

The Great Books

Revised November 2017

Introduction

The Great Books list is a work-in-progress over a life-time. It is intended that the List will be of some guidance to good, genuine, decent, thoughtful, moderate, noble and gentle students interested in learning how to read very carefully some of the very best books ever written and therefore acquiring a clearer understanding of the most fundamental questions no longer addressed by most institutions of higher learning. These questions include: *What is Happiness? What is the Best Way of Life? What is the Best Regime? What is Justice? What is Love? What is Friendship? What is Truth? What is Virtue? What is Death? What is the highest Human Good? What is God?* The greatest books address some of the deadly, necessary, eternal evils undermining all Civilisations in all places and at all times, especially **Tyranny**. Today, *Tyranny* is universal, armed by “value-free” Science, or more specifically, by abstract Modern Mathematics. The List is particularly addressed to those highly intelligent, spirited, frustrated, angry, idealistic youths totally disillusioned with the scientific denial of a universal, rational idea of *the Good*, but still dreaming of a perfect, beautiful, rational, just Community, ruled by wisdom, by love and by friendship. The List and Commentaries are an attempt to make a case for **Virtue** (Human Excellence), meaning an *Individual Perfection*, but only based on what the Classics called “*the best way of life*” or the life dedicated to *Wisdom, Natural Right, The Good and Moderation*, that also includes knowing and understanding the limits of the Political and the limits of Wisdom, recognising the necessity of the presence of **Evil** in the world and recognising why the wisest Thinkers taught the impossibility of all promised future world utopias, especially a utopia (the name means “no-where”) claiming to be the inevitable, final, perfectly just, rational/scientific, homogenous, universal, World State. The List also presents the rational case for a return to *Ancient or Classical Liberalism* that refutes a seemingly inescapable, deadly plague never before experienced in the History of the West - **Nihilism** - or the dogmatic *belief in Nothing*, perfectly symbolised in the modern mathematical creation of the number zero.

Most people know that Western Civilisation faces serious political problems. However, few people understand the fundamental cause of the most obvious problems: terrorism, seemingly senseless mass murder, suicide, depression, drug addiction and the undermining of the Rule of Law and the family. With the invention and rapid spread of the Universal, Homogeneous, World State, armed by universal Science, we are taught that our *Enemy* can no longer be *the Other*. Perhaps *the Enemy*, or our greatest *Enemy*, or what Socrates called **our true Friend** is and has always been - *Ourselves*. Do we really know who we are or what we should be? Today especially, we Westerners, as inheritors of Western Civilisation, lack self-knowledge. We would argue that our fundamental, catastrophic and greatest ignorance today is related to all our most serious political problems. Our greatest ignorance today is our continued ignorance regarding our thoughtless acceptance of *Nihilism*. We do not know and do not understand the problem of *Nihilism*, or the absolute and fundamental belief in *Nothing* that haunts the West more than ever. The issue of *Nihilism* had climaxed in the nineteenth century, brilliantly revealed by the Philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche. For those who missed Nietzsche’s theoretical warnings, W.W.1 & W.W.2 were the more obvious *Political* manifestations of *Nihilism*. Is W.W.3 inevitable? To recognise *the problem of Nihilism* requires or presupposes a certain amount of acquired wisdom that initially demands an undertaking of a special form of **liberal education**, almost unavailable in most universities today. **See our comments on the key novels by George Orwell - 1984 and Animal Farm and William Golding’s novel, Lord of the Flies that offer the best and clearest introduction to the problem of Nihilism.**

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| <p>King James Version</p> | <p><u>The Holy Bible</u></p> <p>One of two pillars of Western Civilisation - <u>Faith</u> - represented by the City of <u>Jerusalem</u>.</p> | <p>Compare the structure of <u>Genesis 1&2</u> with the <u>Gospel of St. John</u>. Is there an order (“<i>logos</i>”) in the seven miracles in the latter? See Thomas L. Pangle <u>Political Philosophy and the Gods of Abraham</u> and Robert D. Sacks <u>A Commentary on the Book of Genesis</u>. For those searching to maintain their Christian Faith, see Roger Scruton’s many thoughtful books, especially <u>Gentle Regrets</u>, <u>England: An Elegy</u>, <u>News from Somewhere</u>, <u>Culture Counts: Faith and Feeling in a World Beseiged</u> and C. S. Lewis <u>The Abolition of Man</u>, and <u>Surprised by Joy</u>.</p> |
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| <p>Plato Aristotle</p> | <p>&</p> <p>The other pillar of Western Civilisation - Reason or Political Philosophy as represented by the City of Athens.</p> <p>See Mary P. Nichols <u>Socrates on Friendship and Community: Reflections on Plato's 'Symposium', 'Phaedrus' and 'Lysis'</u>. This is one of the best introductions in understanding Socratic Political Philosophy, love and friendship. See also Michael Davis <u>The Soul of the Greeks</u> (especially the last chapter). For great poets, the Sea is always a symbol of Wisdom. Is that why Captain Ahab and the hero and survivor - Ishmael go "to sea" in Herman Melville's novel <u>Moby Dick</u>?</p> | <p><u>The Republic</u> is a satire on communism that follows Aristophanes' satire on communism, or radical democracy that promises a perfectly just City (Polis) or State. Plato follows, to some extent, Aristophanes's play <u>Assembly of Women</u>. The "Myth of Er" (Er=<i>Eros</i>?), described in Book 10 of Plato's <u>Republic</u>, excludes the angry Achilles from the account of those listed in Hades. The new hero is a Socratic Odysseus who has been cured of <i>thumos</i> or the love of honour and the love of one's own things or possessions. Nevertheless, Homer and Plato both teach that the hero's task is not all about personal salvation or individuality or living in isolation from one's own community, but must include an activity that supports the Laws of the City/State by instructing citizens that the ultimate Foundation or Founder of Natural Right (Natural Justice) and Natural Law is a Divine, Perfect Being or God. Plato's dialogues are all about re-minding readers of the importance of <i>Virtue</i>, the natural need for the Divine and the things required for the education of good citizens. Readers of Homer's <u>The Odyssey</u> forget that in Book 11:121-138 Odysseus's immediate political task, after returning home to Ithaca, is to pick up an oar and take it inland to "men who do not know the sea" and therefore who do not know what an oar is, meaning the <i>Nature</i> or <i>activity</i> of an oar. Odysseus's job is to plant the oar like a monument and sacrifice to the god of the sea (meaning <i>Nature</i>), thus spreading the good news that there exists an unknown and invisible God. Odysseus's work is <i>awesome</i>. After that divine mission, Odysseus is then instructed to return home to Ithaca and worship "the immortal gods who possess broad heaven" [Nature]. By this pious action, Homer, using the mask of the Theban prophet Tiresias, states: "And the people about you / Will be happy". For the Socratics, to do well is to fare well, meaning that the key to justice is synonymous with the practice of pious Political Philosophy.</p> |
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| <p>Leo Strauss</p> | <p><u>The City and Man</u>, <u>Natural Right and History</u>, <u>What is Political Philosophy?</u> <u>Liberalism Ancient and Modern</u>, <u>Studies in Platonic Political Philosophy</u>, <u>On Tyranny</u>, <u>Socrates and Aristophanes</u>, <u>Persecution and the Art of Writing</u>, <u>Thoughts On Machiavelli</u>, <u>The Argument and the Action of 'Plato's Laws'</u>, <u>The Political Philosophy of Hobbes - Its Basis and Genesis</u>, <u>Leo Strauss Xenophon's Socratic Discourse An Interpretation of the 'Oeconomicus'</u> Preface Allan Bloom Foreword Christopher Bruell with a literal translation by Carnes Lord of Strauss's favourite Socratic writer - the much underrated Xenophon.</p> | <p>Perhaps the greatest Philosopher of all time and certainly the greatest Philosopher of the Twentieth Century who saved Western Civilisation from terminal and seemingly inescapable <i>Nihilism</i> or the dogmatic belief defined as "<i>nothing exists to endow anything with a permanent, non-arbitrary identity or being: nothing prevents anything from changing or being changed into anything else or into nothing.</i>" Strauss, following the Socratics, argued that there exists a higher, rational <i>Good</i> that can be partially grasped and understood and that leads to <i>the best way of life</i>, described by the Socratics as <i>the most complete life, the virtuous life and the most pleasant, natural way of life</i>. <i>Nature</i>, through a natural <i>Eros</i> tends to show human beings the <i>Natural Path or Divine activity</i> that leads towards the <i>Natural, universal Good</i>. Strauss also re-minded readers of the importance of Common Sense or Political Prudence and the non-arbitrary standard of Natural Right not subject to change or arbitrary will whether Divine or Human. Strauss was able to access the writings of Plato, Xenophon and Aristotle by first questioning the authority of the discovery of History that dogmatically claimed that modern readers could never understand the writings of previous thinkers as those thinkers understood themselves. Strauss, through the discovery of esoteric and exoteric writings implemented by many intelligent writers in most historical contexts, proved conclusively that it was possible that an intelligent, thoughtful writer could transcend his "times" or historical context. Strauss's discovery made possible once again - meaning prior to Rousseau's and Vico's invention of an abstract independent field of "necessity" called <i>History</i> - that a reader could take seriously the thoughts of serious thinkers from the past. <i>In short, Strauss made Politics or the Political (the Moral), as well as Philosophy (meaning the search for the Truth), once again possible for all those noble, decent, generous, good Souls.</i></p> |
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| <p>Harry V. Jaffa</p> | <p><u>The Conditions of Freedom</u>, (see especially chapter 3 'The Limits of Politics, An Interpretation of <u>King Lear</u> Act 1, Scene i' and the greatest, most comic, most accurate explanation of Capitalism in chapter 10 'Tom Sawyer Hero of Middle America'. Other key books are: <u>Statesmanship Essays in Honour of Sir Winston Churchill</u>, <u>Crisis of the House Divided</u></p> | <p>Jaffa understood Strauss's fundamental teaching regarding the essential component of the Political (the moral good) in attempting to search for the Truth or to study Philosophy - hence Strauss' rediscovery of Political Philosophy. Did King Lear rely too much on "Nature" or even on Faith/Belief and not enough on Human Nature, the good, or the Political in devising the illusion of a love test to politically and publicly choose his virtuous successor - <i>Cordelia</i>? In the end, she is executed by <i>hanging</i>. The virtuous, truthful, humble Cordelia could never naturally or politically declare her own good in the political form, or image, of her father (the greatest, most brilliant, most just King of a united Britain) Why does King Lear divide <i>one</i> United Kingdom into <i>three</i> parts? Was King Lear a pre-Socratic? He acts like Achilles, an angry punisher and later descends into rage and madness very naturally. Madness was once a euphemism for Philosophy. Socrates brought philosophy down to the City or to the political, by taking morality and the good as the foundation of Philosophy - called Political Philosophy. Is Edgar the only Political Philosopher in the play? Does the evil Edmund do "some good" by his long intended delay that seals <i>Cordelia's</i> just and necessary death by a rope or a <i>cord</i>? Can a prince or princess ever be an heir to the greatest, most just king, if he or she pursues only the Truth without understanding the necessity of the Political and Politics? Cordelia could not tell a political or a noble lie, knowing that the love test was an illusion and therefore not true. She is always truthful and this seems a reminder of the greatest love test - Christianity. Is Lear's name, greatness, nobility, justice and political success an allusion to the great mythical King whose name was King Leir, sounding perhaps in dialect - King <i>Liar</i>? The Truth, as Jesus taught it, transcends the Political and the Law, explaining why Christianity has no political teaching and often unintentionally creates Political chaos - see Shakespeare's play <u>Titus Andronicus</u> and Machiavelli's <u>The Prince</u>.</p> |
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| <p>Harry Neumann</p> | <p><u>Liberalism</u> published by the Carolina Academic Press and The Claremont Institute for the Study of Statesmanship and Political Philosophy 1991. It's no longer available. Try an intra-library loan and photocopy it.</p> <p>This book is essential reading for those interested in the role of Science in generating <i>Nihilism</i> as well as those readers searching for the best discussion regarding the causes of the disappearance the Political.</p> <p>Neumann's greatest insight emphasises the link between anger or spiritedness and <i>Nihilism</i>, explaining that <i>Terrorism's root is found in man's ferocious rebellion against his own Nihilism. Men, as Nietzsche taught, can't live without the gods. Nietzsche called the angry rebellion against "the death of God" as a "will to revenge" and "resentment"</i>.</p> <p><i>Captain Ahab in Herman Melville's great novel, <u>Moby Dick</u> was willing to commit suicide and kill his entire ship's crew in his fanatical mission to seek deadly revenge on the White Whale - Moby Dick. Is the whale a metaphor for Science, the Leviathan that bit off Captain Ahab's leg, meaning his very root or natural foundation?</i></p> <p>This challenging book should be listed for compulsory reading in every Arts Dept in every University in the world.</p> | <p>This is the greatest academic book on <i>Nihilism</i> and Leo Strauss's role in refuting <i>Nihilism</i> in all of its forms, especially in its hidden or unreflective forms. It was Nietzsche who first dramatically alerted the West regarding <i>Nihilism</i>, arguing that the legacy of "Philosophy" and Christianity was inescapable <i>Nihilism</i> or a belief in Nothing. Neumann argues that Nietzsche clearly saw that secularised Christianity, or a morality without a god, a highest good or supreme, irrefutable universal authority, leads to <i>Relativism</i>, or the belief that all "values" are relative and then finally to <i>Nihilism</i>, meaning <i>only Nothing is true</i>. Neumann, unlike Nietzsche, understood the significance of the invention of <i>Science</i> by Descartes and Bacon as a substitute for <i>Philosophy</i> or more specifically, <i>Political Philosophy</i>, as the greatest and immediate cause of <i>Nihilism</i>. Neumann (one of very few highly educated, thoughtful academics who understood Leo Strauss) uses the mask of a profound <i>Nihilist</i> to hold up a mirror and expose 21st Century Liberals, or listless Westerners as <i>Nihilists</i> in the final analysis. Furthermore, he clinically, forensically and logically demonstrates that the vast majority of "educated" people alive today are essentially <i>Nihilists</i>. His vast knowledge and understanding of the greatest, nihilistic literature available to us, further focuses the mirror he holds up of <i>Nihilism</i>. Political Truths can wake sleeping dogs, be very annoying like flies, or even provoke a journey of self-discovery that begins with the discovery of the human <i>Soul</i>.</p> |
| <p>Other writers interested in reading the Great Books</p> | <p>Catherine Zuckett <u>Post Modern Platos</u> – necessary reading. Leo Strauss' moderate solution to the Political Crisis of the 21st Century – pp. 109 – 118 & also Zuckert's <u>Understanding the Political Spirit: Philosophical Investigations from Socrates to Nietzsche</u> & Zuckert's <u>Natural Right and the American Imagination: Political Philosophy in Novel Form</u>. Michael Davis <u>Wonderlust: Ruminations on a Liberal Education</u>, and Ralf Lerner <u>Playing the Fool: Subversive Laughter in Troubled Times</u></p> | <p>See also Stanley Rosen <u>The Limits of Analysis, The Elusiveness of the Ordinary, Hermeneutics as Politics & The Philosophers Handbook</u>. See also Michael Davis <u>Wonderlust – Ruminations on Liberal Education</u>. See also Mark Blitz <u>Plato's Political Philosophy</u> and Eva Brann <u>Feeling Our Feelings: What Philosophers Think and People Know</u>.</p> |

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| Leon R Kass | <u>The Hungry Soul & Toward a More Natural Science</u> | A scientific introduction to Classical Philosophy. Kass tried to read Charles Darwin's writings as Darwin himself understood them. "The term 'evolution' does not occur in <u>The Origin of Species</u> ." In later editions, Darwin inserted "by the Creator" to demonstrate his Christian Faith. |
| G e o r g e Anastaplo | <u>The Christian Heritage: Problems and Prospects</u> | A great introduction to our "crisis" – the Crisis of Western Civilization caused by Nietzsche's announcement that "God is dead" or that there is no longer a rational defence of the good and the best way of life. |
| Fiction | | |
| Jane Austen | <u>Emma, Mansfield Park, Persuasion, Pride and Prejudice & Sense and Sensibility. Mansfield Park</u> surpasses all novels – Fanny Price is the potential philosopher who: feels shame, is self-conscious (as a prelude to self-knowledge), is "sensitive to beauty", "experiences <i>eros</i> [love] more intensely than <i>thumos</i> " [anger] and "accepts the religious teaching that human beings are dependent upon higher powers, insofar as that teaching promotes wonder and not mere awe". In short: "To know oneself, the potential philosopher will combine self-consciousness, the ability to see himself in others, the erotic tendency to divinize the beloved, and the religious tendency to divinize nature." See David Cecil <u>A Portrait of Jane Austen</u> | 1775-1817 – the greatest novelist of all - influenced by Rousseau, but reason rules the heart. <u>Mansfield Park</u> is the political re-founding of the English aristocracy (Sir Thomas) through re-ordination (Latin: <i>ordo</i> meaning a straight line). Fanny (dislocated nature) marries Edmund (nature and piety) who is to be ordained into the Church of England. The <i>polis</i> (in this context, the country community) educates the commercial class represented by Henry Crawford (invited by the modern clergy). Sir Thomas marries beauty and dotes on form, especially artificial music. The ordination (realignment) reforms Sir Thomas - essentially a Christian guided by Aristotle. A good preparation for Plato & Xenophon. See Will Morrisey <u>Culture in the Commercial Republic</u> , especially Ch. 10 'The Politics of Self Knowledge: <u>Mansfield Park</u> and 'The Refounding of English Aristocracy'. See George Anastaplo <u>The Artist as Thinker</u> , Henry T. Edmondson III <u>The Moral of the Story</u> . |
| John Bunyan | <u>Pilgrim's Progress</u> | 1628-88 - a necessary text in understanding the U.S.A. Influenced by Calvin. |
| Lewis Carroll (Charles Dodgson) | <u>Alice in Wonderland & Alice Through the Looking Glass</u> | 1832-98 - the relationship between the limits of Modern Mathematics and the limits of the Political. |

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| Willa Cather | <u>O Pioneers!</u> - Alexandra Bergson lives an ordinary, decent life - "neighborliness, hard work and prudence" - and becomes the owner of "one of the richest farms on the Divide". | 1873-1947 - the transformation of the American frontier. A great celebration of middle class morality (marriage, family and hard work) following Aristotle's praise of middle class morals – not taking from the poor and not being coveted against. For Aristotle, this class forms a virtuous and practical political community. The novel warns against romanticism and contempt for normal human feelings. |
| Louis-Ferdinand Céline | <u>Journey to the End of the Night</u> (trans. R. Manheim) | 1894-1961 - the ugliest description of late modernity or nihilism (Postmodernism). |
| Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra | <u>Don Quixote</u> - best trans. <u>Don Quijote</u> Burton Raffel, ed. Diane de Armas Wilson - the key lesson: "in order to know what in man has to be overcome in order to establish a good regime". Note Marcela's speech, which shows that love can only be contemplation of the beautiful, rather than its possession. See <u>Rinconete and Cortadillo</u> - a "picaresque" short story (i.e. "satiric prose fiction . . . depicting in realistic, often humorous detail the adventures of a roguish hero of low social degree living by his or her wits in a corrupt society". The latter introduces two adolescent boys whose journey leads them to become dissatisfied with a life that is excessively free. Community and order are the essentials for happiness or the philosophic life. | 1547-1616 – Spain's greatest writer. Necessary reading regarding the "Theologico-Political Problem". Check names and classical allusions. Don Quixote was inspired by certain books that led him to become concerned with "courage, strength, and revenge", rather than with a dedication to "love, beauty, reason, or divinity". See H. Higuera: <u>Eros and Empire Politics and Christianity in Don Quixote</u> . |
| Gilbert Keith Chesterton | The <u>Father Brown</u> series, especially <u>The Invisible Man</u> | 1874-1936 – a strange mixture of a Priest and a Detective - "For life is a fight and is not a conversation." |
| Agatha Christie | <u>The Murder of Roger Ackroyd</u> & <u>Curtain: Poirot's Last Case</u> | 1890-1976 - the greatest modern detective writer – generally a teacher of Natural Law - the bad criminal is always caught and justly punished. Which story is based on <u>Othello</u> ? Compare with R. Stout (Leo Strauss' favourite mystery writer): <u>The Doorbell Rang</u> . Nero Wolfe is the fat, democratic version of Sherlock Holmes. Stout like P. D. James supports Natural Right or prudence where sometimes it's just to save others by letting the criminal off the hook. |

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| Joseph Conrad | <u>Heart of Darkness</u> (1902) & <u>The Secret Sharer</u> | 1857-1924 – Modern Nihilism, but in <u>The Secret Sharer</u> – an introduction to “philosophy” or reflection - “It is naturally right that natural right suffer for conventional right. All the noble [and thoughtful] people share this secret. Leggatt discovers it and gradually teaches it to the young captain.” |
| Daniel Defoe | <u>Robinson Crusoe</u> - Compare Ibn Tufayl: <u>Hayy the Son of Yaqzan</u> – back to the “State of Nature” | 1660-1731 - the first novelist. A novel account of John Locke’s capitalism. Return to comfortable self-preservation via Hobbes’ “State of Nature” – England. |
| Charles Dickens | <u>A Christmas Carol</u> , <u>A Tale of Two Cities</u> & <u>Pickwick Papers</u> | 1812-70 – <u>A Christmas Carol</u> is a good introduction to Victorian England. Chesterton liked <u>Pickwick Papers</u> because it’s a story that never ends and is an “awful instance of the instability of human greatness”. Chesterton argued that the 20 th Century produced short novels, since writers saw that “existence is only - an impression- and perhaps only an illusion”. Dickens is a clever Christian writer. |
| Benjamin Disraeli | <u>Coningsby</u> (1844), <u>Sybil</u> (1845) & <u>Tancred</u> (1847) | 1804-81 – Prime Minister of England 1868 & 1874-80 – the “Theologico-Political Problem” – a Jew converts to Christianity. |
| Fyodor Dostoyevsky | <u>The Brothers Karamazov</u> & <u>Demons</u> (trans. R. Pevear & L. Volokhonsky) | 1821-81 - the greatest Russian novelist and thinker. He synthesizes Christianity & Modern Science. Pay attention to the centre of <u>The Brothers Karamazov</u> and to Alyosha (Alexander or “defender of man”). Check his whereabouts on the night of the murder of the father. Who cannot account for missing “time” on the night of the murder? <u>Demons</u> is the greatest book on Nihilism. |
| Conan Doyle | The Sherlock Holmes series - especially <u>The Hound of the Baskervilles</u> | 1859-1930 - the Modern “Socrates”. See <u>The Final Problem</u> – Nietzsche (Dr. Moriarty) fights Sherlock Holmes (post-Machiavellian Socrates). Note that only Holmes recognizes Moriarty’s evil (Irish name means “Maurice” Latin for “The Moor”. Check the setting. Is “Othello – The Moor” or “Ot-hell-O” (Shakespeare) related? A superior being, or a kind of divine intelligence, is behind all major crimes. |

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| Jean Dutourd | <u>The Springtime of Life</u> - influenced by Charles De Gaulle – “finding a friend worthy of your father . . . a bohemianized bourgeoisie will no longer have the discipline to maintain something so modest as prosperity.” | The feminized (privatized) world of France - 1920-40. After W.W. I men/ horses disappeared. The political education of Jacque (John) – “a desire to try one’s strength, a nobility of character, a horror of what is base or vulgar a passion for honour – in short soul”. |
| George Eliot | <u>Middlemarch</u> & <u>Silas Marner</u> | 1819-80 - <u>Silas Marner</u> is a good introduction to her esoteric mixture of Christianity, Marx and Spinoza. Check the meaning of all names in the novels. |
| Henry Fielding | <u>Tom Jones</u> & <u>Joseph Andrews</u> | 1707-54 – England’s first great novelist who understood the Classics, but supported the Enlightenment. |
| G u s t a v e Flaubert | <u>Madame Bovary</u> & <u>Sentimental Education</u> - the latter is a portrayal of “Napoleon III as a despotic solution to the disillusionment, aimlessness, and fragmentation of French society”. “This is why Nietzsche believed that Flaubert was one of the first people to observe and cultivate the taste for European nihilism.” | 1821-80 – <u>Madame Bovary</u> - perhaps the second greatest novel ever written- wonderfully crafted – the greatest satire on Romanticism and the Enlightenment. Observe carefully the speeches of the Chemist and the Priest. |
| James Anthony Froude | <u>The Two Chiefs of Dunboy</u> | 1818-94 - an insight into 16 th Century English political history. |
| J o h a n n Wolfgang von Goethe | <u>The Sorrows of Young Werther</u> (German Romanticism) & <u>Elective Affinities</u> | 1749-1832 - the German “Shakespeare”. <u>Elective Affinities</u> studies the impact of Modern Science on love and marriage. |

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| <p>W i l l i a m G o l d i n g</p> | <p><u>Lord of the Flies</u> published 1954, just after the Korean War. The title means “Beelzebub or “Prince of the Devils” – see the N. T. Bible <u>Matthew</u> 10:25, 12:24 & 27, <u>Mark</u> 3:22, <u>Luke</u> 11:15 & 19. In <u>Luke</u> 11:17, Jesus warns: “a house <i>divided</i> against a house falleth.” The title, “Lord of the Flies”, means ‘The Devil’ or ‘Satan’/‘Evil’. The origin of “Lord of the Flies” is the Hebrew mocking expression of the Canaanite god Baal, “Ba’al Zevul” meaning “Ba’al the exalted”. Is Golding demonstrating the cause of Evil? This novel re-tells <u>Genesis</u> chapters 1-6 and <u>Revelation</u> chapters 12 & 13. The island is <i>The Garden of Eden</i>. The fruit trees on the island are <i>near the centre of the island</i> - the place where the “<i>The Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil</i>” is located in <u>Genesis</u>. Simon (meaning “listening”), who discovers that the “Beast” is really “us”, sits and contemplates at the <i>centre of the island</i> - the location of the “<i>Tree of Life</i>” in <u>Genesis</u>. In chapter One of the novel, Piggy is the first to touch, eat and distribute fruit from the fruit trees on the island. Piggy and Jack are the only ones with <i>Technology</i> - Piggy has thick <i>glasses</i> and Jack has a <i>knife</i>. The boys fell from the air (were shot down) fleeing from “the atom bomb” - Chapter One. Check the structure. There are 12 chapters, the oldest boys are 12 years old, the youngest 6. Count the words in the sub-titles of each chapter. Where does the Devil or “Beast” appear in a subtitle? Is the Devil’s full appearance in chapter 6? Are there 6 words in total in chapters 5 & 6? The most mysterious riddle in the Bible (<u>Revelation</u> Chapter 13:18) refers to the “wisdom” in being able to “count the number of the beast” (666). The appearance of the “Beast”, occurs in chapter 5 of the novel - “Beast from Water” (three words without the definite article) and announced by “Percival Wemys Madison, the Vicarage, Harcourt, St Anthony”. Chapter 6 has the subtitle, “Beast from Air” - the arrival of the dead pilot. Does Golding change/play with <u>Revelation</u> 13:1 the “beast” from “the sea” that has 17 features, 17 representing Nature/Physics & 13:11 (the “beast” “out of the earth”)? The final chapter “Cry of the Hunters”, suggests that Golding intended to present the arrival of the boys’ saviour, the “naval officer”, as the beast from the sea, given that the last line of the novel is “allowing his eyes to rest on the trim cruiser in the distance.” - the <i>sea/water</i>. Is the warship part of a nuclear world war, the very reason the boys arrived on the island? If the island is a metaphor for the <i>earth</i>, hasn’t Piggy’s glasses (<i>fire</i>) destroyed everything on the island that sustains human life?</p> | <p>1911-93 - won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1983. It’s a new interpretation of <u>Revelation</u> that addresses <i>Nihilism</i> resulting from Nietzsche’s revelation that “God is dead”. Check the pre-Socratics elements: air, fire water & earth. In chapter 1 of the novel, we see a formal list of exactly 13 names. It’s the first meeting signalled by the sea-shell/Con-science/“nature” that sounds like a “trumpet”. The first regime is a democracy, which leads to a tyranny. Johnny is the 3rd boy mentioned in the very beginning of the book. “Jack” (the leader of the Church choir who turns into a tyrant) means “John” or “the Grace of God” – an ironic touch. Follow “Piggy’s” list of 13 boys in chapter 1. Maurice is at the very centre of the list - number 7 (meaning “Moriarty” - Irish for “Navigator” or “Sea Worthy”, the Latin root being “sea”). Is Sherlock Holmes’s evil nemesis James, meaning Jacob or “Supplanter”, named <i>James Moriarty</i>? Piggy is the 6th boy listed. He has no Christian name or surname, often described as having “trotted”. Are the other boys later referred to as trotters? Is the only source of meat on the island pigs? The pig is described as an unclean animal not to be eaten in the O. T. Bible? Jack is the first to identify the pig as the “beast”. Simon is the 13th boy listed? Why does Golding refer to the noise of the group talking all at once as a “buzz”? The island is a metaphor for a ship - see the end of chapter 3 where the truth-hunter Simon sees “creepers” (<i>snakes</i>?) that “dropped their ropes like the rigging of foundered ships”. See the end of chapter 1: “It was roughly boat-shaped” and “they felt that the boat was moving steadily astern.” Astern means backwards, just like Jack’s backward move from the civilised idea of living in “Huts on the Beach” to living in dark caves. See chapter 6 “Beast from Air” where Jack’s future home is near “where the rocks are all piled up” at “The tail end part” (the anus of the island) - and where Jack ironically says: “And the thing [the Beast] might live there.” Roger (meaning “spear”) teaches Jack how to stab and kill efficiently.</p> |
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| Nathaniel Hawthorne | <u>The Scarlet Letter</u> & <u>The Blithedale Romance</u> | 1804-64 – Melville’s best friend – love in a Puritan community. <u>The Blithedale Romance</u> is about the failure of community living on a farm (“dropping out” in the “Hippie” sense). |
| Aldous Huxley | <u>Brave New World</u> (1931) – tyranny in the Twenty First Century | 1894-1963 – the key to the book is that people “no longer read, write, love or govern themselves”. Furthermore, without creativity and curiosity, Huxley’s characters are no longer human beings. The tyranny (evil) of “a perfected technology of pleasure” is very hard to recognize. |
| Henry James | <u>The Princess Casamassima</u> | 1843-1916 – great American author. The limits of politics (revolution). |
| Phyllis D. James | Any Text - compare with Agatha Christie’s use of Natural Law, where the criminals are always caught. | 1920 – not a great writer, but she uses Natural Right (some are caught because it is better to leave some sleeping dogs lie)), but without Agatha Christie’s Shakespearean humour. |
| Franz Kafka | <u>The Metamorphosis</u> (trans. S. Corngold) – 1915 - one needs to consult Aristophanes’ <u>Peace</u> to appreciate Kafka’s mention of “‘you old dung beetle!’ or ‘Look at that old dung beetle!’” – p. 33. There are 3 divisions in the book. Gregor dies in March (the 3 rd month at 3 in the morning), there are 3 boarders, all having 3 beards and there are 3 maids: Anna (“Grace” – she leaves), a 16 year old girl (she leaves) and an old widow (she is fired at the end after disposing of Gregor’s transformed body). The story ends with 3 members of the family each writing 3 letters. Greta, his sister is 17 years old (p. 21). Is the family name associated with Sampson (“Child of the Sun”)? | 1883-1924 – heavily influenced by Nietzsche. The key is his numerology. The structure is of three parts. The central (second) part is where his mother (Mrs. Samsa) cries out when she first sees “Gregor” (“Watchman”): “Oh, God, Oh, God!” This is the first time she speaks to him in his transformed state. At that time, he was pressed against a picture of an erotic “lady all dressed in furs”. Check the rotten, “red apple” embedded in Gregor’s body. It was embedded at the end of part three by his angry father. Gregor starves to death. |
| Rudyard Kipling | <u>Kim</u> - the central character is the youth Kimball O’Hara, whose first name means “royally bold”. This is British rule at its best – i.e. a recognition of the soul of India that takes seriously the divine and Natural Right (justice). | 1865-1936 - his best novel – the “Theologico-Political Problem”. A noble, pious son in search of a good father (the son’s search is for the truth). The first Englishman to receive the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1907. Friend of Cecil Rhodes. See G. Anastaplo: <u>But Not Philosophy</u> . |

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| Harper Lee | <p><u>To Kill a Mockingbird</u> (1963) – possibly the greatest, esoteric, American novel - set during the Great Depression of the 1930s and the rise of Fascism. Dill’s third speech of introduction to the children of “Atticus” is: “I can read”. The children form a Trinity who witness “Tom’s” trial. Don’t forget to drop an adjective from seemingly meaningless compound words, especially where Atticus teaches “Jem” the true meaning of the pinnacle of Primary Education – Egypt or the “Dewey Decimal System”. Who was John Dewey? Lee has suggested that it is impossible to write anything else on the topic of Athens, Rome, England and the U.S.A.</p> | <p>1926 – the combination of Athens and Jerusalem. The “Theologico-Political Problem” in the context of Natural Right. A satire on modern education – chaps. 1-7, 12, 16 & 26. Check the number of bullet holes in Tom Robinson. “Atticus” or Athens (Socrates) is always reading, is very political (a member of the State Legislature) and is the most just citizen in the County. “Calpurnia” (Caesar’s highly intelligent wife) is Atticus’ house-keeper, who educates “Jem” and “Scout” by teaching them how to read using the Bible and William Blackstone’s <u>Commentaries</u> - (English Common Law).</p> |
| Clive Staples Lewis | All Texts, Best Science Fiction - <u>Out of the Silent Planet</u> | 1898-1963 - Christianity in the 20 th Century. |
| Jack London | <u>The Sea-Wolf</u> (1904) | 1876-1916 - nature opposed to morality. Is morality or justice merely the product of human agreement or convention? An examination of Darwin, Hobbes and Nietzsche. |
| Muhsin Mahdi (Editor) | <u>Arabian Nights</u> (trans. H. Haddawy) - how to survive in a tyranny. | The definitive edition of the 14 th Century Syrian manuscript. Pay attention to names and to the problem of guilt and punishment - the “Theologico-Political Problem”. |
| Herman Melville | <u>Billy Budd</u> , <u>Moby Dick</u> , <u>Typee</u> , <u>Bartleby & Benito Cereno</u> . | 1819-91- influenced by Rousseau, but sides with poetry against philosophy – very pessimistic, as he did not see the break between the “Moderns” and the “Ancients”. One of America’s greatest political writers. The (sperm) whale is the symbol of life. See T. J. Scorza <u>In the Time Before Steamships</u> . |
| Alan Alexander Milne | <u>The Red House Mystery</u> (1922) - Milne’s short “Introduction” lists the key elements required for the best mystery novel. | 1882-1956 - Milne prefers the classical intuitive method of solving murder cases in contrast to Doyle’s/ Holmes’ scientific method. One of the greatest mystery novels of all time. |

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| <p>George Orwell (Eric Arthur Blair)</p> | <p><u>Animal Farm A Fairy Story and 1984</u></p> <p>The 10 chapters in <u>Animal Farm A Fairy Story</u> is based on the 10 books of Plato's <u>Republic</u>. Compare Socrates' discussion of "the City of Pigs" and its rejection by Glaucon and Socrates - Republic Book 2: 372/d4. Socrates attempts to construct in speech a perfectly just city based on Human Nature which totally fails because of the very weakness of Human Nature. In <u>Animal Farm</u>, Old Major, the pig and brains behind the revolution against Mr Jones (Welch means "son of John") and humans in general or Human Nature, refers to his understanding "the nature of life". Nature in Greek means "physics" and its discovery outlined in Homer's <u>The Odyssey</u> is synonymous with the discovery of Philosophy. Like Plato, Old Major identifies happiness with leisure (a Greek word meaning "school"). See Chapter 1: "No animal in England knows the meaning of happiness or leisure". Notice that Moses the "tame raven" is absent when Old Major makes his first speech initially appealing to "nature" and then to "the order of Nature". Is there a raven mentioned in the Bible in the story of Noah and the Flood? Note the capital "N" for "Nature", Nature meaning Physics or Science. Are modern Utopias (utopia meaning "no-where") doomed to failure as they don't understand HUMAN Nature or the necessity of the Political or Politics (morality) or the Political? The biblical Moses was political or moral in implementing God's Laws or 10 Commandments, implying the presence of evil? Why does Orwell call the evil, Stalinist, tyrant pig Napoleon? Did the historical Napoleon spread the Rights of Man by war, ending in an attempt to create a universal homogeneous world tyranny? Check the use of numbers - e.g., the number 12 - In chapter 1 there are 12 different species of animals listed, Old Major dies aged 12, There are 12 words in the very last contradictory slogan in chapter 10. Boxer was aged 12, In the last chapter, 6 "more eminent pigs" and 6 human "farmers" sat "round the long table", a total of 12. Stalin, the world's most evil tyrant, wished that it were possible for him to kill everyone in the Soviet Union to solve the political problem. In chapter 1 of <u>Animal Farm</u>, Old Major states: "Remove Man from the scene, and the root cause of hunger and overwork is abolished forever." and "All men are enemies". In chapter 7 Napoleon screams out "Death to Humanity".</p> | <p>1903-50 – English Satirist. <u>1984</u> is <i>the greatest 20th Century novel</i>, examining modern tyranny based on (Modern) Science. There is no such thing as Ancient Science as prior to the invention of the Scientific Method, only Philosophy or Political Philosophy existed. Study the Founders of Science - Francis Bacon and Rene Descartes. The problem of Science is that it is based on modern abstract Mathematics that implies logical necessity that can only exist in space (another invention). It also implies a deterministic metaphysics, that contradictorily excludes itself from that determinism. <i>The Truth is that there is no Truth</i>. Reducing man to "matter in motion" or a mathematically measurable body, adopting "relative values" replacing the gods/god and the Good, leads to relativism, then to <i>Nihilism</i> and finally to tyranny. <u>1984</u> is the greatest satire on <i>Nihilism</i> that has its roots in the 24th book of Homer's <u>Iliad</u> with the demise of the hero Achilles that lead to modern Liberalism. <u>1984</u> has 3 Parts with a total of 24 chapters. The novel states near the beginning that it is now "April 4th, 1984" and that the modern Achilles is Winston Smith born "in 1944 or 1945" during W.W.2. We learn in the last paragraph of the novel that Winston died aged "40". In Part 3 chapter 2, O'Brien holds up 4 fingers to test Winston in what he sees. The Party answer is not 4 as common sense suggests, but what the Party wants. Numbers are relative for everyone in 1984, except for Orwell and Winston. In Part 3 chapter 4, Winston finally "cured" writes in capitals: "TWO AND TWO MAKE FIVE". Winston's serial ID number is 6079. The sum of each number is 22, just as the sum of the title <u>1984</u> is 22. <u>Revelation</u> in the Bible has 22 chapters and the New Testament contains 4 key Gospels describing the life of Jesus - the Son of God. Isn't Big Brother presented as a god in the novel and doesn't Winston die loving Big Brother - the novel ends with 4 words - "He loved Big Brother". Brother has Christian connotations and seems misplaced when the title for fellow "citizens" is constantly "Comrade" or "Comrades".</p> |
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| Walker Percy | <u>The Movie Goer</u> , <u>Lost in the Cosmos: The Last Self-Help Book</u> , <u>The Thanatos Syndrome</u> & <u>The Last Gentleman</u> - modern psychology makes human beings completely at home in the world, no longer strangers or aliens. | 1916-90 – Percy uses Natural Law (Thomism) to counter modern Nihilism in the U.S.A. One of the greatest modern, American authors. He satirizes “behaviorism, Marxism and therapeutic liberalism” that “deprive human beings of their specifically human discontent and so their specifically human content.” |
| Francis Rabelais | <u>Gargantua</u> | 1490-1537 - A satire on modern tyranny. The education of a modern ruler. |
| Mary Renault | <u>The Last of the Wine</u> | 1905-83 - a great introduction to Socrates and Athens. |
| Jean-Jacques Rousseau | <u>Julie or the New Heloise</u> (P. Stewart & J. Vache) | 1712-78 – origins of Romanticism and the genre of the Romantic novel. |
| Paul Scott | <u>The Raj Quintet</u> | British imperialism in India. |
| Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley | <u>Frankenstein or The Modern Prometheus</u> | 1797-1851 – Romantic - the limits of the Enlightenment. |
| Stendhal (Marie-Henri Bayle) | <u>The Red and the Black</u> - Nietzsche praised Stendhal. | 1783-1842 – followed Rousseau. Examines the “Theologico-Political Problem”. Pay attention to his monastic education. Admirer of Napoleon and Tacitus. |
| Robert Louis Stevenson | <u>Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde</u> | 1850-94 - the problem of modern Science (Romanticism). |
| Jonathan Swift | <u>Gulliver’s Travels</u> (1726) - Book I is modern political practice in France and Britain, Book II is ancient political practice – Rome and Sparta, Book III is modern philosophy and its effect on political practice and Book IV is ancient utopian politics (based on Socratic political philosophy) used to judge men and regimes for all time and for all places. <u>A Modest Proposal</u> (1729) - A satire using mathematics and science to outline the limits of those arts in statesmanship, <u>A Tale of a Tub</u> (1704) & <u>Against Abolishing Christianity</u> (1708). | 1667-1745 - the greatest English Satirist - comparable with Aristophanes. Swift contrasts the modern Enlightenment (Science/ Mathematics) with Classical virtue. He saw the point where the “Moderns” broke from the “Ancients”. |
| William Makepeace Thackeray | <u>Vanity Fair Or, a Novel Without a Hero</u> | 1811-63 - the first work published under his name. The subtitle tells all. Read closely chapter 31. |

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| John Ronald Reuel Tolkien | <u>The Hobbit</u> (especially chaps. 5, 8, 12 & 14 – contrast Tolkien’s fallen “worm” with “the worm’s an odd worm” – <u>Anthony and Cleopatra</u> - Act 5:2) & <u>The Lord of the Rings</u> (especially chaps. 9-11 of Book Three – i.e. chaps. 30-33 of the whole text & chap. 8 of Book Six. Why can’t Frodo and Bilbo remain in the Shire?). | 1892-1973 – <u>The Lord of the Rings</u> was based on Plato’s <u>Republic</u> that is adapted to the 20 th Century “imagination” - medieval fascination. See the “Ring of Gyges” in both Herodotus’s <u>History</u> and Plato’s <u>Republic</u> . A Christian writer – see the end where Saruman is protected by Frodo “a just man harms no one”. |
| Leo Tolstoy | <u>War and Peace</u> & <u>Anna Karenina</u> | 1828-1910 - Russia’s other great writer. Tolstoy is gentler than Dostoyevsky in his response to the death of classical wisdom – the end of “Romanticism” and the beginning of modern Nihilism. Educated in Plutarch. |
| Trevelyan (Rodney Whitaker) | <u>Shibumi</u> | 1931 – the best postmodern novel – the “superman” as linguist-spy who sees “Being” itself. Influenced by one of the 4 greatest philosophers of the 20 th Century – Heidegger, who tried to return to “Being” and not political opinion (Socrates). |
| Anthony Trollope | <u>Barchester Towers</u> (1857) | 1815-82 – his greatest “political” novel set in provincial, Victorian England. |
| Mark Twain (Samuel Langhorne Clemens. Mark Twain means “two fathoms” or proceed “safely”) | <u>Tom Sawyer</u> , <u>A Connecticut Yankee in King Arthur’s Court</u> & <u>Huckleberry Finn</u> | 1835-1910 – the greatest American writer. His concern was for justice (anti-slavery). Examine Tom’s white washing the fence (a de-fence of American Capitalism). “Black” Jim (Jacob) was freed by Law (the “Will”) & “conscience” (Miss Watson’s Christianity). |
| Robert Penn Warren | <u>Brother to Dragons</u> | 1905-89 - a re-write of the <u>Book of Job</u> in the context of the Jeffersonian disaster. Rugged individualism fails in America. |
| Owen Wister | <u>The Virginian</u> (See Robert B. Pippin <u>Hollywood Westerns and American Myths: The Importance of Howard Hawks, John Ford for Political Philosophy</u>). | 1860-1938 - first, and greatest, Western – a cowboy story that includes Natural Right. |
| Pelham Grenville Wodehouse | <u>Carry on, Jeeves</u> - especially “Bertie Changes his Mind” | 1881-1975 – Jeeves (the servant) reads “Spinoza” (the founder of liberal democracy) and rules the hereditary Master - Bertie (or Albert meaning “noble” or “bright”) Wooster. |

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| <p>John Wyndham (Parkes Lucus Beynon Harris)</p> | <p><u>The Chrysalids</u></p> | <p>1903-69 – the greatest English Science Fiction writer. Modern esoteric writing, including a critique of religion using modern, mathematical Science as a solution to the “Theologico-Political Problem”.</p> |
| <h2>Classics</h2> | | |
| <p>Aeschylus</p> | <p><u>Aeschylus I & Aeschylus II</u> (edited by D. Grene & R. Lattimore), <u>The Suppliant Maidens</u> and <u>The Persians</u> (trans. S. Benardete). The hunting of Orestes is the climax to his sister’s (Iphigenia) sacrifice, remembering that Apollo is the twin of Artemis (the huntress). It is Apollo who orders the matricide. Notice the Furies are old divinities, whereas the new gods stress the political and the city, especially the life “outdoors”. Clytemnestra kills the king indoors in a bath.</p> | <p>524-455 BC – the Orestes (Agamemnon, <u>The Libation Bearers</u>, <u>Eumenides</u> – performed in 458 B.C. just before Aeschylus’ death) is the movement from feud to law, family to city, old to new, but Agamemnon (the political order) is challenged by Clytemnestra (the family order). The limits of the political, meaning the problem of the love of one’s own (things/possessions).</p> |
| <p>Alfarabi</p> | <p><u>Alfarabi’s Philosophy of Plato and Aristotle</u> (trans. M. S. Mahdi)</p> | <p><i>Circa</i> 870-950 AD - the greatest Muslim philosopher. See M. S. Mahdi, <u>Alfarabi and the Foundation of Islamic Political Philosophy</u>, Joshua Parens <u>Metaphysics as Rhetoric</u> <u>Alfarabi’s Summary of Plato’s Laws</u>, Miriam Galston <u>Politics and Excellence The Political Philosophy of Alfarabi</u>, Charles E. Butterworth <u>The Political Writings: Selected Aphorisms and Other Texts</u>. Reni Brague <u>The Legend of the Middle Ages: Philosophic Explorations of Medieval Christianity, Judeaism and Islam</u>.</p> |
| <p>George Anastaplo</p> | <p><u>The Constitutionalist</u></p> | <p>The greatest commentary on the USA First Amendment. Pay special attention to the footnotes.</p> |
| <p>Apuleius</p> | <p><u>The Golden Ass</u> - a return to Isis and Osiris with Roman law without <i>eros</i>.</p> | <p>124-180 AD - Lucius is the new Phaedrus but he has no wings. He turns into an ass with long ears to spy out adulterers. There are 17 mentions of “punishment”. The myth in the centre of the book represents a pagan view of the formation of Christianity. Socrates was the true founder of Christianity. This is the link between <i>eros</i>, <i>agape</i> & “<i>thumos</i>” or anger.</p> |

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| <p>St. Thomas Aquinas</p> | <p><u>Treatise on Law</u> (Part 9: 90-97), <u>Summa Theologica</u> (Part I, chaps. 1, 2 & 13).</p> | <p>1225-74 – the most brilliant Catholic theologian & follower of Aristotle. He taught Natural Law (no exceptions) not Natural Right (there are exceptions).</p> |
| <p>Aristophanes</p> | <p>All Plays especially <u>Clouds</u> (trans. T. West), <u>Assembly of Women</u> (a satire on Communism and radical Democracy), <u>Birds</u> (set just after the invasion of Sicily – universal domination - a repudiation of the gods by men) <u>Frogs</u> (artistic interests should be subordinated to political interests) & <u>Wasps</u> (an attack on religious fanaticism), <u>Three Plays by Aristophanes: Peace, birds and Wealth</u>, Thomas Pangel & Wayne Ambler eds.</p> | <p>450-388 BC - the greatest (Greek) comic poet who understood the “Theologico-Political Problem” – i.e. the problems philosophy posed to the “polis” (city). Aristophanes is the central speaker in Plato’s <u>Symposium</u> and was highly regarded by Socrates for his political knowledge, especially his recognition of the political fact that most people love their own possessions. Aristophanes’ solution to the political problem is ironically tragic – eros is mere illusion. Necessary reading in understanding Plato.</p> |

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| <p>Aristotle</p> | <p><u>Politics</u> (trans. Carnes Lord), <u>Ethics & On the Soul & Metaphysics & Aristotle's Physics</u> (trans. Joe Sachs) & <u>On Poetics</u> (M. Davis). "Touch" is the key to <u>On the Soul</u> near the centre. Contemplation is the activity of touching the Devine or God. Notice Michelangelo' "Adam" in the Sistine Chapel and da Vinci's "John the Baptist – which finger is used to point or touch? The <u>Metaphysics</u> is the retelling of Homer's <u>Iliad</u>. Comedy under the guise of tragedy – war. Notice the listing of the ships allude to the listing of the Ionian/Greek Philosophers. Book V seems to follow Book V of the <u>Iliad</u>. See p. 102 as Aristotle refers directly to the Trojan War. See the beginning of chapter 28 Book V. See chapter 29, the reference to "Hippias" and footnote and the limping one "god". Chapter 30 is a revelation of the "hidden treasure" of "Aegina" or the great grandmother of Achilles and a certain King of Aegina who helped Poseidon and Apollo build the walls of Troy. Aristotle's <u>Physics</u> (trans. Joe Sachs), George B Kennedy <u>Aristotle: A Theory of Civil Discourse 'On Rhetoric'</u> See David McBryde's PhD Thesis (University of Newcastle Australia) on <u>Ethics & Eric Salem In Pursuit of the Good: Intellect and Action in Aristotle's 'Ethics'</u>. See Joe Sachs (trans.) <u>Aristotle: Poetics</u> and Michael C. Davis & Susan D. Collins (trans.), <u>Aristotle: Nicomachean Ethics</u>.</p> | <p>384-322 BC - described as the wisest philosopher. Aristotle addresses decent people open to common sense. No physics has transcended Aristotle's <u>Physics</u>. Taught Natural Right (the best regime). See Michael Davis <u>The Poetry of Philosophy: On Aristotle's Poetics & M Davis The Politics of Philosophy: A Commentary on Aristotle's 'Politics' Ancient Tragedy and The Origins of Modern Science</u> – essential reading to understand the tragedy of Modern Science. See David McBryde's PhD Thesis on the <u>Ethics</u> (University of Newcastle Australia) – the very best to date. See Ronna Burger's <u>Aristotle's Dialogue with Socrates on the 'Nicomachean Ethics'</u>, Robert C. Bartlett <u>Action and Contemplation: Studies in the Moral and Political Thought of Aristotle</u>, Christopher Bruell <u>Aristotle as Teacher: His Introduction to a Philosophic Science A Commentary on Aristotle's Metaphysics</u>, A. Tessitore <u>Aristotle and Modern Politics: The Persistence of Political Philosophy</u>. Michael Davis <u>The Soul of the Greeks</u>. Aristotle's <u>On the Soul</u> is a scientific image of his <u>Ethics</u>. The centre of the former is "On Touch" which corresponds to "friendship" in the <u>Ethics</u>. See Edward C. Halper <u>One and Many in Aristotle's Metaphysics: Books Alpha-Delta, One and Many in Aristotle's Metaphysics: The Central Books & Aristotle's 'Metaphysics': A Reader's Guide</u>. See also Avicenna <u>The Metaphysics of Healing</u> (Brigham Young University Press).</p> |
| <p>St. Augustine</p> | <p><u>Confessions</u> (Ch 1-12) & <u>The City of God</u> (especially Books 11 & 14)</p> | <p>354-430 AD - the greatest Platonic Christian and founding father of Christian theology. Access to Plato's <u>Timaeus</u> and Cicero's writings. He emphasized the "will" as an essential part of the soul. Did Augustine's change to "will" herald Nietzsche's "will to power" as the replacement of Socrates/Plato's eros directed toward the good?</p> |

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| <p>Averroes (Ibn Rushd)</p> | <p><u>Averroes On Plato's Republic</u> (trans. Ralf Lerner), <u>Averroes' Middle Commentary on Aristotle's 'Poetics'</u> (trans. Charles E Butterworth), <u>Decisive Treatise and Epistle Dedicatory</u> (Brigham Young Uni., trans. Charles E. Butterworth), <u>Averroes' Middle Commentaries on Aristotle's Categories and the De Interpretatione</u> (trans. Charles E. Butterworth)</p> | <p>1126-98 - second greatest Muslim philosopher and defender of the Faith and the political. See <u>Enlightening Revolutions: Essays in Honor of Ralph Lerner</u> ed. Svetozar Minkov.</p> |
| <p>Avicenna</p> | <p><u>The Metaphysics of Healing</u> (Brigham Young University Press)</p> | <p>A synthesis of philosophy, law and Islam. One of the greatest Arab philosophers.</p> |
| <p>Francis Bacon</p> | <p><u>Essays, The Great Instauration and New Atlantis</u> (best trans. & commentary J. Weinberger) & <u>The New Organon, The Advertisement Touching on a Holy War: Interpretative Essay, Notes, and Interpretative Essay</u> edited by Laurence Lampert.</p> | <p>1561-1626 - the founder of the Scientific Enlightenment – see R. Faulkner: <u>Francis Bacon and the Project of Progress</u>, Jerry Weinberger <u>A Commentary on Bacon's 'Advancement of Learning'</u> & G. Weinberger's <u>Science and Politics: Francis Bacon and the Utopian Roots of the Modern Age</u>. See Jerry Weinberger <u>Benjamin Franklin Unmasked: On the Unity of his Moral, Religious and Political Thought</u>.</p> |
| <p>Pierre Bayle</p> | <p><u>Various Thoughts on the Occasion of a Comet</u> (R. C. Bartlett) & <u>The Dictionary Historical and Critical of Mr. Peter Bayle</u> (ed., Pierre Desmaizeaux)</p> | <p>1647-1706 – the best writer on the Enlightenment (atheism). Ralf Lerner <u>Playing the Fool: Subversive Laughter in Troubled Times</u> chapter 4 on Bayle. Is Lerner having a private “conversation” with Leo Strauss? Count the number of paragraphs in his central chapter 4 and read carefully footnote 6, to say nothing of the quote from Shakespeare's <u>Twelfth Night</u> in the beginning of the book. Count the number of words in Lerner's title and dedication to Leo Strauss.</p> |
| <p>Seth Benardete</p> | <p><u>Encounters and Reflections, The Archaeology of the Soul: Platonic Reading in Ancient Poetry, The Bow and the Lyre, Heroditean Inquiries, The Rhetoric of Morality and Philosophy: Socrates' Second Sailing, The Argument and the Action, Plato's 'Laws': The Discovery of Being, The Tragedy and Comedy of Life, Sacred Transgressions & Achilles and Hector: The Homeric Hero, The Archaeology of the Soul: Platonic Readings in Ancient Poetry and Philosophy.</u></p> | <p>1930-2001 – <u>Encounters and Reflections</u> is essential reading. Reveals many of Strauss' more hidden suggestions on ancient esoteric writings. Read in the book order presented. The greatest Classicist. He understood the Socratic art of esoteric writing – Leo Strauss's most intelligent student.</p> |

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| Allan Bloom | <u>The Closing of the American Mind</u> , <u>Giants and Dwarfs</u> & <u>Love and Friendship</u> , <u>Letter to M. d'Alembert on the Theatre</u> , see his translations of Rousseau's <u>Emile</u> , Plato's <u>Republic</u> and his book - <u>Shakespeare's Politics</u> (with Harry V. Jaffa) | 1930-92 – American - a “Socratic” view of the American soul and a close reading of the Great Books without the aid of “ideology”. One of Leo Strauss’ most intelligent students. See <u>Political Philosophy and the Human Soul: Essays in Memory of Allan Bloom</u> ed. M. Palmer & T. L. Pangle. |
| Edmund Burke | <u>Reflections on the Revolution in France</u> , <u>Selected Letters of Edmund Burke</u> (ed. H. C. Mansfield) | 1729-97 – origin of Historicism the 21st Century’s greatest tyranny – anti Natural Law/Natural Right but one of the greatest statesmen of all time. He taught that the best constitution is natural because “it has come into being without guiding reflection”. It comes into being very slowly and “is directed toward <i>the greatest variety of ends</i> ”. “History has this in common – that both are concerned with particulars”. |
| John Calvin | <u>Institutes of the Christian Religion</u> (trans. L. Battles) | 1508-64 - the greatest Protestant theologian. |
| Brother Thomas Campanella | <u>The City of the Sun</u> (trans. A. M. Elliot & R. Millner) | 1568-1639 - the high priest is “Sol” (Latin for sun) as is the symbol O with a dot in the centre. The helpers are: “Pon” (“potentia” or power), “Sin” (“sapientia” or “scientia” or wisdom) & “Mor” (“amor” or love) giving a natural trinity – see J. Klein: <u>Lectures and Essays</u> . |
| Thomas Carlyle | <u>The French Revolution</u> , <u>Life of Frederick the Great</u> & <u>Hero Worship</u> | 1795-1881 – English - admired Goethe. |
| Baldassare Castiglione | <u>The Courtier</u> | 1478-1529 – the perfect Renaissance gentleman. |
| Geoffrey Chaucer | <u>The Canterbury Tales</u> | 1342-1400 – a return to Socratic “good sense”. Remember that the tales begin in “April” (the 4 th month) and everyone tells four tales. Chaucer’s most important ideas are presented in the “Franklin’s Tale”. Check the name “Harry Bailey” by playing with the Roman Alphabet. Is Harry a mask for Jesus Christ? |
| Winston S Churchill | <u>The Life and Times of the Duke of Marlborough Vols I & II</u> | One of the greatest books on politics and should be compulsory reading for all Liberal Arts students. |
| Marcus Tullius Cicero | <u>On the Good Life</u> & all texts | 106-43 BC – the greatest Roman orator. Responsible for the introduction of “Socrates” to Rome. |

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| Carl Von Clausewitz | <u>On War</u> | One of the best books on “the limits of politics”. |
| Confucius (Master K’ung) | <u>Confucius – Confucian Analects, The Great Learning & the Doctrine of the Mean</u> (trans. J. Legge). Did he discover “Nature” as did the Greek philosophers – remembering that “fire burns in Persia [China] as it does in Athens”? | 479 B.C. He died in the year of the Battle of Plataea, around the end of the war between the Greeks and Persians - see books VI, XV & XX. Books X & XI (the latter perhaps the longest with 25 chapters) of the <u>Analects</u> are central. Confucius is defeated in argument – VII 30. Books IX & XVI are devoted to ruling. |
| Fustel de Coulanges | <u>The Ancient City</u> | 1830-89 - the greatest work on the “polis” (city). |
| Alighieri Dante | <u>The Divine Comedy</u> – are the “two felts” in the <u>Inferno</u> (Canto I, line 105) the cloth cover of Dante’s book? What is being sounded out in Canto XVI, lines 134-136? Observe the structure and count the Cantos. Is Canto XXI (<u>Purgatorio</u>) - the introduction to Statius - the mathematical centre of the entire work? | 1265-1321 - the introduction of Aristotle’s <u>Ethics</u> and <u>The Politics</u> to the West in the Middle Ages in the context of Christianity. Who is sitting on the throne in Heaven? Dante is the new Adam. Pay attention to the structure and the role of Statius who suffers from greed (philosophy). Observe the use of “velo” (meaning “veil”) and the use of “cord”. Does Dante spell out his name cryptically (a string cipher) in Canto XI (<u>Purgatorio</u>), lines 98 & 99? See E. L. Fortin: <u>Dissent and Philosophy in the Middle Ages</u> . |
| Charles Darwin | <u>The Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection</u> - especially chaps. 1-4 & 14. | 1809-82 - Darwin still has a teleology. He follows Rousseau - the best introduction: Leon R. Kass: <u>Toward a More Natural Science</u> . |
| René Descartes | <u>Discourse on Method & Meditations</u> , see Richard Kennington <u>On Modern Origins: Essay in Early Modern Philosophy</u> (ed. Pamela Kraus & Frank Hunt). Best trans. of <u>Discourse</u> is by Richard Kennington. | 1596-1650 – follower of Machiavelli. His work is the mathematical foundation of the new Science. “Individuality” (ego) becomes central. Check all quotations from the Bible in both texts. Is there a connection between the <u>Meditations</u> and the seven days of Creation in <u>Genesis</u> ? See David R. Lachterman <u>The Ethics of Geometry: A Genealogy of Modernity</u> . |

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| <p>Eliot Deutsch (trans.)</p> | <p><u>The Bhagavad Gita</u> - there are 18 Books that cover the 18 - day epic battle with God as the source of all being. God must keep his activity to prevent chaos; hence, no nature.</p> <p>The story ends in the 17th Book – a structure of 5-8-5 – important numbers for Hindus. The first word of the poem is “Dharma” or “righteousness” and the last words are “matir mama” or “I am certain”.</p> | <p>300 B.C. – essential Hindu reading. An introduction to the Indian soul. God answers vital questions from a “warrior”, not from a Brahman (secrets only for the gifted and privileged) - see VIII 1 - 2 – “What is that Brahman etc” – in the centre of the book that points to XI 3 – 4 where the warrior demands to see the “godly form . . . O Lord of Yoga!”. Check and count the uses of names and compare with 41 in the genealogy of Exodus 6:14-25 and Matthew 1.1-17. See G. Anastaplo: <u>But not Philosophy</u>.</p> |
| <p>Euripides</p> | <p>All plays, especially <u>Helen</u> – which is an imitation of Book IV (imaging) of Herodotus’s <u>History</u> & <u>Iphigeneia</u> – an imitation of Book II of Herodotus (Persia or “thought”). <u>Hippolytus</u> or “loosener of horses” - see the black horse in Plato’s <u>Phaedrus</u> - deals with Phaedra’s desire to know – i.e. to strip away convention. Hippolytus is an extreme, passionate ascetic. He fails to reason with Phaedra. In the <u>Rhesus</u>, constructed on the 10th Book of the <u>Iliad</u>, Rhesus represents the barbarian counterpart to Achilles – a Greek. Phoebus (Apollo) was the Trojan password on the night Rhesus was killed. The <u>Medea</u> - “the ruling/cunning one” is a barbarian. In line 1360 “Sisyphus” land is “nature” (physis) spelled backwards – compare “the tribe of Sisyphus, Jason’s new family by marriage” in line 394. Jason’s name means, “to heal”. Medea is noted for her pride (<i>hubris</i>) – the nurse (the traditional representative of nature) states: “She can be wild and hateful, /In her stubborn pride” – lines 94-95. We learn from Jason that everyone knows Medea’s talents now that she resides in Greece: “If you still lived at the end of the world, there would be no <i>logos</i> of you” – lines 518-19. In a <i>deus ex machina</i>, the Sun (associated with Circe, i.e. Helios’ daughter - and Poseidon) saves her with a “chariot” ride to Athens.</p> | <p>484-406 BC - includes Plato’s divided line of the soul. See Herodotus. The central speech is where Hippolytus says: “My tongue swore, but my mind was still unpledged”. Compare with Racine’s play, <u>Phèdre</u> – 30 scenes, the central scene located somewhere in Act III iv & v. Rhesus hates Odyssean cleverness - a hint at the end of the heroic age and the rise of barbarism. Medea has King Aegeus of Athens swear by “Earth and Sun” or the <i>cosmos</i>. Jason’s oath based on the gods is worthless. Hecate (see <u>Macbeth</u>) is her divine – “whom above all I worship” – lines 383-4. Is Medea’s poison cloak sophistry as it destroys a royal family?</p> |
| <p>John Fortescue</p> | <p><u>The Governance of England</u></p> | <p>1385-1476 - the earliest treatise on the English Regime.</p> |

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| Ernest L. Fortin | <u>Classical Christianity and the Political Problem: Reflections on the Theologico-Political Problem</u> 3 Vols. (ed. J. Brien Benestad), <u>Ever Ancient Ever New: Ruminations on the City, the Soul and the Church</u> (ed. Michael Foley) <u>Essay on Religion, Political Philosophy in Honour of Ernest L. Fortin</u> (ed. Michael P. Foley & Douglas Kries), <u>Gladly to Learn and Gladly to Teach, Dissent and Philosophy in the Middle Ages</u> (trans. M. A. Le Pain). | The greatest commentator on Christianity and the “Political/Theological Problem”. The greatest commentator on Dante. Pay attention to the poet mentioned by Dante – first letter “S” and note how Dante spells out his name in crucial speeches using a well-known technique. Ponder the word “knot”. |
| James Anthony Froude | <u>The History of England from the Fall of Wolsey to the Defeat of the Spanish Armada</u> | 1818-94 - Henry VIII was his hero. |
| Galilei Galileo | <u>Two New Sciences</u> (1638) | 1564-1642 – coincided with the appearance of a “nova”. He was the greatest “Copernican”. The Church condemned Galileo because he claimed “the truth” rather than possessing “truth” as hypothetical. Copernicus was incorrect as Tycho Brahe demonstrated, indicating “the politico-theological problem”. After Brahe’s discoveries, Kepler, Campanella and Galileo (a minority) still claimed to possess “the truth”. Copernicus had stated that the sun was in the middle of the universe, rather than following Ptolemy’s notion that the earth was in the middle and the sun revolved around it. The sun had metaphysical and theological implications - see Brother Thomas Campanella <u>The City of the Sun</u> (natural religion), which was written in direct opposition to St. Augustine’s <u>The City of God</u> . Johannes Kepler’s physics and astronomy were under the influence of a “Protagorean” claim that man is “the measuring creature”; hence, the Platonic sun recovers its former title. However, the finiteness of the world was the claim of the ancients and medievalists. Is this not a contradiction regarding “the infinite power of God”? “The infinite power of God” was first used in the 16 th century. “The infinity of God” became “One of the assumptions of our mathematical science” – hence the emphasis on “revolution”. |

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| John Gardner & John Maier (trans.) | <u>Gilgamesh</u> - compare the knowledge of the Moly plant in <u>The Odyssey</u> X 277 with this “magical plant” found from the bottom of the sea and compare the serpent with the biblical serpent. | The story was first told 6,000 years ago - essential reading for an understanding of the Middle East. The centre includes Tablets VI & VII – the fatal encounter with Ishtar (a goddess connected to <i>eros</i> /life). Tablet VII is essential reading as seven is important in Mesopotamian numerology – see Tablet VI 53 where Gilgamesh selected “a stallion” as the 7 th beloved. |
| Edward Gibbon | <u>History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire</u> - especially chaps. 1-3 & 15 | 1737-94 – part of Winston Churchill’s classical education. Written in the spirit of the Enlightenment. See also Shakespeare’s “Roman” plays including <u>Cymbeline</u> (the best possible regime) and the poem <u>The Rape of Lucrece</u> (the political foundation of Rome based on “honour”). |
| J o h a n n Wolfgang von Goethe | <u>Faust</u> | 1749-1832 - Germany’s “Shakespeare” and the greatest Enlightenment poet. See Faust’s change of “In the beginning was the word (logos)” to “the feeling” and then “the deed”. Action replaces contemplation, as “the first things are not the intelligible order but the chaos open to creativity”. |
| A l e x a n d e r Hamilton & James Madison | <u>Federalist Papers</u> (1787-88) especially nos. 1, 10, 39, 49, 51, 71, 78 & 84 | The original Political Science (Natural Right) that should guide the U.S. regime at all times. |
| William Harvey | <u>On the Motion of the Heart and Blood in Animals</u> | 1578-1657 – English doctor - one of the greatest books on modern Biology. |
| Georg W. F. Hegel | <u>Philosophy of Right</u> & <u>Philosophy of History</u> | 1770-1831 - the greatest alternative to Classic Natural Right. The greatest commentator on Hegel is A. Kojève: <u>Introduction to the Reading of Hegel</u> . See Peter Kalkavage <u>The Logic of Desire: An Introduction to Hegel’s Phenomenology of Spirit</u> . |

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| <p>M a r t i n Heidegger</p> | <p><u>An Introduction to Metaphysics, Being and Time, The End of Philosophy, Poetry, Language, Thought & On the Way to Language</u> - the latter is the foundation of the Postmodern movement that insists that “language”, based on historicism, informs literary interpretation. <u>Being and Truth</u> (trans.) G. Fried & R. Polt.</p> | <p>1889-1976 - one of the greatest 20th Century thinkers. The best on “Existentialism” (realism) and the climax of modern philosophy (the loss of reason). He never gave up his support of German “National Socialism” (the Nazis). He is very popular with the radical, Postmodern “Movement”, but he did not support the arrival of History’s “last men” - the Lotus Eaters.</p> |
| <p>Herodotus</p> | <p><u>History</u> (trans. D. Grene) – Book II (Egypt) is thought (“<i>dianoia</i>”) - everything seems double, but they can’t put them together, Book III (Persia) is trust (“<i>pistis</i>”) and Book IV (Scythia & Libya) is imaging (“<i>eikasia</i>”). After Book III 38, it’s the end of “the holy law” (the sacred, or priests disappear) and everything is seen in the light of the political. There are 9 Books – equivalent to the 9 invading Ionian philosophers, beginning with Thales. Compare the structure of Lucretius: II, III & IV.</p> | <p>484-430 BC - “History” means “Inquiry”. The Ionian, philosophic invasion of Greece – see the two bridges built by Xerxes. Predates Plato’s division of the soul - i.e. “the divided line”. Greece is a mean – the story of Gyges is the beginning of philosophy – “The beautiful things were found long ago, of which one of them is: only look at your own”. See Seth Benardete’s <u>Herodotean Inquiries</u> and Ann Ward’s <u>Herodotus and the Philosophy of Empire</u>.</p> |
| <p>Hesiod</p> | <p><u>Birth of the Gods</u></p> | <p>700 BC - the “bible” of Greek mythology. Examine Zeus’ action to prevent ongoing parricide – swallowing Métis and giving birth to Athena. See Jenny Strauss Clay (Leo Strauss’ daughter) <u>Hesiod’s Cosmos</u>.</p> |
| <p>Thomas Hobbes</p> | <p><u>Leviathan, Behemoth or Long Parliament, A Dialogue Between a Philosopher and a Student of the Common Laws of England</u> (J. Cropsey) & <u>Three Discourses</u> (Newly identified Works of the young Hobbes – A. W. Saxonhouse), <u>Leviathan: With Selected Variants from the Latin Edition of 1668</u> edited Edwin Curley.</p> | <p>1588-1679 - the foundation of Modern Psychology and modern economics – i.e. the modern Social Sciences based on modern Mathematics and modern Physics. See James R. Stoner Jun., <u>Common Law & Liberal Theory: Coke Hobbes, and the Origins of American Constitutionalism</u>. See Leo Strauss’s book on Hobbes and Leon Harold Craig <u>The Platonian Leviathan</u>. Craig argues that the key to the Leviathan and hence Hobbes is the central part – see one of Part I “On the Commonwealth” where Hobbes imitates Plato’s <u>Republic</u> in arguing that Philosophers must rule. Is Hobbes’ reliance on a mechanical universe a mythical use of the future dogmatic Modern Science? Also observe Craig’s centre.</p> |

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| <p>Homer</p> | <p><u>The Iliad</u> (the best/most literal trans. M. Hammond). Check the catalogue of ships, Book II – Odysseus is the central fifteenth place out of 29 listed with Agamemnon and Achilles being exactly 6 places from Odysseus in opposite directions & <u>The Odyssey</u> (best/most literal trans. A. Cook) – compare Hermes’ – who is said to have introduced writing - lack of shame in wishing to lie with Aphrodite in contrast to Ares’ shame in being caught with Hephaestus’s wife, Aphrodite. Hephaestus is furious (<i>thumos</i>) and publicly punishes Ares and his wife. The crippled, ugly Hephaestus wants to possess Aphrodite (beauty). Compare Hermes’ character with Queen Arete’s (“virtue”). She can “dissolve quarrels” (anger and enmity), meaning that she possesses wisdom. Hermes and Arete can observe (nature) without making things their own. King Alkinoos, Arête’s husband, is associated with <i>nous</i> or intellect, but lacks self-knowledge. He lacks prudence and is punished by the gods. Odysseus defeats the Cyclops by “<i>metis</i>” or “no one” or “mind” – the implication being that the gods are withdrawing. Note that Odysseus rejects Calypso’s (“concealer”) immoral beauty in becoming less selfish/isolated. Odysseus’ decision takes place after he meets Achilles in Hades and hears him say: “I would rather be a serf in a poor man’s house and be above ground than reign among the dead.” - (<u>The Odyssey</u> XI 489-91). It is the end of the heroic age of warriors.</p> | <p><i>Circa</i> 700 BC - the first Western discussion of Natural Right whether convention (Agamemnon) or nature (Achilles) should rule. Menelaus decides the issue in challenging Paris – winner has Helen and concludes the war - (chaps. 1 & 3 of <u>The Iliad</u>). Plato’s ladder of love, outlined by Diotima in the <u>Symposium</u>, is based on <u>The Iliad</u> – see the ladder from Helen to the glory of Hector and to the elimination of Ares and Aphrodite. The first to mention philosophy (physics/physis) is in <u>The Odyssey</u> (chap. 10). In Hades, count the characters and note that only a wise “shadow” can speak in Hades (meaning “invisible”). The central event in Odysseus’ journey is his confrontation with Circe. This is where Odysseus’ men are transformed into pigs. His men retain “<i>logos</i>” or speech, but they take the form of pigs. Hermes (the god of language/<i>logos</i>) gives Odysseus the knowledge (“<i>physis</i>”) of the Moly plant that is independent of the gods and secures human nature. The best discussion is Seth Benardete <u>The Bow and the Lyre</u>. See also Jenny Strauss Clay (Leo Strauss’ daughter) <u>The Wrath of Athena: Gods and Man in ‘The Odyssey’</u> and Eva Brann <u>Homeric Moments</u>.</p> |
| <p>Richard Hooker</p> | <p><u>Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity</u></p> | <p>1553-1600 – the greatest defence of the Church of England – see R. K. Faulkner: <u>Richard Hooker and the Politics of a Christian England</u>.</p> |
| <p>David Hume</p> | <p><u>Treatise of Human Nature</u> (Book III parts 1 & 2), <u>Enquiry Concerning the Principles of Morals</u> (Sections 1, 3, 4, 5 & 9) & <u>History of England</u></p> | <p>1711-76 - regarding morality, Hume followed Hobbes & Locke – “passion” is the key, not “reason”; however, he believed that government should be based on “custom” not “contract”.</p> |
| <p>Edmund Husserl</p> | <p><u>Logical Investigations</u></p> | <p>1859 - 1938 - Founder of Phenomenology.</p> |

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| Harry Jaffa | <u>Crisis of the House Divided, The Conditions of Freedom, Statesmanship: How to Think about the American Revolution, American Conservatism and the American Founding, Statesmanship Essays in Honor of Sir Winston S. Churchill, Original Intent and the Framers of the Constitution & A New Birth of Freedom, Crisis of the Strauss Divided: Essays on Leo Strauss and Straussianism, East and West,</u> | Perhaps America's greatest Political Philosopher – the <u>Crisis</u> is the most brilliant analysis regarding the “Theologico-Political Problem” relating to the American Civil War. Lincoln supported Natural Right, Calhoun - State Rights or the priority of the social over the individual. Read the true story behind the genius (Churchill) of Gallipoli – Jeffrey D. Wallin <u>By Ships Alone</u> . |
| T h o m a s Jefferson | <u>The Declaration of Independence & Letters</u> | 1743-1826 - the author of the “soul” of the U.S. Constitution (Natural Right). |
| Immanuel Kant | <u>Groundwork in the Metaphysics of Morals</u> (Preface & Parts 1-3) | 1724-1804 - the last great philosopher of Liberalism. Morality supersedes prudence. |
| Leon Kass | <u>Life, Liberty, and the Defense of Dignity: The Challenge for Bioethics, The Beginning of Wisdom: Reading Genesis, The Hungry Soul & Toward a More Natural Science</u> | A scientist and medical doctor who understood the importance of Natural Right for Modern Science. |
| R i c h a r d Kennington | <u>On Modern Origins: Essay in Early Modern Philosophy</u> (ed. P. Krauss & F. Hunt) | The best commentator on Descartes and the Modern Enlightenment. |
| John Maynard Keynes | <u>The General Theory of Employment, Interest, and Money</u> | 1883-1946 - the greatest work on economics that almost gets back to Aristotle, i.e., to common sense or “house-hold management” or “economicus” (Greek), instead of a remote, abstract mathematical “cosmos”. For everything one needs to know concerning the fundamentals of economics (“household management”) see Aristotle <u>The Politics</u> : Book 1. |
| S ö r e n Kierkegaard | <u>Philosophical Fragments</u> - especially 1-5 | 1813-55 - critic of rationalism and founder of Christian Existentialism. |

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| Jacob Klein | <u>Greek Mathematics</u> | 1899-1978 - the best book on Mathematics. Francois Viéta was the founder of “mathematical science” combining analytical geometry (founded by Descartes) with algebra. The number “2” is replaced by “a”, indicating that “a” does not mean two definite things. Simon Stevin was the other founder of Modern Mathematics. See the fifth book of Euclid containing geometrical algebra and its development from Plato (<u>Timaeus</u> is only a likely story), Proculus (Commentary on Book One of Euclid), Kepler, Descartes, Wallis and Descartes to modern, symbolic logic. For “all Greek mathematics”, “2” was the first number, because arithmetic was “a number of things”. The number one (1) was beyond being; it was the idea of the Good. The new mathematics (outlined by Francois Viéta) is based on the claim that every problem can be solved. Since maths is the basis of Modern Physics and Modern Science, the outlook became very optimistic. |
| Alexandre Kojève | <u>Outline of a Phenomenology of Right & Introduction to the Reading of Hegel</u> (trans. Bryan-Paul Frost & Robert Howse), <u>The Concept, Time and Discourse</u> (edited Ronna Burger & Michael Davis). | 1902-68 – another brilliant thinker of the 20 th Century – an intelligent “Marxist” responsible for GATT and the European Union. He is the father of “Globalization”. See him in the greatest philosophic debate of the 20 th Century in Leo Strauss: <u>On Tyranny</u> . The debate is over the issue of what constitutes the best way of life – is it the active life or the contemplative (philosophic) life? See <u>Alexandre Kojève: Wisdom at the End of History (20th Century Political Thinkers)</u> James H. Nichols. See Francis Fukuyama <u>State Building Governance and World Order in the 21st Century</u> and his latest book <u>The Origins of Political Order</u> – a Bloom and Kojève student. Note the 31 division and the central 16 th part. Comedy and seriousness at its most comical. |
| Etienne de La Boétie | <u>The Voluntary Servitude</u> | Montaigne’s only friend – contributed to the 16 th Century Protestant and Catholic debate. |

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| Ralph Lerner & Muhsin Mahdi | <u>Medieval Political Philosophy</u> | The greatest source book on Medieval Political Philosophy. Pay attention to the footnotes. Contains Defoe's source for <u>Robinson Crusoe</u> . See Muhsin Mahdi <u>Ibn Khaldun Philosophy of History</u> – 14 th Century, Muslim Historian influenced by Plato & Aristotle. See <u>Enlightening Revolutions: Essays in Honor of Ralph Lerner</u> ed. Svetozar Minkov. See the latter essays on Strauss and his private comments on Heidegger. |
| G o t t h o l d Ephraim Lessing | <u>Laocoön An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry</u> (trans. Edward A. McCormick) & <u>Nathan the Wise</u> | 1729-81 – the most brilliant “Humanist” - the latter book is excellent on the three great religions. The last thinker to appreciate esoteric writing. |
| Clive Staples Lewis | <u>The Abolition of Man</u> & <u>Mere Christianity</u> | 1898-1963 - <u>The Abolition of Man</u> is the best introduction to the “Crisis of Western Civilization”. <u>Mere Christianity</u> is a classic on Christianity and <u>A Myth Retold</u> is based on the story of Psyche and Cupid. Compare it with Apuleius: <u>The Golden Ass</u> . |
| A b r a h a m Lincoln | <u>Speeches</u> | 1809-65 - the Douglas/Lincoln Debate was the greatest political debate of the nineteenth Century (Natural Right). |
| N i k o l a y I v a n o v i c h Lobachevsky | <u>The Theory of Parallels</u> | 1792-1856 - an excellent example of modern philosophy's influence on mathematics – the importance of “space”. He demonstrates that parallel lines do meet (non-Euclidian geometry). |
| John Locke | <u>A Letter Concerning Toleration</u> - check all Locke's quotations - <u>Second Treatise on Government</u> & <u>The Reasonableness of Christianity</u> | 1632-1704 – necessary reading for all students of Government. He follows Hobbes's political economy (Capitalism) adding representative government. See his requirements for a Liberal Education. |

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| Lucretius | <u>On the Nature of Things</u> - follows Plato's divided line – Book II (thought), Book III (trust) & Book IV (imaging). One of the greatest satires/parodies of cosmological “science”. Is the volcanic “wind” that permeates the market place the flatulence of Sophistry? | 99-55 BC – on the pleasures of the philosophic life. Scientific pleasure is one pillar supporting Hobbes's Political Philosophy. Humorous like Plato's <u>Timaeus</u> . Plato's four fundamental building blocks – “the most perfect bodies” - of the cosmos are: Socrates (equilateral triangle the best of the triangles), Plato (isosceles “half square”), Aristotle (half equilateral) and Xenophon. All four are united by “one angle”. Is the unnamed 5 th geometrical body or “perfect body” Natural herself? These 4 equate with the 4 elements: fire, air, earth and water. So what of the fifth? |
| Martin Luther | <u>Three Treatises</u> | 1483-1546 - one of the great Church Reformers. Luther denies “free will”. |
| Thomas Macaulay | <u>History of England</u> | 1800-59 – a Whig account of the Glorious Revolution of 1688. Part of Winston Churchill's education in English & Politics. |
| Niccolo Machiavelli | <u>Niccolo Machiavelli Clizia</u> (trans. D. T. Gallagher Intro. Robert K. Faulkner) <u>Mandragola</u> (trans. M. J. Flaumenhaft, <u>The Prince</u> (trans. H. C. Mansfield or A. M. Codevilla or L. P. S. de Alvarez), <u>Discourse on Livy</u> (trans. H. C. Mansfield) & <u>Art of War</u> (trans. C. Lynch) – “So as not to send messages by mouth, they write letters in cipher and hide them in various modes” – p. 154. <u>Machiavelli and his Friends: Their Personal Correspondence</u> (ed. James B. Atkinson & David Sices) – note the role of Eros, especially in the bizarre erotic activities of Machiavelli himself, <u>Florentine Histories</u> (trans. L. F. Banfield & Harvey C. Mansfield) | 1469-1527 - the founder of the modern Enlightenment. The first great rejection of Plato, Aristotle & the Bible as guides to political life. <u>Mandragola</u> is a re-founding of Rome – Lucrece. See Leo Paul S. de Alvarez <u>The Machiavellian Enterprise: A Commentary on the Prince</u> , Carnes Lord <u>The Modern Prince</u> , H. C. Mansfield <u>Taming the Prince</u> , Roger D. Masters <u>Fortune is a River: Leonardo Da Vinci's and Niccolo Machiavelli's Magnificent Dream to Change the Course of Florentine History</u> , Vickie B. Sullivan <u>The Comedy and Tragedy of Machiavelli Essays on the Literary Works</u> . See Paul. J. Rasmussen <u>Excellence Unleashed: Machiavelli's Critique of Xenophon and the Moral Foundation of Politics</u> . <u>Against Throne and Alter: Machiavelli and Political Theory Under the English Republic</u> Paul A. Rahe. |
| Moses Maimonides | <u>The Guide of the Perplexed</u> (trans. Shlomo Pines with “Introductory” by Leo Strauss) | 1135-1204 – the greatest Jewish political philosopher and defender of the Faith and the Political. Admired Plato and Aristotle and understood the necessity of esoteric writing. See Ralf Lerner <u>Maimonides' Empire of Light: Popular Enlightenment in an Age of Belief</u> . |

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| Christopher Marlowe | <u>The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus</u> – note the negativity in the first three clauses of the play – the play begins with “Not”, indicating the true character of the Devil. The theme of the play is: “I will be Paris, and for love of thee, / Instead of Troy, shall Wittenberg be sack’d; / And I will combat with weak Menelaus . . .” (Faust). What is contradictory about Mephistophilis’ refusal to tell Faust who made the world? | 1564-93 – Athens and Jerusalem. Note Faust is a commoner who seeks the Devil, but is not tempted by the Devil. Why 24 years of magical powers? (Check Luke, another doctor – remember that Faust is a Natural Philosopher, not a Political Philosopher). Lucifer and Faust suffer from pride – check the central (3 rd) encounter with the good and bad angels. Faust is concerned with resoluteness (self-assertiveness) – see the link to Heidegger and Faith. Achilles and Socrates are replaced by the new hero – the martyr. |
| Marsilius of Padua | <u>The Defender of Peace</u> | 1275-1342 – Christian Aristotelian. His “anticlericalism” led to Machiavelli’s questioning of the superiority of contemplation. The Political is crucial. |
| Karl Marx | <u>The Communist Manifesto</u> - the greatest praise of capitalism, <u>Capital</u> - the key to Marx is in the first 10 chaps., <u>The Economic & Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844</u> & <u>The German Ideology</u> | 1818-83 – Economy is the true ground of society and human nature. He accepts the labor theory of value. The “replacement of philosophy by history was the condition for the replacement of politics and religion by society and economics”. Marx proposes the end of the West – i.e. the end of philosophy, religion and political life. Is History “the opiate of the masses”? |
| John Stuart Mill | <u>On Liberty</u> | 1806-73 – influenced by 18 th Century French thought (Comte) – The “Socratic” model is meant for all men capable of achieving it. Individual initiative is better than government control. |
| John Milton | <u>Paradise Lost, Of Education & Areopagitica and Other Political Writings of John Milton</u> - Forward John Alvis | 1608-74 – Milton attempts to establish a free commonwealth that honours philosophy and educates its citizens to pursue knowledge with moderation. |
| Molière (Jean-Baptiste Poquelin) | <u>The Misanthrope</u> | 1622-73 – great French playwright influenced by Montaigne. He tried, with Hobbes, “to undermine the unsociability that comes from the practise of virtue”; hence, the emphasis on “utilitarian social value” hated by Rousseau. |

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| <p>Michel de Montaigne</p> | <p><u>Essays</u></p> | <p>1553-92 – the great Renaissance Humanist (admired classical antiquity) and mediator between Catholics and Protestants – advisor to the Catholic Henri IV (former Protestant king of Navarre). A very covert writer. See <u>The Political Philosophy of Montaigne</u> David. L. Schaefer.</p> |
| <p>Montesquieu</p> | <p><u>Persian Letters, The Greatness of the Romans and their Decline</u> (trans. D. Lowenthal) & <u>The Spirit of the Laws</u></p> | <p>1689-1755 - an outline of the modern, representative republic based on liberty and commerce, not virtue. See <u>Erotic Liberalism: Woman and Revolution in Montesquieu’s Persian Letters</u> D. J. Schaub. See the best commentary: <u>The Theological Basis of Liberal Modernity in Montesquieu’s ‘Spirit of the Laws’</u> by Thomas L. Pangle, Paul A. Rahe <u>Montesquieu and the Logic of Liberty: War, Religion, Commerce, Climate, Terrain, Technology, Uneasiness of Mind, the Spirit of Political Vigilance and the Foundation of the Modern Republic.</u></p> |
| <p>Thomas More</p> | <p><u>Utopia</u></p> | <p>1478-1535 – (“nowhere”) a Christian rewrite of Plato’s <u>Republic</u> without laughter.</p> |
| <p>Muhammad</p> | <p><u>The Koran Interpreted</u> (A. J. Arberry)</p> | <p>570-632 - pay attention to the structure – chapter titles, especially for the overall structure outlined in II (“The Cow”), the centre – XXVI (“The Poet”) & LVII (“Iron”).</p> |
| <p>Isaac Newton</p> | <p><u>Newton’s Principia: The Central Argument</u> (trans. W. H. Donahue) & <u>Clarke Correspondence</u></p> | <p>1643-1727 - Newton’s “gravity” is based on a massive contradiction. Gravity is matter in motion, with a nondynamical cause of motion – the steady point, i.e., motion is created by non-motion. For a more thoughtful and consistent understanding of “motion” – see Aristotle’s <u>Physics</u>. Motion is related to place.</p> |

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| <p>F r i e d r i c h Nietzsche</p> | <p><u>On the Genealogy of Morals & Ecce Homo</u> (all trans. Walter Kaufmann), <u>The Will to Power</u> Kaufmann, <u>The Birth of Tragedy & The Case of Wagner</u>, <u>Twilight of the Idols & The Anti-Christ</u>, <u>The Gay Science</u>, <u>On the Advantages and Disadvantages of History for Life</u>, <u>Prefaces to Unwritten Works</u> Friedrich Nietzsche (trans Michael W Grenke), <u>Schopenhauer As Educator</u> – Nietzsche’s first introduction to Philosophy, <u>Frederick Nietzsche on the Future of our Educational Institutions</u> (trans. Michael W Grenke), <u>Beyond Good and Evil</u> (W. Kaufmann) & <u>Thus Spoke Zarathustra</u> (W. Kaufmann) – especially “Prologue” pp. 9 – 25 (“the <i>last man</i>”). Nietzsche and Heidegger were indirectly responsible for the rise of Fascism, which was a futile attempt to solve the “Theologico-Political Problem” – i.e., the dangers of joining “Athens” (philosophy) and “Jerusalem” (“religion”).</p> | <p>1844-1900 - the greatest 19th Century philosopher who sadly announced, “God is dead” and stressed the “Will to Power”. He was Heidegger’s teacher. Both dominate Western Universities esp. the Humanities today with an emphasis on resoluteness, historicism and creativity. See <u>Nietzsche’s Teaching: An Interpretation of Thus Spoke Zarathustra</u> Laurence Lampert, <u>Nietzsche’s Task: An Interpretation of Beyond Good and Evil</u> Laurence Lampert., <u>The Paradox of Philosophical Education: Nietzsche’s New Nobility and the Eternal Recurrence in ‘Beyond Good and Evil’</u> J. Harvey Lomax. For Nietzsche’s best discussion of the Philosopher see <u>Genealogy of Morals</u>, Third Essay – 8-14 – essential reading for those interested in the qualities of the Philosopher. See the Nietzschean Laurence Lampert <u>How Philosophy Became Socratic – A Study of Plato’s ‘Protagoras’, ‘Charmides’ and ‘Republic’</u>.</p> |
| <p>Ovid (Publius Ovidius Naso)</p> | <p><u>Metamorphoses</u> (trans. Arthur Golding & also trans. Allen Mandelbaum).</p> | <p>43BC–17AD – Shakespeare’s favourite classical poet. Socratic teaching hidden behind Greek myth.</p> |
| <p>Blaise Pascal</p> | <p><u>Pensées</u></p> | <p>1623-62 - the greatest French Christian. Descartes and Pascal are the two choices between “Reason” and “Revelation”. Tocqueville considered Pascal to be “the most perfect of men”.</p> |

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| <p>Plato</p> | <p><u>Apology</u> (trans. T. G. West), <u>Read First Cleitophon</u> (trans. Mark Kremer), <u>Charmides</u> (trans. T. G. West), <u>Plato and Aristophanes: Four Texts on Socrates: Plato's Euthyphro, Apology, Crito and Aristophanes' 'Clouds'</u>, (trans. T. G. West & G. S. West), <u>Gorgias & Phaedrus</u> (trans. James H. Nichols), (<u>Plato Gorgias and Aristotle Rhetoric</u>, <u>The Laws</u> (trans. Joe Sachs), (<u>Lysis</u> (trans. D. Bolotin), <u>Plato's Menexenus and Pericles's Funeral Oration: Empire and the Ends of Politics</u> (ed. Susan Collin & Devin Stauffer), <u>Meno</u> (trans. G. Anastaplo & L. Berns), <u>Parmenides</u> (trans. A. K. Whitaker), <u>Phaedo</u> (trans. E. Brann, P. Kalkavage & E. Salam), <u>Protagoras and Meno</u> (trans. Robert C. Bartlett), <u>Sophist</u> (trans. S. Benardete or another translation by E. Brann, P. Kalkavage & E. Salem), <u>Statesman</u> (trans. S. Benardete), <u>Symposium</u> (trans. S. Benardete), <u>Theaetetus</u> (trans. S. Benardete or another translation - J. Sach's edition), <u>The Republic</u> (trans. A. Bloom's & Joe Sachs' edition). <u>Plato's Republic & Timaeus</u> (trans. P. Kalkavage) – the greatest parody on autonomous, “scientific” cosmology – see my notes on Lucretius, <u>Socrates and Alcibiades: Plato's 'Alcibiades I', 'Alcibiades II' Plato's 'Symposium' & Aeschines of Sphettus 'Alcibiades'</u> (trans. David D. Johnson A. K. Whitaker). For the best translation of the minor Platonic dialogues: <u>The Roots of Political Philosophy</u> (ed. T. L. Pangle). <u>Euthydemus</u> (trans. Mary P. Nichols). <u>Socrates and the Sophists: Plato's Protagoras, Euthydemus, Hippias Major and Cratylus</u> (trans. Joe Sachs).</p> <p>For Commentaries see: Michael Davis: <u>The Soul of the Greeks</u>, Mark Blitz: <u>Plato's Political Philosophy</u>, Mitchell H. Miller <u>Plato's 'Parmenides': The Conversion of the Soul & The Philosopher in Plato's 'Statesman'</u>, Mark J. Lutz <u>Socrates' Education to Virtue: Learn the Love of the Noble</u>, Ronna Burger, <u>The 'Phaedo' A Platonic Labyrinth & Plato's 'Phaedrus' – A Defence of a Philosophic Art of Writing</u>, K. Dorter <u>'Phaedo' – An Interpretation</u>, C. L. Griswold <u>Self Knowledge in Plato's 'Phaedrus'</u>, Stanley Rosen <u>The Quarrel between Philosophy and Poetry</u>, <u>Plato's 'Symposium', The Ancients and the Moderns & Plato's 'Sophist', Plato's 'Statesman' & Plato's 'Republic'</u>. David M. Leibowitz <u>The Ironic Defence of Socrates: Plato's Apology</u>. See Laurence D. Cooper <u>Eros in Plato, Rousseau and Nietzsche: The Politics of Infinity and The Soul of the Greeks</u> by Michael Davis, <u>The Unity of Plato's</u></p> | <p>427-347 BC - the greatest political philosopher of nature who begins from common sense - i.e. the most authoritative opinions of the city. Begin with <u>Lysis</u> (on friendship) – it's very short and is the key to understanding Socrates. Socrates solves Parmenides' refutation of the ideas by posing the problem that “everything has to be understood as neither-nor, and, on the other hand, everything has to be akin to the good”. The <i>idion</i> (one's own); hence, it is what Socrates doesn't know, for if he does know it, then the knowledge is universal. See J. Cropsey <u>Plato's World: Man's Place in the Cosmos</u>. Diskin Clay & Andrew Purvis <u>Four Utopias: Iamboulos 'Iland of the Sun' Sir Francis Bacon 'New Atlantis' Plato's Atlantis Euhemeros of Messenes Panchaia</u>, C. H. Zuckert <u>Plato's Philosophers: The Coherence of the Dialogues</u>. See also <u>Socratic Rationalism and Political Philosophy: An Interpretation of Plato's Phaedo</u> Paul Stern, E. Brann <u>Open Secrets Inward Prospects Reflections on World and Soul</u>, E. Brann <u>The Music of the Republic: Essay on Socrates' Conversations and Plato's Writings</u>, David Roochnik <u>Of Art and Wisdom: Plato's Understanding of Techne</u>, & <u>Beautiful City The Dialectical Character of Plato's 'Republic'</u>, Catherine Zuckert <u>Post Modern Platos, Nietzsche, Heidegger, Gadamer, Strauss, Derrida</u> – essential reading, G. Anastaplo <u>The Thinker as Artist From Homer to Plato and Aristotle</u>, G. Ferrari <u>Listening to the Cicadas: A Study of Plato's 'Phaedrus'</u>, Crucial reading - Laurence Lampert <u>How Philosophy Became Socratic: A Study of Plato's 'Protagoras', 'Charmides', and 'Republic'</u>. See also Peter S. Ahrensdoerf <u>The Death of Socrates and the Life of Philosophy – An Interpretation of Plato's 'Phaedo'</u>. See Mary P. Nichols <u>Socrates and the Political Community. Plato Euthyphro & Clitophon</u> Greek with comments. edited by Jacques Bailly. <u>Prudes, Perverts, and Tyrants: Plato's Gorgias and the Politics of Shame</u> Christina H. Tarnopolsky. For pre-Socratic Philosophy see Eva Brann</p> |
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| Plutarch | <u>Plutarch's Lives or Illustrious Men</u> | 46-119 AD - a Greek philosopher who examined the "Heroes" – a great antidote to radical Postmodernism, meaning that Science has not eradicated the essential mystery of life. Pay attention to "Alexander". See also Homer & Churchill. |
| Jean-Jacques Rousseau | <u>The Reveries of the Solitary Walker</u> (trans. Charles E. Butterworth), <u>Emile</u> (trans. A. Bloom), <u>Jean Jacques Rousseau Social Contract & The Confessions and Correspondence Including Letters to Malesherbes</u> , (trans. C. Kelly ed. C. Kelly, R. D. Masters & P. G. Stillway), <u>Letter to M. D'Alembert on the Theatre</u> (trans. A. Bloom), <u>The First and Second Discourses</u> (trans. R. D. Masters), <u>Julie or the New Heloise Letter of Two Lovers who Live in a Small Town at the Foot of the Alps</u> (trans. P. Stewart & J. Vache) & <u>On the Social Contract</u> - especially Book IV, chap. VIII – "On Civil Religion", <u>Discourse on the Virtue Most Necessary for a Hero</u> , <u>Political Fragment and Geneva Manuscript</u> (ed. R. D. Masters, C. Kelly, trans. J. R. Bush, R. D. Masters & C. Kelly). Rousseau was the first to see the monkey as the "true" origin of mankind. | 1712-78 – indirectly responsible for the French Revolution. He begins with "a Cartesian radical doubt" and then attempts "to put the machine back together again". He is the third wave of Modernity who takes <i>Eros</i> seriously. For the greatest critique of acting and the theatre see chaps. 2 & 5: <u>Letter to D'Alembert on the Theatre</u> . See <u>The Autobiography of Philosophy: Rousseau's The Reveries of the Solitary Walker</u> Michael Davis, <u>Jean Jacques Rousseau on the Social Contract with Geneva Manuscript and Political Economy</u> , (ed. R. D. Masters, trans. Judith R. Masters), <u>Rousseau's Social Contract – The Design of the Argument</u> Hilail Gildin, <u>The Legacy of Rousseau</u> Clifford Orwin, <u>Nathan Tarcov, Rousseau the Modern Self in Rousseau's Confessions – A Reply to St. Augustine</u> Ann Hartle. Laurence .D. Cooper <u>Rousseau Nature: The Problem of the Good Life</u> . |
| Robert D. Sacks | <u>A Commentary on the Book of Genesis</u> | The best Commentary on <u>Genesis</u> in terms of the "Theologico-Political Problem". |

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| <p>Carl Schmitt</p> | <p><u>The Concept of the Political</u>, <u>The Crisis of Parliamentary Democracy</u>, <u>The Leviathan in the State Theory of Thomas Hobbes</u>, <u>Land and Sea</u>, <u>The Nomos of the Earth</u>, <u>Roman Catholicism and Political Form</u>, <u>Meaning and Failure of a Political Symbol</u> (trans. George Schwab & E. Hilfstein), <u>Theory of the Partisan</u> (trans. G. L. Ulmea), <u>Political Romanticism</u> (trans. Guy Oakes)</p> | <p>1888-1985 - the greatest, the most dangerous, most “evil” Political Theologian. The fourth greatest 20th Century thinker. He was justly banned from all public teaching positions after W.W. II for his support of the Nazi regime. Happily, the Marxists and Europeans who admire and use him to solve the problem of Nihilism, or “the belief in nothing”, that dominates the world today, fail to understand Schmitt’s revolutionary and illiberal teachings. See H. Meier: <u>Carl Schmitt & Leo Strauss the Hidden Dialogue</u> and <u>The Lesson of Carl Schmitt</u>. Leo Strauss considered Political Theology the only worthy alternative to Political Philosophy. Strauss conducted a hidden conversation with Schmitt in Strauss’ <u>City and Man</u>. See Brett Dutton’s PhD digital thesis, Sydney University Library – <u>Leo Strauss’ Recovery of the Political: ‘The City and Man’ as a Reply to Carl Schmidt’s ‘The Concept of the Political’</u>. He continues the “Theologico-Political” debate with Schmitt in Strauss’ book on Aristophanes plays: <u>Socrates and Aristophanes</u>. The true title of the latter is <u>Strauss and Schmitt</u>, where Strauss ironically takes the role of Aristophanes in an effort to correct Schmitt. Count the times “friend/enemy” appear in the ‘Introduction’ and in the ‘Conclusion’. The book is broken into 4 parts to indicate that this is Strauss’ Cosmos – see my notes on Lucretius/<u>Timaeus</u> regarding fire, air, earth and water and the best triangles (3).</p> |
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| <p>W i l l i a m Shakespeare</p> | <p>Given the 21st Century's greatest threat – universal tyranny – read <u>Hamlet</u> (pay attention to the names of the guards in the opening scene, the setting, the Ghost's clothing and Hamlet's last words), <u>Othello</u> Shakespeare's answer to Modern Terrorism ("honest" Iago – means "Jacob" - and is the most truthful character in the play. Desdemona means "superstitious"), <u>Romeo and Juliet</u> (Faith/Jerusalem and Reason/Athens. Verona was Dante's home of exile & Mantua was the birthplace of Vergil), <u>Much Ado About Nothing</u> (Socrates claimed he "knew nothing" – check the names and reflect on the speeches of Beatrice, Benedick and the fools), <u>Twelfth Night</u> (the title is the key – a close look at Puritanism), <u>Richard III</u> (Machiavellian tyranny without ideology or conscience), <u>Macbeth</u> (Natural Right and tyranny without ideology), <u>Antony and Cleopatra</u> (the universal and homogeneous state of today), <u>Titus Andronicus</u> (the end of History or the end of Western Civilization & the political limits of Christian morality), <u>Julius Caesar</u> (a political introduction to Christianity), <u>Richard II</u> (a god becoming a man), <u>King John</u> (statesmanship and realism – the Bastard is Shakespeare himself - i.e. prudence without power. Note the omission of the Magna Carta), <u>Henry IV</u> (the philosophic education of a Prince – Falstaff, a parody of Socrates as a modern, fictional character), <u>Henry V</u> (the Machiavellian Prince and the cause of England's greatest political disaster – the War of the Roses) & <u>As You Like It</u> (fathers and children, matter, mirth and melancholy). For an overview of Shakespeare's "Theologico-Political" solution see: <u>King Lear</u> (the limits of Natural Right & how to perpetrate the best regime in a pre/post-Socratic setting. Edgar is a reformed Cordelia or "heart"/"rope" – she is appropriately hanged), <u>Cymbeline</u> (the best, practical regime set around the birth of Christ), <u>The Merchant of Venice</u> (happiness and the survival of philosophy in a commercial Republic and the cause of Modern Terrorism. Who is the Terrorist? Antonio? – Portia is the new Medea – pay attention to those who live in Belmont and note what they do there), <u>The Winter's Tale</u> (observe Autolycus), <u>Troilus and Cressida</u> (the two truths: poetry and philosophy – the limits of "religion" and "philosophy"), <u>Timon of Athens</u> (nature and the city), <u>Measure for Measure</u> (chastity as a political principle – Vienna, the capital of the Holy Roman Empire), <u>A Midsummer Night's Dream</u></p> | <p>1564-1616 - the greatest English poet and playwright who best understood "the Theologico-Political Problem" and the classical idea of nature. As a poet, he holds up a mirror. The key to all Shakespeare's plays lies in the first scene and has the best description of the rise and fall of Rome and Athens. There is usually something comical on every line of his plays. For the synthesis of Jerusalem (Romeo) and Athens (Juliet) – see <u>Romeo and Juliet</u>. Necessary reading for all statesmen interested in the cause of Modern Terrorism. Shakespeare outlines the cause of violence and terrorism in scene one. The key to the play is working out what poison Romeo buys in Mantua. Only Romeo, Friar Laurence and Lady Capulet know of the poison. Who cries when Tybalt dies? Does he place poison on the end of his sword in order to kill Hermes (Mercury) more swiftly? See Michael Platt <u>Rome and Romans According to Shakespeare</u> (revised edition), Jan Blitz <u>The Insufficiency of Virtue – Deadly Thoughts & The Soul Of Athens & Spirit Soul and City</u>, David Lowenthal <u>Shakespeare and the Good Life</u>, John E. Alvis & Thomas G. West <u>Shakespeare as Political Thinker</u>, Tim Spiekerman <u>Shakespeare's Political Realism</u>, Stephen W. Smith & Travis Curtright <u>Shakespeare's Last Plays</u>, see Bernard J. Dobski, Dustin A. Gish <u>Souls with Longing: Representations of Honor and Love in Shakespeare</u>.</p> |
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| Adam Smith | <p><u>An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations</u> (Book I, chaps. i-xi; Book V, chap. i) (1776) & <u>Theory of Moral Sentiments</u> (1759)</p> | <p>1723-90 - Founder of scientific Economics (Liberal Capitalism). Outlined a theory of “sympathy mechanism” as strict morality. Invented the “invisible hand”, an Historicist. Political Economy replaces Political Philosophy as the Queen of the Social Sciences</p> |
| Sophocles | <p>All plays, especially <u>Antigone</u> (the right of the family to challenge the right of the city, or the disaster caused by a love of nobility – see Hamlet’s central soliloquy “whether ‘tis nobler in the mind to suffer the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune”), <u>Oedipus Tyrannus</u> (see Plato’s <u>Republic</u>, Book 9). The “limping third” refers to Aristotle’s <u>Politics</u>, where he uses 3 as the foundation for his divisions, following the impractical Hippodamus. Oedipus uses a stick to walk. This is the final part of the Sphinx’s riddle, but triads don’t work. The riddle includes 3 parts, the baby, the man and the old man. Notice when the word “polis” disappears from the play. See Plato’s <u>Meno</u> regarding the learning done by the slave boy – the geometrical solutions are “two feet”, “three feet” and “four feet”. The play begins with a political problem, then a family problem and then a problem of self-knowledge. Oedipus’s desire to be autonomous or a god – i.e., without an origin/parents, leads to the greatest tragedy for him, his family and the polis. The theme: we need the gods or divine law. <u>Sophocles II</u> (trans. /edited by D. Grene & R. Lattimore) includes: <u>Ajax</u> & <u>The Women of Trachis</u>, <u>Electra</u> & <u>Philoctetes</u>.</p> | <p>495-406 BC – the theme of the first two plays is the disappearance of the “polis”. <u>Philoctetes</u> outlines the “Theologico-Political Problem” (politics, justice and piety). Oedipus is a precursor to Christ (guilt bearer). The tyrant (be it Science or a human being) is a foolish seeker of self-sufficiency and full autonomy – i.e. godlike and the source of his/its own being. Thus, “his character is his destiny”.</p> |
| Benedict Spinoza | <p><u>Theologico-Political Treatise</u> (trans. M. D. Yaffe)</p> | <p>1632-77 - the great Founder of modern Liberal Democracy. Crucial reading given his claim that freedom cannot be preserved “when a love of speculation is absent”. The serenity of contemplation depends on rejection of the Classics and a “successful reconstruction [mathematical] of the social and political, or human order”; yet, “only the philosopher is free”. See P. G. Wodehouse: <u>Carry On, Jeeves</u>. A “slave” becomes the true, modern “master”.</p> |

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| <p>Leo Strauss</p> | <p><u>Liberalism – Ancient and Modern, What is Political Philosophy? An Introduction to Political Philosophy</u> (ed. H. Gilden), <u>Natural Right and History, Persecution and the Art of Writing, On Tyranny</u> Leo Strauss Corrected and Expanded Edition Including the Strauss-Kojeve Correspondence published 2013 V. Gourevitch & M.S. Roth, <u>Thoughts on Machiavelli, The City and Man, Socrates and Aristophanes, The Argument and the Action of Plato’s Laws, Jewish Philosophy and the Crisis of Modernity Essays and Lectures in Modern Jewish Thought</u> edited Kenneth Hart Green, <u>Studies in Platonic Political Philosophy, The Political Philosophy of Hobbes, Hobbes’s Critique of Religion and Related Writings</u> trans./edited Gabriel Bartlett & Svetozar Minkov. <u>Leo Strauss The Early Writings (1921-1932)</u> trans./edited Michael Zank, <u>On Plato’s Symposium</u> edited & Foreword Seth Benardete, <u>Philosophy and Law: Contributions to the Understanding of Maimonides and his Predecessors, Leo Strauss Xenophon’s Socrates</u> edited Allan Bloom Foreword Christopher Bruell, <u>Leo Strauss Xenophon’s Socratic Discourse An Interpretation of the ‘Oeconomicus’</u> Preface Allan Bloom Foreword Christopher Bruell with a literal translation by Carnes Lord Strauss’s favourite book, <u>The Rebirth of Classical Political Philosophy</u> (ed. T. Pangle), <u>Leo Strauss: the Early Writings 1921-32</u> (trans. Michael Zank). See Strauss’ complete works – J. B. Metzler <u>Leo Strauss Gesammelte Schriften, Faith and Political Philosophy: The Correspondence Between Leo Strauss and Eric Voegelin 1934-64</u> (trans. Peter Emberleg & Barry Cooper). For the best biographies on Strauss see Daniel Tanguay <u>Leo Strauss: An Intellectual Biography</u>. Thomas L. Pangle <u>Leo Strauss: An Introduction to his Thought and Intellectual Legacy</u>, Catherine H. Zuckert <u>Truth About Leo Strauss: Political Philosophy and American Democracy</u>. See David Janssens <u>Between Athens and Jerusalem: Philosophy, Prophecy and Politics in Leo Strauss’s Early Writings</u> & (trans. ed.,) G. Bartlett & S. Minkov, <u>Hobbes’s Critique of Religion and Related Writings</u> - Leo Strauss, <u>Leo Strauss on Moses Mendelssohn</u> – Leo Strauss.</p> | <p>1900-73 - the greatest philosopher of the 20th century, who made it possible to read the “Great Books” of the past as the authors wanted them to be read. He rediscovered Political Philosophy and challenged Heidegger’s Existentialist doctrine. Strauss successfully refuted Historicism and Positivism (the intellectual tyrannies of the Twentieth Century) through the discovery of the art of exoteric and esoteric writing. He was the greatest defender of Liberalism, both Modern and Classical, through highlighting their foundations on Natural Right or justice. Strauss’s works are not easy to read, because he follows his “teachers” – Plato and Xenophon - in requiring a “living together” as essential for a liberal education. See also H. Meier <u>Leo Strauss and the Theologico-Political Problem</u>, Steven B. Smith editor <u>The Cambridge Companion to Leo Strauss</u> - read carefully Chapter 4 by Laurence Lampert: ‘Strauss’ Recovery of Esotericism’, Nasser Behnegar <u>Leo Strauss, Max Weber, and the Scientific Study of Politics</u>, Kenneth L. Deutsch & W. Nicgorski <u>Leo Strauss Philosopher and Jewish Thinker</u>, editor Rafael Major <u>Leo Strauss’s Defence of the Philosophic Life: Reading ‘What is Political Philosophy?’</u>, K. L. Deutsch & J. A. Murley <u>Leo Strauss, the Straussians and the American Regime</u>, Robert C. Bartlett <u>The Idea of Enlightenment: a Post Modern Study</u>. Thomas Pangle <u>Leo Strauss, Laurence Lampert Leo Strauss and Nietzsche, Modernity and What Has Been Lost: Considerations of the Legacy of Leo Strauss</u> Pawel Armada & Arkadiusz Gornisiewicz. <u>Heidegger, Strauss and the Premises of Philosophy: On the Original Forgetting</u>, Richard L. Velkley, <u>Eros Turannos: Leo Strauss & Alexandre Kojève Debate on Tyranny</u>, Aakash Singh.</p> |
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| <p>Publius (Gaius) C o r n e l i u s Tacitus</p> | <p><u>The Annals & The History</u></p> | <p>56-120 AD - Rome's greatest historian. Scholars believe that <u>The Annals</u> and <u>The History</u> (the latter covering four Emperors perishing with the sword beginning 69 AD to the death of Domitian in 96 AD) contains 30 Books. <u>The Annals</u> begins with Augustus (14 AD) and ends with Nero (68 AD) - some 16 - 18 Books. Is this a pagan understanding of the introduction of Christianity? See how the Emperor's two "sons" solve the revolution in the army – one by an eclipse of the sun and the slaughter of innocent people, the latter motivated by "guilt". See especially Book One and S. Benardete: <u>Encounters and Reflections</u>.</p> |
| <p>Thucydides</p> | <p><u>The Peloponnesian War</u> – it should be compulsory reading for all potential Statesmen because the history ("inquiry") includes everything they need to know about politics.</p> | <p>460-400 BC - the greatest philosophic historian of all time - contrast between Athens (philosophy) and Sparta (faith) and an esoteric discussion of "the best regime". Human nature does not change being constant and predictable. Used by brilliant scholars to map out the course of World War One. See Homer's <u>Iliad</u> – Thucydides retells Homer's tale from myth to a "scientific" account of war. Nothing changes – nature and human nature is like fire. Fire burns in Athens, Sparta, Persia and Troy.</p> |
| <p>Ibn Tufayl</p> | <p><u>Hayy Ibn Yaqzan: A Philosophical Tale</u></p> | <p>One of the greatest Medieval tales from one of the greatest Arab Classicist. Defoe based his novel <u>Robinson Crusoe</u> on this story about the limits of Modern Enlightenment. Crusoe returns to England to enjoy comfortable self-preservation whereas Hayy and philosophers prefer to return to the island – i.e., the complete life over the political life.</p> |
| <p>Alexis de Tocqueville</p> | <p><u>Democracy in America</u> (trans. H. C. Mansfield & D. Winthrop)</p> | <p>1805-59 - the best philosophic book on the U.S. regime. The first Postmodernist – i.e. a record of unhappy, restless (rich) Americans. See Harvey C. Mansfield <u>Tocqueville A Very Short History</u> and Paul A. Rahe <u>Soft Despotism Democracy's Drift</u>.</p> |

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| Vergil | <u>The Aeneid</u> (trans. A. Mandelbaum) | 70-19 BC – a satire on the Emperor and the Roman Empire. The most brilliant Roman poet. Essentially Socratic. Observe the two gates from Hades (Book 6 – last page). The “horn” is an easy exit for “true shapes”, but the “polished ivory”, “glittering” gate is the “way the Spirits send false dreams to the world above”. Anchises sends his son (Aeneas) – his mother is Venus - through the gate of ivory – The best commentary: Lee Frantantuono <u>A Reading of Virgil’s ‘Aeneid’</u> . See also E. Adler: <u>Vergil’s Empire</u> . |
| Giambattista Vico | <u>The New Science</u> | 1668-1744 - the birth of modern Historicism. Montesquieu and Rousseau came closest to him. Pay attention to “Bigfoot”. See <u>Vico’s Science of Imagination</u> D. P. Verene. |
| Xenophon | <u>The Education [Anabasis] of Cyrus</u> (trans. W. Ambler), <u>Memorabilia</u> (trans. A. Bonnette) & <u>The Shorter Socratic Writings: Apology of Socrates to the Jury, Oeconomicus, and Symposium</u> (trans. R. C. Bartlett) | 430-354 BC - the most subtle Socratic Political Philosopher. Xenophon’s <u>On Hunting</u> is an esoteric introduction to philosophy. Compare the Greek for “hare” and “logos”. Read also Leo Strauss: <u>Xenophon’s Socrates & Xenophon’s Socratic Discourse</u> ed. A. Bloom & C. Bruell. |
| | Biographies Autobiographies | |
| George Anastaplo | <u>Abraham Lincoln: A Constitutional Biography</u> | One of the best biographies on Lincoln and the refounding of the American regime. |
| Raymond Aron | <u>Memoirs</u> | 1905-83 - France’s greatest Liberal. |
| Otto von Bismarck | <u>Recollections</u> | 1815-98 - the greatest German statesman and Founder of Germany. His policies were too sophisticated and complicated for the Kaiser (William II) - or anyone else - to follow. They contributed to W.W. I. |
| Irving Brant | <u>The Fourth President</u> | Perhaps the best text on one of America’s most intelligent statesmen - James Madison: 1751-1836. Madison admired the Classics. |
| Lord David Cecil | <u>Melbourne</u> (William Lamb) | England’s only truly philosophic Prime Minister – Melbourne: 1779-1848. |

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| L o r d Charnwood | <u>Abraham Lincoln</u> | An excellent biography that grasps Lincoln's character – Lincoln: 1809-65. |
| W i n s t o n Leonard Spencer Churchill | All books beginning with: <u>The Life and Times of the Duke of Marlborough (essential reading)</u> , <u>My Early Life</u> , <u>The World Crisis</u> , <u>The Second World War</u> , <u>The River War</u> , <u>The Story of the Malakand Field Force</u> , <u>Mr Brodrick's Army</u> & <u>Savrola</u> (his only novel) | 1874-1965 - the greatest Statesman ever – Prime Minister 1940-45 & 1951-5. Read especially Book One of <u>The Second World War</u> in the first volume "The Gathering Storm". Pay attention to the second page – the Aristotelian "Moral of the Work". <u>Marlborough</u> & <u>Savrola</u> should be compulsory reading for all Liberal Arts students. <u>Savrola</u> outlines Churchill's principles required for Statesmanship. For the best on the great strategic benefits of the Gallipoli Campaign – see J. D. Wallin: <u>By Ships Alone: Churchill and the Dardanelles</u> , Kirk Emmert <u>Winston S. Churchill on Empire</u> . |
| Robin George Collingwood | <u>An Autobiography</u> | 1889-1943 - the best book on Historicism – the most powerful threat to the survival of the Great Books in the 21st Century. See Stanley Rosen <u>Nihilism</u> . See G. Weinberger. |
| R o b e r t Conquest | <u>The Great Terror</u> | The most brilliant book on the world's most evil tyrant - Joseph Stalin: 1879-1953. Churchill thought Lenin was worse. |
| Duff Cooper | <u>Talleyrand</u> | Talleyrand: 1754-1838. Charles-Maurice de Talleyrand was France's most outstanding Statesman - Napoleon's Political Advisor. |
| B e n j a m i n Franklin | <u>Autobiography</u> | 1706-90 the greatest U.S. autobiography. Best commentary on Franklin - Jerry Weinberger <u>Benjamin Franklin Unmasked: On the Unity of his Moral, Religious and Political Thought</u> . |
| David Southhall Freeman | <u>R.E. Lee & G. Washington</u> | Robert E. Lee: 1807-70. The South's greatest general. Best biography on George Washington: 1732-99. |
| Martin Gilbert | <u>Winston Churchill</u> | Best biography on Churchill. |
| U l y s s e s S. Grant | <u>Autobiography</u> | 1822-85 - the second greatest U.S. autobiography. The greatest, virtuous American General. When Grant was accused of being a "drunk", Lincoln told the critics to note the brand of liquor and give it to all U.S. Officers. |

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| Harry V. Jaffa | <u>A New Birth of Freedom: Abraham Lincoln and the Coming of the Civil War</u> | The greatest, American Political / Philosophical Historian – necessary reading for those interested in the U.S. regime, political wisdom and Natural Right. |
| Robert W. Johannsen | <u>Stephen A. Douglas</u> | Douglas: 1813-61 - the most brilliant orator who opposed Lincoln's doctrine of Natural Right. See the Lincoln/Douglas Debate. The best book on the debate is Harry V. Jaffa's book <u>Crisis of the House Divided</u> . |
| Clive Staples Lewis | <u>Surprised by Joy</u> | Lewis's conversion to Christianity. |
| Daniel J. Mahoney | <u>De Gaulle: Statesmanship, Grandeur, and Modern Democracy</u> | De Gaulle: 1890-1979 - necessary reading for all potential statesmen. The best biography on De Gaulle. He was influenced by Catholicism and Charles Péguy, rather than by Nietzsche. |
| David McCullough | <u>Truman</u> | 1884-1972 – the thirty-third President of the U.S.A. (1945-53) Churchill told Harry S. Truman: “You, sir, saved Western Civilization”. Truman persuaded the Republicans to abandon isolationism. He expelled the pro-Communist - Henry Wallace - from Cabinet. Wallace saw British imperialism, symbolized by Churchill, as the true enemy. Truman implemented the Marshall Plan that helped save Europe and therefore, Western Civilization. |
| Will Morrisey | <u>Reflections on De Gaulle – Political Founding in Modernity</u> | A brilliant introduction to statesmanship. “De Gaulle's military epistemology, an anti-dogmatism, underlies his advocacy of mobile warfare . . . Aristotle did not intend his disciples to be parliamentarians; with De Gaulle's epistemology, they could not be”. |
| Conor Cruise O'Brien | <u>The Great Melody</u> | The best biography on Edmund Burke (one of the greatest statesmen ever) – Burke: 1729-97. |
| Geoffrey Serle | <u>John Monash</u> | Australia's most brilliant soldier – Monash: 1865-1931. |
| Robert Skidelsky | <u>John Maynard Keynes (2 Vols.)</u> | The best book on the “classical” economist who almost returned to the common sense of Aristotle's <u>Politics</u> (“household management”) – Keynes: 1883-1946. |

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| Marguerite Yourcenar | <u>Memoirs of Hadrian</u> | 76AD–138AD - one of Rome's most thoughtful/philosophic Emperors and a lover of beauty and virtue. Necessary reading. |
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'What is Liberal Education?'

You have acquired a liberal education. I congratulate you on your achievement. If I were entitled to do so, I would praise you for your achievement. But I would be untrue to the obligation which I have undertaken if I did not supplement my congratulations with a warning. The liberal education which you have acquired will avert the danger that the warning will be understood as a counsel of despair.

Liberal education is education in culture or toward culture. The finished product of a liberal education is a cultured human being. "Culture" (*cultura*) means primarily agriculture: the cultivation of the soil and its products, taking care of the soil, improving the soil in accordance with its nature. "Culture" means derivatively and today chiefly the cultivation of the mind, the taking care and improving of the native faculties of the mind in accordance with the nature of the mind. Just as the soil needs cultivators of the soil, the mind needs teachers. But teachers are not as easy to come by as farmers. The teachers themselves are pupils and must be pupils. But there cannot be an infinite regress: ultimately there must be teachers who are not in turn pupils. Those teachers who are not in turn pupils are the great minds or, in order to avoid any ambiguity in a matter of such importance, the greatest minds. Such men are extremely rare. We are not likely to meet any of them in any classroom. We are not likely to meet any of them anywhere. It is a piece of good luck if there is a single one alive in one's time. For all practical purposes, pupils, of whatever degree of proficiency, have access to the teachers who are not in turn pupils, to the greatest minds, only through the great books. Liberal education will then consist in studying with the proper care the great books which the greatest minds have left behind -- a study in which the more experienced pupils assist the less experienced pupils, including the beginners.

This is not an easy task, as would appear if we were to consider the formula which I have just mentioned. That formula requires a long commentary. Many lives have been spent and may still be spent in writing such commentaries. For instance, what is meant by the remark that the great books should be studied "with the proper care"? At present I mention only one difficulty which is obvious to everyone among you: the greatest minds do not all tell us the same things regarding the most important themes; the community of the greatest minds is rent by discord and even by various kinds of discord. Whatever further consequences this may entail, it certainly entails the consequence that liberal education cannot be simply indoctrination. I mention yet another difficulty. "Liberal education is education in culture." In what culture? Our answer is: culture in the sense of the Western tradition. Yet Western culture is only one among many cultures. By limiting ourselves to Western culture, do we not condemn liberal education to a kind of parochialism, and is not parochialism incompatible with the liberalism, the generosity, the open-mindedness, of liberal education? Our notion of liberal education does not seem to fit an age which is aware of the fact that there is not the culture of the human mind but a variety of cultures. Obviously, "culture" if susceptible of being used in the plural is not quite the same thing as "culture" which is a *singulare tantum*, which can be used only in the singular. "Culture" is now no longer, as people say, an absolute but has become relative. It is not easy to say what culture susceptible of being used in the plural means. As a consequence of this obscurity people have suggested, explicitly or implicitly, that "culture" is any pattern of conduct common to any human group. Hence we do not hesitate to speak of the culture of suburbia or of the cultures of juvenile gangs both non-delinquent and delinquent. In other words, every human being outside of lunatic asylums is a cultured human being, for he participates in a culture. At the frontiers of research there arises the question as to whether there are not cultures also of inmates of lunatic asylums. If we contrast the present day usage of "culture" with the original meaning, it is as if someone would say that the cultivation of a garden may consist of the garden being littered with empty tin cans and whiskey bottles and used papers of various descriptions thrown around the garden at random. Having arrived at this point, we realize that we have lost our way somehow. Let us then make a

fresh start by raising the question: what can liberal education mean here and now?

Liberal education is literate education of a certain kind: some sort of education in letters or through letters. There is no need to make a case for literacy; every voter knows that modern democracy stands or falls by literacy. In order to understand this need we must reflect on modern democracy. What is modern democracy? It was once said that democracy is the regime that stands or falls by virtue: a democracy is a regime in which all or most adults are men of virtue, and since virtue seems to require wisdom, a regime in which all or most adults are virtuous and wise, or the society in which all or most adults have developed their reason to a high degree, or the rational society. Democracy in a word is meant to be an aristocracy which has broadened into a universal aristocracy. Prior to the emergence of modern democracy some doubts were felt whether democracy thus understood is possible. As one of the two greatest minds among the theorists of democracy put it, "If there were a people consisting of gods, it would rule itself democratically. A government of such perfection is not suitable for human beings." This still and small voice has by now become a high-powered loudspeaker. There exists a whole science -- the science which I among thousands profess to teach, political science -- which so to speak has no other theme than the contrast between the original conception of democracy, or what one may call the ideal of democracy, and democracy as it is. According to an extreme view which is the predominant view in the profession, the ideal of democracy was a sheer delusion and the only thing which matters is the behavior of democracies and the behavior of men in democracies. Modern democracy, so far from being universal aristocracy, would be mass rule were it not for the fact that the mass cannot rule but is ruled by elites, i.e., groupings of men who for whatever reason are on top or have a fair chance to arrive at the top; one of the most important virtues required for the smooth working of democracy, as far as the mass is concerned, is said to be electoral apathy, i.e., lack of public spirit; not indeed the salt of the earth but the salt of modern democracy are those citizens who read nothing except the sports page and the comic section. Democracy is then not indeed mass rule but mass culture. A mass culture is a culture which can be appropriated by the meanest capacities without any intellectual and moral effort whatsoever and at a very low monetary price. But even a mass culture and precisely a mass culture requires a constant supply of what are called new ideas, which are the products of what are called creative minds: even singing commercials lose their appeal if they are not varied from time to time. But democracy, even if it is only regarded as the hard shell which protects the soft mass culture, requires in the long run qualities of an entirely different kind: qualities of dedication, of concentration, of breadth and of depth. Thus we understand most easily what liberal education means here and now. Liberal education is the counter-poison to mass culture, to the corroding effects of mass culture, to its inherent tendency to produce nothing but "specialists without spirit or vision and voluptuaries without heart." Liberal education is the ladder by which we try to ascend from mass democracy to democracy as originally meant. Liberal education is the necessary endeavor to found an aristocracy within democratic mass society. Liberal education reminds those members of a mass democracy who have ears to hear, of human greatness.

Someone might say that this notion of liberal education is merely political, that it dogmatically assumes the goodness of modern democracy. Can we not turn our backs on modern society? Can we not return to nature, to the life of preliterate tribes? Are we not crushed, nauseated, degraded by the mass of printed material, the graveyards of so many beautiful and majestic forests? It is not sufficient to say that this is mere romanticism, that we today cannot return to nature: may not coming generations, after a man-wrought cataclysm, be compelled to live in illiterate tribes? Will our thoughts concerning thermonuclear wars not be affected by such prospects? Certain it is that the horrors of mass culture (which include guided tours to integer nature) render intelligible the longing for a return to nature. An illiterate society at its best is a society ruled by age-old ancestral custom which it traces to original founders, gods or sons of gods or pupils of gods; since there are no letters in such a society, the late heirs cannot be in direct contact with the original founders; they cannot know whether the fathers or grandfathers have not deviated from what the original founders meant, or have not defaced the divine message by merely human additions or subtractions; hence an illiterate society cannot consistently act on its principle that the best is the oldest. Only letters which have come down from the founders can make it possible for the founders to speak directly to the latest heirs. It is then self-contradictory to wish to return to illiteracy. We are compelled to live with books. But life is too short to live with any but the greatest books. In this respect as well as in some others, we do well to take as our model that one among the greatest minds who because of his common sense is the mediator between us and the greatest minds. Socrates never wrote a book but he read books. Let me quote a statement of

Socrates which says almost everything that has to be said on our subject, with the noble simplicity and quiet greatness of the ancients. "Just as others are pleased by a good horse or dog or bird, I myself am pleased to an even higher degree by good friends. . . . And the treasures of the wise men of old which they left behind by writing them in books, I unfold and go through them together with my friends, and if we see something good, we pick it out and regard it as a great gain if we thus become useful to one another." The man who reports this utterance, adds the remark: "When I heard this, it seemed to me both that Socrates was blessed and that he was leading those listening to him toward perfect gentlemanship." This report is defective since it does not tell us anything as to what Socrates did regarding those passages in the books of the wise men of old of which he did not know whether they were good. From another report we learn that Euripides once gave Socrates the writing of Heraclitus and then asked him for his opinion about that writing. Socrates said: "What I have understood is great and noble; I believe this is also true of what I have not understood; but one surely needs for understanding that writing some special sort of a diver."

Education to perfect gentlemanship, to human excellence, liberal education consists in reminding oneself of human excellence, of human greatness. In what way, by what means does liberal education remind us of human greatness? We cannot think highly enough of what liberal education is meant to be. We have heard Plato's suggestion that education in the highest sense is philosophy. Philosophy is quest for wisdom or quest for knowledge regarding the most important, the highest, or the most comprehensive things; such knowledge, he suggested, is virtue and is happiness. But wisdom is inaccessible to man and hence virtue and happiness will always be imperfect. In spite of this, the philosopher, who, as such, is not simply wise, is declared to be the only true king; he is declared to possess all the excellences of which man's mind is capable, to the highest degree. From this we must draw the conclusion that we cannot be philosophers -- that we cannot acquire the highest form of education. We must not be deceived by the fact that we meet many people who say that they are philosophers. For those people employ a loose expression which is perhaps necessitated by administrative convenience. Often they mean merely that they are members of philosophy departments. And it is as absurd to expect members of philosophy departments to be philosophers as it is to expect members of art departments to be artists. We cannot be philosophers but we can love philosophy; we can try to philosophize. This philosophizing consists at any rate primarily and in a way chiefly in listening to the conversation between the great philosophers or, more generally and more cautiously, between the greatest minds, and therefore in studying the great books. The greatest minds to whom we ought to listen are by no means exclusively the greatest minds of the West. It is merely an unfortunate necessity which prevents us from listening to the greatest minds of India and of China: we do not understand their languages, and we cannot learn all languages. To repeat, liberal education consists in listening to the conversation among the greatest minds. But here we are confronted with the overwhelming difficulty that this conversation does not take place without our help -- that in fact we must bring about that conversation. The greatest minds utter monologues. We must transform their monologues into a dialogue, their "side by side" into a "together." The greatest minds utter monologues even when they write dialogues. When we look at the Platonic dialogues, we observe that there is never a dialogue among minds of the highest order: all Platonic dialogues are dialogues between a superior man and men inferior to him. Plato apparently felt that one could not write a dialogue between two men of the highest order. We must then do something which the greatest minds were unable to do. Let us face this difficulty -- a difficulty so great that it seems to condemn liberal education as an absurdity. Since the greatest minds contradict one another regarding the most important matters, they compel us to judge of their monologues; we cannot take on trust what any one of them says. On the other hand we cannot but notice that we are not competent to be judges. This state of things is concealed from us by a number of facile delusions. We somehow believe that our point of view is superior, higher than those of the greatest minds -- either because our point of view is that of our time, and our time, being later than the time of the greatest minds, can be presumed to be superior to their times; or else because we believe that each of the greatest minds was right from his point of view but not, as he claims, simply right: we know that there cannot be the simply true substantive view but only a simply true formal view; that formal view consists in the insight that every comprehensive view is relative to a specific perspective, or that all comprehensive views are mutually exclusive and none can be simply true. The facile delusions which conceal from us our true situation all amount to this, that we are, or can be, wiser than the wisest men of the past. We are thus induced to play the part not of attentive and docile listeners but of impresarios or lion-tamers. Yet we must face our awesome situation, created by the necessity that we try to be more than attentive and docile listeners, namely, judges, and yet

we are not competent to be judges. As it seems to me, the cause of this situation is that we have lost all simply authoritative traditions in which we could trust, the *nomos* which gave us authoritative guidance, because our immediate teachers and teachers' teachers believed in the possibility of a simply rational society. Each of us here is compelled to find his bearings by his own powers however defective they may be.

We have no comfort other than that inherent in this activity. Philosophy, we have learned, must be on its guard against the wish to be edifying -- philosophy can only be intrinsically edifying. We cannot exert our understanding without from time to time understanding something of importance; and this act of understanding may be accompanied by the awareness of our understanding, by the understanding of understanding, by *noesis noeseos*, and this is so high, so pure, so noble an experience that Aristotle could ascribe it to his God. This experience is entirely independent of whether what we understand primarily is pleasing or displeasing, fair or ugly. It leads us to realize that all evils are in a sense necessary if there is to be understanding. It enables us to accept all evils which befall us and which may well break our hearts in the spirit of good citizens of the city of God. By becoming aware of the dignity of the mind, we realize the true ground of the dignity of man and therewith the goodness of the world, whether we understand it as created or as uncreated, which is the home of man because it is the home of the human mind.

Liberal education, which consists in the constant intercourse with the greatest minds, is a training in the highest form of modesty, not to say of humility. It is at the same time a training in boldness: it demands from us the complete break with the noise, the rush, the thoughtlessness, the cheapness of the Vanity Fair of the intellectuals as well as of their enemies. It demands from us the boldness implied in the resolve to regard the accepted views as mere opinions, or to regard the average opinions as extreme opinions which are at least as likely to be wrong as the most strange or the least popular opinions. Liberal education is liberation from vulgarity. The Greeks had a beautiful word for "vulgarity"; they called it *apeirokalia*, lack of experience in things beautiful. Liberal education supplies us with experience in things beautiful.

[Leo Strauss - Liberalism: Ancient and Modern, Chapter One 'What is Liberal Education?']