book VII of the *Republic* raises the following problem: why should the Guardians leave their studies and return to the Cave in order to rule over those left behind? As one commentator puts it, “Someone engrossed in the study of impersonal Forms, someone who has rejected as trash the claims of the world we experience, can hardly be keen to conduct interviews and sit on boring committees.”

How does Plato resolve this problem? Is his resolution satisfactory?