

PHI 171 – PROBLEMS OF PHILOSOPHY – FALL 2017 – ASGN. #1 – DUE SEPT 6

Your assignment should be written clearly, concisely and precisely.

Hand in a paper copy in class and submit an electronic copy on the course website.

I. TELL ME BE ABOUT YOURSELF

Let me get to know you a bit. Tell me something you want to share. How did you grow up? What interests your mind? What are you passionate about? What do you fear? What do you dream of? What do you hope? Tell me something you think will help me get to know you a bit. Please also attach a picture so I can associate your name to a face.

II. THE MELIAN DIALOGUE

Watch the Melian dialogue using the link on the website. Then, answer the following:

- (a) What is the historical context of the Melian dialogue? Why did it take place in the first place? When did it take place? What was at stake? What was the outcome?
- (b) What is the position of the Athenian diplomats? What about the Melian diplomat?
- (c) What arguments do the Athenian diplomats use to support their position? What arguments does the Melian diplomat use to support his position?
- (d) Do they have the same idea of justice? If yes, what is it? If no, what is the difference?

III. THINK FOR YOURSELF

- (e) The Melian diplomat did not accept the conditions imposed by the Athenians. Do you think this was the right decision? What would you have done? Motivate your answer.
- (f) The Athenian diplomats say that appealing to what is right, dissociated from the reality of one's own military force, is empty talk. Do you agree? Motivate your answer.
- (g) Think of a historical event, past or contemporary, similar to the confrontation between the Athenians and the Melians. Briefly describe the parallelism between the two.
- (h) If you were to summarize what you learnt from the Melian dialogue, what would you say? If you think you learnt nothing, feel free to say so, but do tell me why.

Please itemize your answers. No essay format.