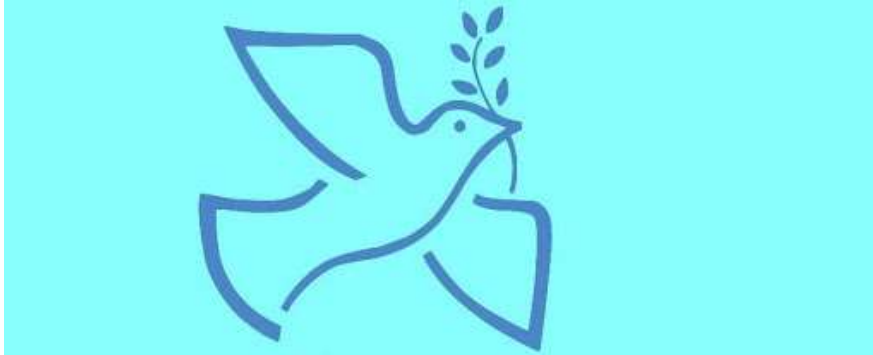


Philosophy and Human Rights



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The Ancient Time

Protagoras (490-420 BCE) said:
“man is the measure of everything.”



“What is the purpose of amors, shields and weapons? It is protect us from bandits, rebels, robbers and thieves? Should there be bandits, rebels, robbers and thieves....”

Mozi or Mo Tzu or Mo Ti (470-391 BCE)

Socrates, Plato and Aristotle

Socrates accepted to die rather than disobeying the law of city

Plato illustrated his ideal state

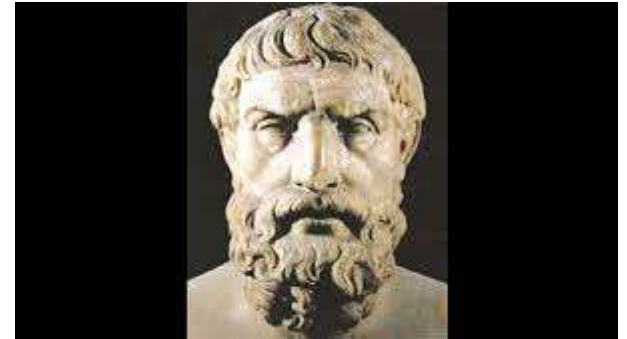
Every citizen, it is said, must have equality, and therefore in a democracy the poor will have more power than the rich, because there are more of them, and the will of the majority is supreme....

Aristotle (384-322 BCE)



Epicurus (341-270 BCE)

- ▶ He followed a hedonistic philosophy in which good is considered what that brings pleasure and evil is that yields suffering. He calls pleasure “the beginning and end of the blessed life.”
- ▶ “it is impossible to live a pleasant life without living wisely, honorably and justly and it is impossible to live wisely, honorably and justly without living pleasantly.”

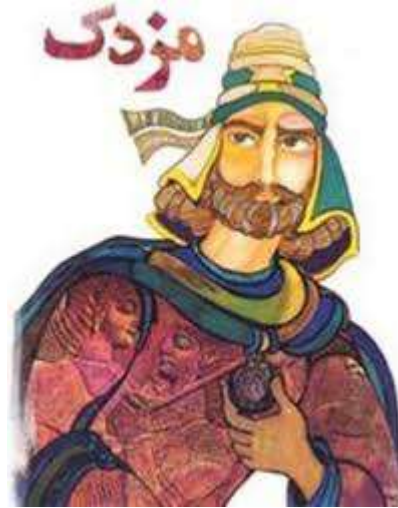


Lucretius Carus (99-55 BCE) followed the Epicurean Path

During Medieval Era (5th to 15th century

- The Dark Age in the West & Golden Age elsewhere
- Contribution of Madzadk, Iranshahri, Razi, Farabi & Ibn Khaldoun:

“Evil is the quality that is closest to man when he fails to improve his customs and when religion is not used as the model to improve him. The great mass of mankind is in that condition... Evil qualities in man are injustice and mutual aggression.”



Renaissance (14th to 17th century)

Desiderius Erasmus (1466–1536), Erasmus of Rotterdam (1466–1536) wrote *In Praise of Folly*:

“And whereas war is so savage a thing that it rather befits beasts than men... so pestilent that it corrupts all men’s manners, so unjust that it is best executed by the worst of men... and yet, omitting all the other, they make this their only business. Here you’ll see decrepit old fellows acting the parts of young men, neither troubled at their costs, nor wearied with their labors, nor discouraged at anything, so they may have the liberty of turning laws, religion, peace, and all things else quite topsy-turvy. Nor are they destitute of their learned flatterers that call that palpable madness zeal, piety, and valor, having found out a new way by which a man may kill his brother....”



Thomas More (1478-1535) developed the ideal of utopia

- “Why do you suppose they made you king in the first place?’ I ask him. ‘Not for your benefit, but for theirs.’”
- Jewelry is considered a something desirable by children to play with.
- “Instead of inflicting these horrible punishments, it would be far more to the point to provide everyone with some means of livelihood



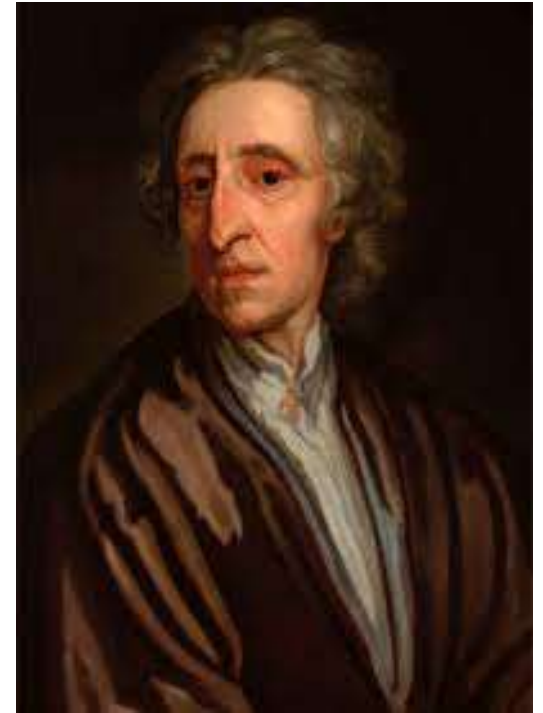
Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592)

- ▶ **“Man is certainly stark mad; he cannot make a worm, and yet he will be making gods by dozens.”**
- ▶ **“The most certain sign of wisdom is cheerfulness.”**
- ▶ **“The greatest thing in the world is to know how to belong to oneself.”**



John Locke (1632-1704 CE)

- Natural Law (rooted in divine law)
- The concept of secular society
- Right to Life, liberty, health and property
- “The state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges everyone: and reason which is that law, teaches all mankind who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possessions: for men bring all the workmanship of one omnipotent and wise Maker; all the servants of one sovereign master, sent into the world by his order, and about his business.”



The Age of Enlightenment



- Thorough questioning of the world
- challenging the authority of the church
- separation of religion and the state
- Voltaire, Montesquieu, Jean Jacque Rousseau, Benjamin Franklin, Jeremy Bentham and Moses Mendelssohn are pioneers



Beginning of Feminist Movement



- ▶ “As for me, I confess that if I were king, I would wish to make this scientific experiment. I would reform an abuse that cuts out, so to speak, half of humanity. I would allow women to share in all the rights of humanity, and most of all those of the mind....” Emilie du Châtelet (1706-1749)



“It is time to effect a revolution in female manners - time to restore to them their lost dignity - and make them, as a part of the human species, labour by reforming themselves to reform the world. It is time to separate unchangeable morals from local manners.”

Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1792)

Thomas Paine (1737-1809): Revolutionary, Philosopher, Enlightenment, fugitive, etc.

- Born in England, Joined American Revolution
- Left US and joined French Revolution, Imprisoned in France
- A deist and human rights advocate; died in poverty

“He that would make his own liberty secure must guard even his enemy from oppression; for if he violates this duty, he establishes a precedent that will reach to himself.”



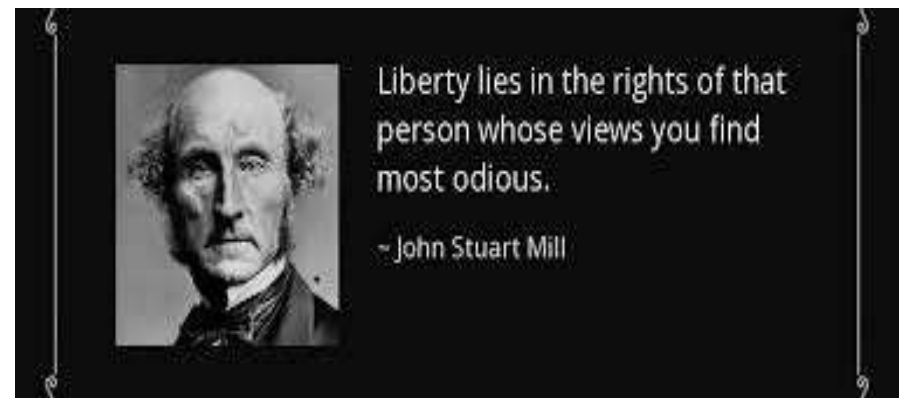
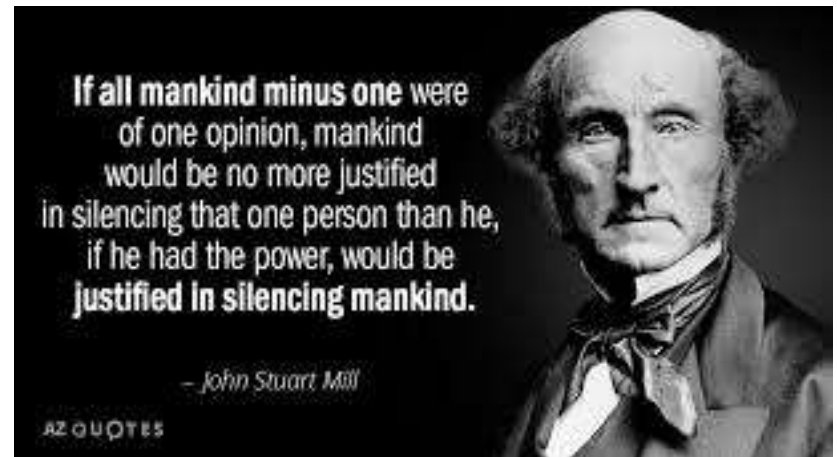
Ludwig Andreas Feuerbach (1804–1872)

- His anthropomorphism led him to develop the idea of anthropocentrism
- Challenged human alienation, self- alienation and abnegation
- Wrote “The Essence of Christianity”
- Theology is nothing but anthropology. All virtues, including love, compassion, altruism, envy, greed, etc., exist in human



John Stuart Mill (1806-1873)

- ▶ Individual happiness should be geared to public benefits.
- ▶ Freedom should be protected by law and the government.
- ▶ Restriction of freedom, by anyone, is a form of tyranny.
- ▶ He advocated for the freedom of speech and anti-slavery vote.
- ▶ Individual is “sovereign over his own body and mind.”



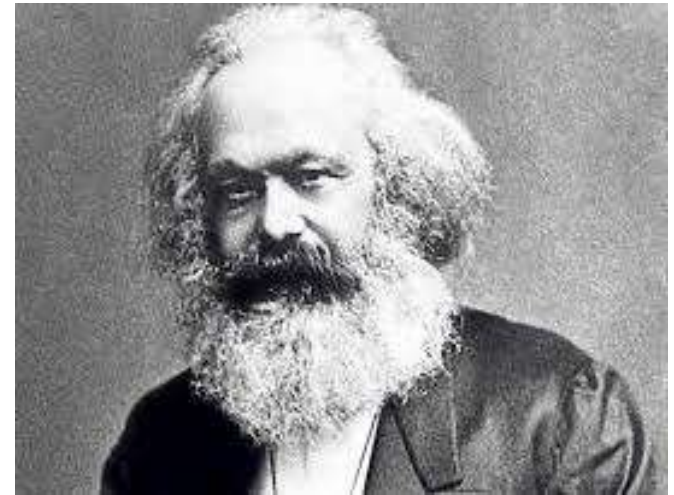
Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Cons:

- ▶ polarization of the humanity through class antagonism
- ▶ Use of force for social transformation
- ▶ glorification of the dictatorship of proletariat,
- ▶ total disrespect for religions.
- ▶ Responsible for the rise of totalitarian societies

Pros

- ▶ Defender of defence of the human rights of labor
- ▶ Rejection of exploitation and removal of all kinds of human alienation and self alienation.
- ▶ Induced ruling classes and their states to introduce reforms and provided works with some rights and privileges.
- ▶ Human being is a species-being. Individual rights will be meaningless without fulfilment of rights for the whole human community. His criticism of religious is a path to the removal all human self-made spiritual bondage against oneself.



Henry David Thoreau (1817-1862)

- “Live in each season as it passes; breathe the air, drink the drink, taste the fruit, and resign yourself to the influence of the earth.”

From his book *Walden* (on environment)

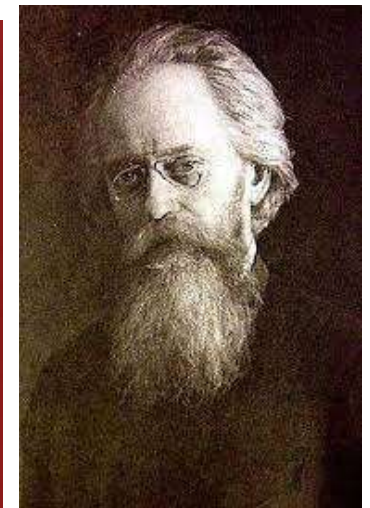
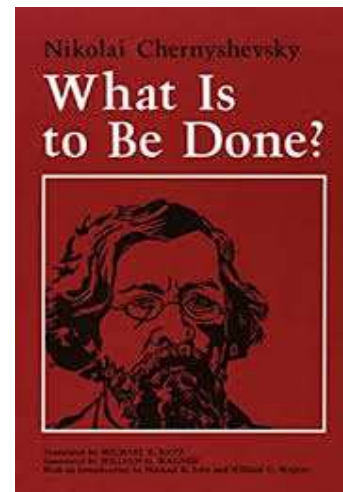
- "If the injustice is part of the necessary friction of the machine of government, let it." (From his *Civil Disobedience*)



Narodism

▶ Populist Movement in Russia during 1860s to 1870s with the belief that people are above territory. Prominent among them are:

- ▶ Alexander Herzen (1812-1870)
- ▶ Nicholai Chernyshevsky (1928-1989) and
- ▶ Nikolai Mikhailovsky (1842-1904)



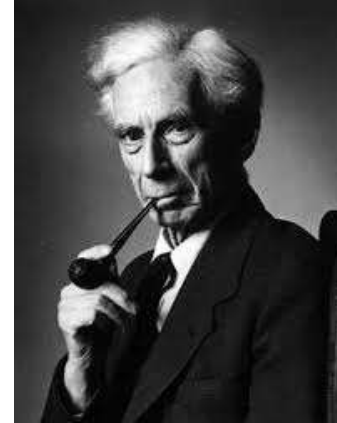
William du Bois (1868-1963)

- ▶ “And herein lies the tragedy of the age: not that men are poor – all men know something of poverty; not that men are wicked – who is good? Not that men are ignorant – what is Truth? Nay, but that men know so little of men.”
- ▶ He was anxious about self-alienation and “double-consciousness” of black people:
 - ▶ “It is a particular sensation, this double-consciousness, the sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness, - an American, a negro, tow souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder.”



Bertrand Russel (1872–1970)

- “The whole world of loneliness, poverty, and pain make a mockery of what human life should be.”
- in our technically unified world wishing well to oneself is sure to be futile unless it is combined with wishing well to others.”
- the road to happiness and prosperity lies in an organized diminution of work.
- Russel was an active participant in 1960s movement for peace and disarmament.
- Russel Court and addressing impunity



Jean Paul Sartre (1905-1980) and Existentialist Movement

- ▶ “At every moment I’m obliged to perform exemplary acts. For every man, everything happens as if all mankind had its eyes fixed on him and were guiding itself by what he does. And every man ought to say to himself, "Am I really the kind of man who has the right to act in such a way that humanity might guide itself by my actions? And if he does not say that to himself, he is masking his anguish.”



Two Prominent Women



- ▶ Hannah Arendt (1906-1975) has contributed to the better understanding of the root cause of the heinous crimes against humanity. She demands that the most monstrous acts should not be taken for granted.)



Human rights for Simone de Beauvoir are nothing but women's rights. She calls upon women to emancipate themselves of the notion that they are similar to men. She demands that women act radically for their full freedom and meaningful equality: "Change your life today. Don't gamble on the future, act now, without delay."

Isaiah Berlin (1909-1997)

This celebrated British philosopher, historian educator and moralist advocated the ideal of positive freedom, in which people are in control of their lives: “Both liberty and equality are among the primary goals pursued by human beings throughout many centuries; but total liberty for wolves is death to the lambs, total liberty of the powerful, the gifted, is not compatible with the rights to a decent existence of the weak and the less gifted.



Irne Naess (1912-2009)

“Quality of life is here considered to be something incompatible with artificial, material standards above that necessary for the satisfaction of fundamental needs, and secondly, that ecological considerations are to be regarded as preconditions for life quality, therefore not outside human responsibility...The lifestyle of the majority should be changed so that the material standard of living in the Western countries becomes universalizable within this century.



Conclusion

While Philosophy has made a great contribution towards the development of human rights, human rights, in turn, has motivated philosophy to come up develop itself with new insights. This is a reciprocal, open and unending process

