

Plato's republic and why it was important assignment



1-Plato discusses father-son relationship 2-good character is a gift from the gods 3-the idea that Knowledge is a matter of recollection, and not of learning, observation, or study 4-Several dialogues tackle questions about art 5-Idea being the real Plato's Republic Plato's Republic was a necessary catalyst for the advancement of human knowledge through the idea of using inductive reasoning. I feel it was important for scientific studies of the past to use inductive reasoning instead of deductive because it fuels the desire to learn or gain more knowledge through questions.

Questioning the authority, whether it be the government, the Church, or numerous other topics is essential for creating a new way of thinking or any other change in how an individual or society acts. The down side however to Plato's new epistemology is that it excludes the masses and portrays people who disagree with the " authority" as irrational, which in my opinion destroys the idea that all people are one and created equal.

Regarded as Plato's most important work, the Republic has long been studied as a seminal text of the Western literary and philosophical canon. In this group of philosophical dialogues, Plato uses a conversational prose format to explore the nature of society, seeking to define the characteristics of an ideal society, or republic. Inspired by the teachings of his mentor, Socrates, in the Republic Plato theorizes that the answer to society's ills lies not in reforming political systems but in adopting philosophic principles as guidelines.

To implement and oversee these principles in society, Plato proposes the creation of what he calls ruler philosophers??? individuals who will lead

society into an ethical existence based on predetermined principles that are expounded in the Republic. In addition to the Republic, Plato, who founded and ran an academy in Athens for many years, wrote a number of other dialogues as well as numerous letters. Because of the influence of the ideas expressed in various dialogues, including the Republic, Plato has come to occupy a key position in the history of western philosophy and is often called the father of philosophic idealism.

Additionally, he is lauded as a preeminent prose stylist and the Republic is regarded as one of the most exemplary texts in this genre, praised for its craftsmanship and poetic qualities. MAJOR THEMES OF REPUBLIC The main intention of the Republic is to define the principles that govern an ideal society. In doing so, Plato touches upon many important ideas about education, ethics, politics, and morality in this text. Scholars have pointed out that the main argument of the Republic is partly a response to the political unrest and instability Plato witnessed in contemporary Athenian society.

Following the end of the Peloponnesian War, Athens became a democracy of sorts, led mostly by laymen, who, in Plato's view, tended to implement policies based more on popular demand rather than necessity or principle. Thus, Plato developed a perspective that viewed all contemporary forms of government as corrupt, theorizing that the only hope for finding true justice both for society and the individual lies in philosophy, and that " mankind will have no respite from trouble until either real philosophers gain political power, or politicians become by some miracle true philosophers. " This is the central theme of the Republic.

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In the context of this premise, Plato touches upon several major issues, focusing the most significant discussions on the nature and definition of ethics, education, and the organization of society and politics, as well as religion and philosophy. In contrast to the Sophists, who advocated the primacy of rhetoric over moral training, Plato proposes the creation of an educational system that focuses on the molding of character, with the ultimate goal of the educator being not just imparting knowledge, but also the ability “ to turn the mind’s eye to the light so that it can see for itself. According to Plato, one of the main problems of his society was the inability to distinguish true reality from reflections or images of reality. Plato employs his famous allegory of the cave to illustrate how mankind learns and can be misled by the manner in which he learns. Plato’s preferred educational system strictly controls the upbringing of the ruling class in order to help them differentiate between appearance and reality and form correct views. He advocates the study of mathematics and abstract ideas rather than art, music, or literature because the latter deal with representation of ideas, not ideas themselves; he even goes so far as to advocate censorship of art, when necessary, in the service of proper education. Another powerful focus in the Republic is the discussion of justice. Responding primarily to the Sophists’ position, that morality is important only because of the social and personal consequences that follow, Plato contends that morality and justice are key components of an ideal society and that they must underlie all areas of human interaction.

Critical Reception The Republic has a unique place in the history of Western literature because of its importance as a literary, political, as well as <https://assignbuster.com/platos-republic-and-why-it-was-important-assignment/>

philosophical text. Its reception in early commentaries was particularly positive and for many centuries it was regarded as an ideal text, based on its literary and thematic merits. A. E. Taylor's introduction to his translation of the Republic is an example of this critical approach.

Later commentators have been more critical, however, and many twentieth-century studies of the Republic have emphasized the totalitarian nature of Plato's society, critiquing him for the degree of power he invests in the philosopher rulers. In her introduction to the Republic Julia Annas remarks on the power of the text and the persuasiveness of Plato's assessments, noting that in some ways, the systematic treatment of such important subjects as morality, politics, and knowledge is "designed to sweep the reader along," often leading first-time readers to either accept the premise of the text without question or to reject it entirely.

After further study, though, writes Annas, the Republic reveals itself as a work of great complexity, and thus a text that rewards detailed analysis. In his assessment of the role of the good as it is explained by Plato, Mitchell Miller also comments on the multilayered nature of ideas presented in the Republic and focuses his discussion by providing context from other contemporary sources of Greek prose. Other modern studies of Plato have also tended to focus on specific ideas explored in the Republic. For example, R. E. Allen (see Further

Reading) explores the speech of Glaucon to highlight the idea of justice and morality, while James O'Rourke ruminates about the respective positions accorded to myth and logic in Plato's ideal society. In his essay on slavery as

it is defined in the Republic, Brian Calvert reviews other critical commentaries on this issue, concluding that Plato's republic " could not contain slaves. " Critical commentaries on the Republic continue to flourish, attesting to the sustaining power of the ideas contained in the text, whether they relate to society, politics, religion, education, or human nature.