

Philosophy 190E

Short Writing Assignment 2

Due Tues., October 25th

Instructions

Note: this assignment is for students in Group III *only*.

Please respond to the following in two pages or less (double spaced). (Needless to say this should be your own original work.)

In the addition (*Zusatz*) to §107 (p. 170), Hegel apparently alludes to a dispute between Protagoras and Plato about whether the human being or God is “the measure of all things,” and takes Plato’s side (see, in our translation, n. 35, p. 327). But can Hegel argue at the same time that there is something right to what Protagoras says, and that even a finite human ego can be rightly described as a universal measure? Consider, in particular, this passage from the *Zusatz* to §96 (p. 153): “The most familiar form of being-for-itself is the ‘I.’ We know ourselves as beings who are there [*als daseiende*], first of all distinct from all other such beings, and as related to them. But secondly, we also know that this expanse of being-there is, so to speak, focused onto the simple form of being-for-self.” Explain how the ego (the “I”) might also be seen as a familiar form of *measure*, i.e. how the “focusing” of the whole varied expanse of the world into one consciousness could also be seen as a focusing onto the simple form of measure. Recall that measure is the unity of quality and quantity, just as being-for-itself is the unity of being and being-there (*Dasein*). Why would Hegel nevertheless prefer Plato to Protagoras? What has Protagoras missed about the relationship between finite and infinite consciousness?