

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.

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### **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**)

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