Minkov, Great Ideas (Honors) I, Fall 2009, Tues & Thurs, 11:00-12:15, AUD 316

Office: 705 A

Books
Aristophanes, Plutos/Wealth
Plato, Hipparchus (Forde translation -- I’ll provide it)
Bible (any edition)
Farabi, Philosophy of Plato (I’ll provide it)
Machiavelli, The Prince (Mansfield translation)
Bacon, New Atlantis (Weinberger ed./Crofts)
Shakespeare, The Tempest (any edition)

Course Description

No matter how controversial or varied, notions of justice, of right and wrong, are of central importance in every society, even the most barbarous ones, and in everyone’s life, even that of the greatest cynic. Justice has a universal appeal, yet there’s radical disagreement over the content of justice. This state of affairs calls for an investigation through the study of literary and philosophical works. Some of the questions we’ll pursue are the following. Does justice or morality play a role in love and friendship? What is the relation between justice and reason: can we justify rationally our deep-seated notions of right and wrong? Or does justice need religion’s support? What is the relation between justice and necessity: if life is governed by implacable necessities, is there any room for justice? Is morality useful? Is morality “moral” if it is merely useful? Is there a solution to dilemmas of justice, arising from human differences, such as gender or deep inequality of opportunity? We need the best help we can get in addressing these fundamental questions, and there are no better guides than the greatest books bequeathed to us by the most perceptive and imaginative minds.

Schedule
September 1, Intro
September 3, Plutos, 1-318
September 8, Plutos, 319-598
September 10, Plutos, 599-1000
September 15, Plutos, 1000-end
September 17, Hipparchus
September 22, Hipparchus
September 24, Hipparchus
September 29, *Genesis* [first paper due]
October 1, *Genesis*
October 6, *Genesis*
October 8, *Gospel of Matthew*
October 13, *Gospel of Matthew*
October 15, *Farabi*
October 20, *Farabi*
October 22, *Farabi*
October 27, *Prince*
October 29, *Prince*
November 3, *Tempest* (second paper due)
November 5, *Tempest* (11/5/09: last day to withdraw w/o GPA impact)
November 10, *Tempest*
November 12, *Tempest*
November 17, *Tempest*
November 19, *Tempest*

December 1, *New Atlantis*
December 3, no class (professor away at conference)
December 8, *New Atlantis*
December 10, *New Atlantis* (final paper due)