

PLATO

-Background of the Platonic perfect state:

- The notion of **virtue**, perfection, excellence, function - cardinal virtues: wisdom, courage, temperance, justice
- **Tripartite division** of the soul and the state - rational, spirited, appetitive
- The need for **specialization**
- A **harmony** of the elements
- An **intellectual aristocracy** in which rulers rule based on knowledge and goodness, not popularity

- Strategy: to first explain the primary notion of societal/political justice, and then to derive a concept of individual justice → perfect society
- political justice- harmony in a structured political body
- ideal society exists of 3 main classes of people: producers, auxiliaries, and guardians; a society is just when relations b/w these 3 classes are right.
- Each group performs appropriate function- ruler's rule, auxiliaries uphold ruler's convictions, producers limit themselves to exercising whatever skills nature granted them
- Justice is a principle of specialization
- individual justice mirrors political justice: the soul of every individual has a 3 part structure similar to the 3 classes of society (analogy of the city and soul)
 - rational part of the soul- seeks after truth and is responsible for our philosophical inclinations
 - spirited part of the soul- desires honor and is responsible for feelings of anger
 - appetitive part- lusts after all sorts of things but mostly money
- In a just individual, the rational part of the soul rules, the spirited part supports, and appetitive submits: the entire soul aims at fulfilling the desires of the rational part just as in society the community aims at fulfilling whatever the ruler wants
- Producers dominated by their appetites, warriors dominated by their spirits, rulers dominated by reason
- World is divided into 2 realms:
 - the visible- which we grasp with our senses- the universe we see around us
 - the intelligible- which we grasp with our mind- the Forms (Goodness, Beauty, Redness, Sweetness that exist in permanent relation to the visible realm and make it possible)
- Only the Forms are objects of knowledge, because they possess the unchanging truth that the mind- not the senses- must apprehend
- Philosophers must be trained to grasp the Forms, it's the only way they will know anything at all - they are the most just men
- In order to become able rulers philosophers must know the Form of the Good, the source of all other forms (form of the Sun)
- The aim of education is not to put knowledge into the soul, but to put the right desires into the soul- a lust for truth, so it desires to move past the visible world, into the intelligible
- Justice is worthwhile for it's own sake

- Tyrant is ruled entirely by his own non-rational appetites
- Lecture argument: Plato engages with the ethos of democratic Athens in a number of ways in this text. Many of the formal and stylistic features of the work draw on basic democratic sensibilities (the work as a dialogue, use of images and metaphors from democratic practice and direct examples from the experience of democratic citizens) but much of the substance of Plato's depiction of the just and unjust cities appears to call democratic practice into question. At the level of the state it might appear that democracy is a necessary condition for in-depth reflection on the nature of justice, but that very reflection may carry one theoretically beyond the confines of democracy. At the level of the individual there is greater possibility that the just soul can live in democratic community, but the potential costs of that for the just soul do not put democracy in such a good light.
- not "building city as a real model" but is an intervention into the politics in Athens by bringing power to the symbols of political Athens → Plato knows it is difficult to bring people to the side of philosophy through argument alone so uses symbols to make a larger impact long term → toys with Sparta as an alternative to democratic Athens
- Plato = moral absolutism (if you have theoretical knowledge, then you're just)
- Three ways of thinking
 - only about justice, individual soul → political message: general, convincing each person to seek justice within themselves
 - the republic is about justice at the level of the state, best means to support that
 - ironic way → the city is a bit of a joke, the political message is one of moderation in political life
- different way of thinking: appeal to a democratic republic, in-depth critique of outcomes
- using democracy to criticize outcomes of democracy
- argue for forms of public principles as a result of the intense Spartan form

Comparisons:

Aristotle → logical unification of knowledge vs. gathering knowledge of actual things, A attacks theory of forms (makes it impossible to explain how sensible things and intelligible forms are related; A says everything is changing, threw out possibility of philosopher king

Hobbes → advocates centralization of authority while plato believes groups of people could work. defines justice as nothing more than abiding by the law, where Plato views justice as instrumental for harmony;

Hobbes is more pessimistic about human nature; both committed to reason, justification of state independent of religion; men are souls vs. men are machines, promoting/knowing the Good vs. power

Machiavelli → ruler is more justified in actions vs. ruler can never be unjust; state exists to make war vs. is unjust;

Pizan → similar in considering the ruling body of society to be composed of a group of people instead of a single authority figure, authority needs to be asserted through military force

Locke → believed we are born with a blank slate (tabula rasa), acquire knowledge through experience vs. knowledge within the soul/Forms

ARISTOTLE

- Only being a citizen of the polis (Greek city-state) can pursue a life of good quality, which is the end goal of human existence
- “man is a political animal” → one can only achieve a good life through political association
- Justice is equality, but only for equals; and justice is inequality, but only for those who are unequal.
- slavery is necessary
- 6 different types of cities
 - good types: politeia, aristocracy, kingship
 - Bad types: democracy, oligarchy, tyranny
- A good constitution is formulated according to the principles of distributive justice: equal people treated equally and unequal people treated unequally
- constitutional government with a sovereign set of laws ideal
- government of cities generally divided between deliberative, judicial, and executive functions
- moderation, education, and respect for all will ensure stability
- the goal of the city is to help each citizen achieve happiness, and all other goods are just means to this end
- emphasis on forms of knowledge beyond the theoretical - scientist
- What do Plato and Aristotle share?
 - a sense of objective good for human beings
 - human beings have a definable nature and it is written into the constitution of human beings that there are modes of perfection unique to what human beings are
 - act of theoretical contemplation deemed highest
- How do they differ?
 - While the ideal of the philosopher and contemplative life is highly praised in Ethics, arguably this was not the only path to excellence as envisaged by A → civic engagement as another realm of possible excellence
 - Virtue for A not identical to the ability to give a complete and coherent theoretical account of it in contrast to Plato
 - Greater attention by A to the quality of intersubjectivity among citizens of a regime, their priorities, activities, and the nature of their struggles
 - Platonic politics waver between sustaining contemplation or minimal gains vs. Aristotle who holds arguably that more can be salvaged from politics and from our attention to details of policy
- Mixed republic → A did not have one precise model in mind, but rather a set of principles or maxims in the organisation and running of political systems to encourage moderation, class compromise, and more broadly an accommodation of difference that would serve as a basic condition for longer term stability
- still: larger middle class and balancing social and class interests as reflected in very institutions and laws of the city; rule of law; mix principles of justice- both numerical and differential equality
- Lecture Argument: Aristotle has something specific in mind when he suggests in Book 1 of The Politics that man is by nature a political animal. He means that man is best suited to live in the smaller political communities that were found in ancient Greece. There are various reasons why

he believes these types of communities are best for human flourishing and why other alternatives (including contemporary nation-states) are less optimal.

- Given that practical wisdom is essential for moral virtue, Aristotle recognizes that politics can not only be instrumental for virtue (i.e. shaping the environment through which good character develops), but partly constitutive (i.e. providing a forum for public debate where practical wisdom is exercised) if done in a spirit of reciprocity. For Aristotle, in contrast to Plato (and in contrast to Confucius), citizen engagement in politics can contribute to developing moral virtues, though the practice of full intellectual virtue remains separate from political life. The degree to which this is possible depends nonetheless on a number of factors including the moral characteristics of one's fellow citizens and the conception of the good embedded in political practice.

	Ruling for the common good (or justice)	Ruling in the ruler's interest
Rule of one	<i>Monarchy</i>	<i>Tyranny</i>
Rule of a few	<i>Aristocracy</i>	<i>Oligarchy</i>
Rule of the many	<i>Constitutional Government (or Polity or Mixed Regime)</i>	<i>Democracy</i>

Comparisons: view other study guides

PIZAN

Themes:

- misrepresentation vs. truth → true and accurate portrayal of women
- physical vs. spiritual
- universality of human experience → men and women are largely the same

Plot:

- Reason: testament to women's strength and prudence, builds foundation and walls
mirror: source of wisdom, clarity, self-knowledge
- Rectitude: integrity, honesty, and generosity earn women distinction, build houses, populate with noble ladies
ruler: justice, guide with proper path/decision
- Justice: testament to power and unity of women and their own high standards and unshakable virtue, cities final touches
vessel of gold: eternal reward and salvation for faithful

Lectures:

- thinking about justice firstly through the medium of feeling and through the building of imaginative and historical solidarities to allow us to think about new possibilities for practicing political theory
- Pizan seeks to counteract many strands of theory, law, literature and practice that denigrated women. Christine the character draws on these traditions to voice various objections to the work of the Three Ladies in building the city. The city is inhabited by a pantheon of (not always unproblematic) female heroes from both history and literature and seeks to revise the perception that women have had of themselves. This city functions differently from the ideal communities of Plato and Aristotle, serving not as moral ideal or political blueprint, but as an alternative community of identity for women (distinct from the family and the household) through which they can reevaluate their true capacities. We can consider this an important work in the canon of political theory because of its original rhetorical contribution defining a problem through a *feeling of injustice* and seeking redress by drawing on new imaginative, historical and experiential *solidarities*.
- Pizan's text is multi-layered in terms of its argument. While she demonstrates to us that women have performed well in positions of political power, she also suggests that ultimately this is not the goal to which we should ask all women to aspire. Indeed, her political project is much more radical, suggesting that we reassess what types of roles and activities are indeed most beneficial to the establishment and sustaining of collective life. Pizan acknowledges that women have lacked opportunities and access to education and indeed she argues that these venues be opened up to some degree, but for Pizan, this lack of opportunity is not the cause of the problem, but rather a *symptom*. The root of the problem, she suggests, is a deeper prejudice against women that will inform the judgement of whatever women do. The solution, then, comes firstly in the field of perception. A sense of self-respect through solidarity with good exemplars of virtuous women, along with a practice of the virtues, will give women the understanding of the gold in their souls that can only become stronger and purer in the face of numerous assaults against them. In broader cultural terms, a revaluing of the practical arts and an awareness of their foundational role for public life will help to reorient our political priorities away from the centrality of raw power, force and fraud (reversed later by the likes of Machiavelli and Hobbes) and will generate an appreciation for the important roles that women have already played in history.
- A proper and wider vision of justice must not only acknowledge that we cannot in principle exclude certain classes of people from positions of power and privilege as they can show the capabilities to succeed there. More deeply, justice requires that we rethink the frameworks that identify what positions and activities are most valuable to political communities. Greatest honours are due not to kings, legislators and founders, but to those who have developed the practical skills and crafts without which civilization would be impossible.
- Pizan starts from deep feeling of injustice, emphasis on experience- a call to new forms of thinking about human experience through solidarity that grounds a new sense of justice, hence a different type of political theorizing → feeling of injustice when equality is practiced as misogyny
- city acts as a metaphor for strength and the worthiness of women, bringing them out of the traditional community of identity

Connections:

Machiavelli → Pre-emptive reply, great political leaders and leadership may not be the key to civilization

Aristotle → “It seems to me that neither in the teaching of Aristotle, which has been of great profit to human intelligence and which is so highly esteemed and with good reason, nor in that of all the other philosophers who have ever lived, could an equal benefit for the world be found as that which has been accrued and still accrues through the works accomplished by virtue of the knowledge possessed by these ladies.” (I.38.5, p. 81) ; polity of one is best, uses Aristotle to defend her statements

Plato → similar in considering the ruling body of society to be composed of a group of people instead of a single authority figure, authority needs to be asserted through military force

Hobbes → both conceptualized society using the metaphor of the human body → society being “one polity, like a human body”

HOBBS

Plot Details:

- Equality: Hobbes’s notion of equality is peculiar in that it refers to the equal ability to kill or conquer one another, but quite consistent with his notion of power. This equality, Hobbes says, naturally leads to conflict among individuals for three reasons: competition, distrust, and glory.
- argues that civil peace and social unity are best achieved by the establishment of a commonwealth through social contract
- Hobbes, very mechanistic and materialistic; matter and motion reason for everything
- people have no soul, the object world has no purpose; desire and love same thing, aversion/hate
- good and evil are a function of a person’s appetite/aversion → subjective theory of value
- every aspect of human nature can be deduced from materialist principles
- natural condition of mankind → state of nature → violent, chaotic, war-like state
- so horrible that human beings naturally seek peace; self-preservation and fear of violent death rules

Lectures:

- shift from Machiavelli to Hobbes; Plato and Machiavelli both share politics of the good, i.e. the idea that we should all structure our approach to politics around some idea of human happiness understood as human fulfillment
- Hobbes is an opponent to the politics of virtue and honor
- Central themes:
 - Plurality of goods (connection b/w fact of human pluralism and the need for an absolute political authority)
 - Presumption of social equality (human equality not based on our reasoning capacities but on our embodied nature and its vulnerability)
 - The modern dislocated soul
- human psychology reduced to physical laws → we develop desires on the basis of sensations and their effects in the brain- fundamental motivating forces are appetites and aversions
- thus, all ethical claims are relative to the individual, and the soul is reducible to the effects of sensation, virtue is a protection of our passions and an egoistic rationalisation
- frailty of language → unreliable, speech cannot bind humanity
- everything in the world is just matter and motion → human life especially

- desire is incessant and impermanent, power is the only way to satisfy them (universal currency)
- No transcension of our senses, our experience of the world fundamentally depends on the medium with which we see it
- Our moral judgements are fundamentally relevant, and the nature of social life is social strife: an incessant struggle for power
- 2 natural powers allow a person to escape a state of nature: fear and reason
- we make political authority to satisfy needs, sovereign can do no wrong → there's no "right to rule"
- social contract: the simultaneous giving up by all individuals in the state of nature of their unlimited right of nature (self preservation)
- Viewed as a: judicial founding and justification for absolutist power; psychological submission- fear of one another in state of nature replaced by fear of the Sovereign as a condition for peace; moral submission- sovereign sets the public standards of right and wrong and defines contours of justice; religious submission- sovereign in charge of religious doctrine
- men are not adequately motivated on the basis of self-interest alone, nor laws of morality alone → they need the extra motivation of fear
- 2 ways to create a state: by institution (social contract) or by acquisition (conquest)
- rights of sovereignty and natural law are mutually reinforcing → rights are linked to the function of the sovereign to keep internal peace and order

Comparisons:

Plato → advocates centralization of authority while Plato believes groups of people could work. defines justice as nothing more than abiding by the law, where Plato views justice as instrumental for harmony; Hobbes is more pessimistic about human nature; both committed to reason, justification of state independent of religion; men are souls vs. men are machines, promoting/knowing the Good vs. power

Aristotle → opposite ends of the spectrum; Hobbes believed that all men have the same political worth, whereas Aristotle felt that men differ in the capacity to discern, and therefore should be afforded greater or lesser political rights in proportion. For Aristotle, man is naturally a social and, therefore, political animal –man is ordered toward the community. For Hobbes, man is *anything but* –man is naturally ordered toward the the individual, and that individual is *himself*.

Pizan → both conceptualized society using the metaphor of the human body → society being “one polity, like a human body”

Machiavelli → similar views on human nature/political power, Hobbes more scientific and mechanistic, Machiavelli more practical, rational

Locke → Hobbesian solution only serves to perpetuate the state of nature and continue a state of war, Similarity b/w Hobbes and Locke- the state of nature stands in the background as a regulative image; argument against absolutism (HOBBS) and unjust government, appeals to abstract moral notions and a more grounded view of the self-interest of people; HOBBS we use reason to discover the best ways to preserve ourselves (self-interested); we all have an ability to reason- Hobbes, agrees, we can use rationalization, but we are dominated by power; we use reason to discover the best ways to preserve ourselves vs. we use reason to discover natural law, to preserve ourselves and mankind.

MACHIAVELLI

- Not a defender of empire and amassing power for its own sake
- Autocratic regimes, not republican
- Equality: Machiavelli does not call for equality for all, though he does argue for a rough equality between *citizens* (meaning those who pay tax or own property). More intriguingly, he argues that inequality between the classes should be limited and not allowed to reach extreme proportions. The rich must not become so rich and powerful that they can afford to ignore the will of the people, and the poor must not become so poor and wretched that they have no hope of either improving their lot or influencing their environment for the better. Where such inequalities do exist, the rich become corrupt and the poor desperate, thus threatening the health and stability of the state.
- obtaining the goodwill of the populace is the best way to maintain power; the appearance of virtue may be more important than true virtue
- cruelty important, fear of punishment (basically essay points) aka better to be feared than loved
- Two important criteria by which Machiavelli judges the effectiveness of political rule and outcomes
 - the generation of citizen loyalties to the ruler and regime
 - the ability of the political actor to achieve glory, that is a reputation that goes down in history
- Discourses- Mach looks at development of Rome's constitution, laws, etc.
- best way to achieve glory is to reform a corrupt city, achieved by a community
 - republics are best means to lasting glory
- pessimistic, darkened view of human nature
- setting up a republic is the height of the challenge for the prince, the prince is a sculptor in the task of either radical innovation, or renovation, so the methods of imposing order are thereby excused.
- 5 features of republicanism:
 - autonomy → in it's origin and continued independence
 - mixed govt → by design as in Sparta or by chance as in Rome → mixed institutions, social classes, and values from number of regimes (Aristotle's polity)
 - social friction and necessity of faction → embraces type of political conflict that improves laws promoting public good
- What constitutes political failure
 - losing the state
 - Prophet lacking military preparedness
 - Borgia elevated to high level of praise and emulation despite failure
 - Agathocles and Oliverotto force without concern for the constraints of public perception

Comparisons:

Locke → concern for the betterment of society, political activity becomes a mean of satisfying selfish ends (different in how a ruler should behave)

Hobbes → similar views on human nature/political power, Hobbes more scientific and mechanistic, Machiavelli more practical, rational

Pizan → Pre-emptive reply, great political leaders and leadership may not be the key to civilization

Plato → ruler is more justified in actions vs. ruler can never be unjust; state exists to make war vs. is unjust;

Aristotle → virtues of man vs anyone who has virtues actions will lead to ruin

LOCKE

- theory of government based on the sovereignty of the people
- Equality men are by nature free and equal against claims that God had made all people naturally subject to a monarch. He argued that people have rights, such as the right to life, liberty, and property, that have a foundation independent of the laws of any particular society. Locke used the claim that men are naturally free and equal as part of the justification for understanding legitimate political government as the result of a social contract where people in the state of nature conditionally transfer some of their rights to the government in order to better ensure the stable, comfortable enjoyment of their lives, liberty, and property
- we all have an ability to reason- Hobbes, agrees, we can use rationalization, but we are dominated by power
- we use reason to discover natural law, to preserve ourselves and mankind (morality)
- reason makes us free and equal
- community of free, equal individuals, all possessed of natural rights → invokes natural law of morality to govern them before they enter to society
- In order to best protect themselves and their property, they must come together into some sort of body politic and agree to adhere to certain standards of behavior → relinquish some of their rights to enter in a social contract
- people submit natural freedoms to the common laws of society to receive the protection of the government → create an executive power to enforce the laws and punish offenders, entrusted with authority
- When power is abused, the people should rebel against their government and replace it with one they trust
- unlimited personal property wholly protected from governmental intervention: places sanctity of property over life
- how to own property: own yourself, own your labor, you own that which you mix your labor with.
- leave as much and is as good for others
- invention of money- money doesn't spoil, helps others
- people trust the government/sovereign, but you can take your trust back
- argument against absolutism (HOBBS) and unjust government, appeals to abstract moral notions and a more grounded view of the self-interest of people
- Lockean state of nature

- political power naturally residing in individuals, obligations exist in the state of nature through the law of nature
- the preservation of all humankind as a rule of action and obligation
- natural rights derived from natural law
- Differs from Hobbes:
 - political power is a natural property of individuals
 - natural law different from “law of nature” (preserve rest of humankind after preserving oneself) (premise of equality)
 - state of nature no longer liberty to pursue all means of self-preservation, or fully subjective to be limited
- property → limited in initial state of nature by 1) one cannot take more than what can spoil and 2) leave enough and as good for others
- institution of property in a state of nature not necessarily grounds for conflict (like hobbes) because of natural abundance and limited accumulation
- In state of nature, individuals have the power to a) order their actions and use possessions as they wish, and to b) enforce law of nature → but individuals believe the laws don’t apply to them, passions and interests impair judgement, and no reliable force backs up laws → thus a society is needed, not just a state of nature
- bias exists, conflicting judgements
- Political society provides 4 main things:
 - mechanisms for the protection of property understood broadly
 - institutional structure to promote right reason
 - common judge to provide final say in disputes
 - force to back up judgements
- nature of government: create a disinterested 3rd party to resolve conflict
- a certain amount of organised civil life that goes on independent of politics, so politics are responsible to fundamental features of civil life, there will be certain rules justifying restraint on govt
- Why do we want to escape state of nature? Not just fear generated from self-preservation, but also a sense of restoration
- 2 stages of social contract:
 - 1st - entering civil society- give up our power to punish breaches of the law of nature entirely - the community becomes the common judge to punish offences - entails a regulation of property and labor to ensure the preservation of the whole as well as individuals
 - 2nd- govt is established by majority rule and that requires an actual contract b/w the community and the rulers (unlike hobbes) - community chooses form of government, govt limited by terms of agreement as well as precepts of natural law
- powers of government a) making and judging laws b) executing laws and defending the community
- liberties- rights in one’s goods (criminal punishment justified though) as is resistance and revolution - each individual can be judge of a breach of trust

Comparisons:

Plato → believed we are born with a blank slate (tabula rasa), acquire knowledge through experience vs. knowledge within the soul/Forms

Hobbes → see Hobbes study guide, (long answer)

Machiavelli → concern for the betterment of society, political activity becomes a mean of satisfying selfish ends (different in how a ruler should behave)

Aristotle → Locke agrees with Aristotle that there is a natural tendency given by God in man's nature which makes him sociable. But contrary to Aristotle and in agreement with Hobbes (and all Modern tradition in this sense), he considers that government is a rationally created institution for the preservation of all against each, as if the possibility of aggression is enough to distrust each other, but not so much as to render society impossible.

MODERN VS. ANCIENT THINKERS:

- Ancient thinkers more concerned with utopian ideals and principles- concerned with how things should be, not how they were. Modern thinkers are more realistic, focusing on how things are in reality, not if the world was perfect, and how to improve that.
- Plato and Aristotle's concerns in *The Republic* and *Politics* was understanding virtue and justice, and determining who was best fit to lead. In both cases, Plato and Aristotle were concerned about the political community at large, and about how morals and politics intersected. Nicolo Machiavelli, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke question this assumption to some extent, and relate their own concerns about good government, order, and human nature.
- Modern philosophers: all three philosophers deal with man as he is – rational, self-interested and calculating – and not how men ought to be. Second, these modern philosophers are the first to investigate individualism and consent in political life. Lastly, the modern philosophers' major impact and difference from the ancients was their insistence that men were born equal. This sets the stage for the rise of modern, individualist liberal theory.
- Share with ancient: Machiavelli, for example, bridges the divide between ancient and modern. Like Plato, Machiavelli agreed that some were more suited than others to lead.
- Hobbes' *Leviathan* seems to stand in direct opposition to Plato and Aristotle, particularly his insistence that man is fundamentally self-interested, but many of Hobbes' Laws of Nature are concerned with aspects of right and wrong and even morality to some extent.
- John Locke also shares with the ancient philosophers several similarities. First, like Plato, Locke was very conservative in his preference for stability and order over change (Locke xiii). Locke was against violence and war, and Locke's concern for having good laws to prevent unwanted tyranny is similar to Aristotle's desire for good laws.
- Machiavelli's *The Prince* is a handbook of sorts for accruing and maintaining power. *The Prince* also is a straightforward account of man's self-interested, individualist ways. Hobbes' *The Leviathan* is less an account of how to govern as it is a discussion for the need of authority and the sovereign. Hobbes' discussion of the state of nature describes a place that is dangerous and

full of war. Man desires the sovereign to escape this world. Locke's discussion of the state of nature is less grim, and for Locke, government arises to protect not only life, but "liberty and property." Locke also argues against the lawlessness and lack of consent inherent in tyrannical regimes.

- For Aristotle government springs naturally from the human condition of sociability. Man as the political animal lives under government in his natural self, whereas for Hobbes government and society are rationally established by individuals by their natural tendency to fear and distrust each other, but for the purpose of permitting civil life in tranquility. In Hobbes, society and government is built against nature, whilst in Aristotle it springs from human nature itself. For Locke society springs from human nature, but not government.

HOBBS, PLATO, AND PIZAN: relationship b/w law of nature and nature of civil law → both nature and society characterized by disorder, passion, and an absence of reason; order and reason could be imposed by investing power in the hands of specific individual/class; world as an organism/body aka metaphor of the human body for society