
RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

Muslim scholars, for example, cite the Koran to show that Islam recognizes 14 distinct human rights. But the Islamic "right of free expression" is actually a *duty* to speak the truth; the "right" to life, a *duty* not to kill. Such injunctions do help ensure human dignity, which Donnelly sees as the aim of human rights. But unlike those in the West, these "rights" carry no guarantees. The Koran's command that a ruler establish justice in his land does not give his people a right to justice.

Some non-Western societies have acknowledged certain rights, but without granting them universally. In traditional Hindu India, for example, rights were distributed according to caste; in Africa, according to "communal membership, family, status, or achievement."

The modern Western concept of human rights assumes the existence of a large state, against which the individual must be protected, observes Donnelly. By contrast, traditional non-Western ideas of human rights have centered on "the small community based on groupings of extended families," where a network of social support serves the same protective function as institutionalized Western human rights.

When Western philosophers began discussing human rights in the 17th century, the modern state was just taking shape. According to Donnelly, needs for human rights in the Third World today are "essentially the same . . . as they were two or three centuries ago in England and France." But he worries that some governments may reject the notion of human rights out of misplaced resistance to Western "cultural imperialism." Though a product of advancing Western culture, Donnelly argues, all human rights necessarily belong to all human beings. And non-Western governments that recognize the rights to liberty and property will, he predicts, win popular support and hasten economic development.

The Prophet of Liberation

"On Herbert Marcuse and the Concept of Psychological Freedom" by Myriam Miedzian Malinovich, in *Social Research* (Spring 1982), 66 West 12th St., New York, N.Y. 10011.

The 1960s student generation hailed American Marxist philosopher Herbert Marcuse (1898–1979) as an apostle of sexual liberation. But according to Malinovich, a CUNY philosopher, Marcuse's theories were not what they seemed.

Like all Marxists of the decade, Marcuse faced a knotty intellectual problem: Marx's indictment of capitalism for exploiting labor seemed irrelevant in view of the rising prosperity of most American workers. In such books as *Eros and Civilization* (1966), Marcuse charged that capitalism had merely satisfied "false" materialistic needs. To show how capitalism failed to meet man's "true" psychological needs, he turned to Sigmund Freud's notion that "civilization is built upon the renunciation of instinctual gratification." Capitalism, Marcuse argued,

RELIGION & PHILOSOPHY

needlessly perpetuated the sublimation of biological needs even though prosperity put liberation within reach: Men no longer needed to repress their natural desires to provide for the necessities of life.

But, says Malinovich, Marcuse never clearly defined what "true" needs were. In dramatizing capitalist oppression, he suggested at times that liberation meant sexual anarchy. At other times Marcuse's "freedom" seemed relatively tame: taking greater pleasure in work and family life. "True" needs varied according to the philosopher's polemical requirements. Marcuse used Freud's ideas, says Malinovich, not because he believed them, but to make more palatable his own views about the mediocrity of American life.

Marcuse never explained how psychological liberation would work. What is the place, in his utopian society, of those who are content solely with material satisfactions? Must they be forced to be free?

Malinovich concludes that Marcuse's chief contribution to philosophy was raising the issue of psychological oppression. His prescriptions for psychological freedom were of little value. But though he was shunned by most other philosophers, he did force them to confront contemporary social questions they would have preferred to ignore. And many of his student followers in the '60s are now taking their places in the ranks of today's teachers of philosophy.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY*New Memories*

"Micromemories" by John Douglas, in *Science* 82 (July-Aug. 1982), P.O. Box 10790, Des Moines, Iowa 50340.

The computer wizards who put a calculator in every pocket are now at work on Phase II of the "microelectronic revolution." Phase I gave us microprocessors, tiny silicon chips that make millions of calculations in seconds. But today's microprocessors cannot store much information—which is where the new micromemories come in, says Douglas, a writer from northern California's "Silicon Valley."

While all microprocessors are made the same way—electronic circuits are etched on a chip of silicon the size of an oatmeal flake—the new memory devices come in several forms. The most important today is the Random Access Memory (RAM) silicon chip. RAM chips are made much like microprocessors and are the only micromemories that work as fast. They can retrieve stored information in ten-billionths of a second. But their capacity is limited. Even the latest "64K" RAM chips can stock only 1,300 words. (Forthcoming Japanese models will quadruple that capacity.) Magnetic bubbles and disks are alternatives with more storage space. Bubbles can store the equivalent of a 600-page novel and disks the equivalent of an unabridged dictionary, but both are one