

Learn about philosophers through great works of art



ABC Philosophers in Art

Acknowledgement

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Front cover: Auguste Rodin (1840-1917), The Thinker (Le Penseur), model 1880, cast 1901,
The National Gallery of Art, Washington, D.C., US

Back cover: Raphael (1483-1520), The School of Athens, c. 1509-1511
Apostolic Palace, Vatican City

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A is for Aristotle

Aristotle (384-322 BCE)

Aristotle was an ancient Greek philosopher and polymath, a student of Plato and teacher of Alexander the Great, whose works have profoundly influenced virtually every area of Western philosophy and science



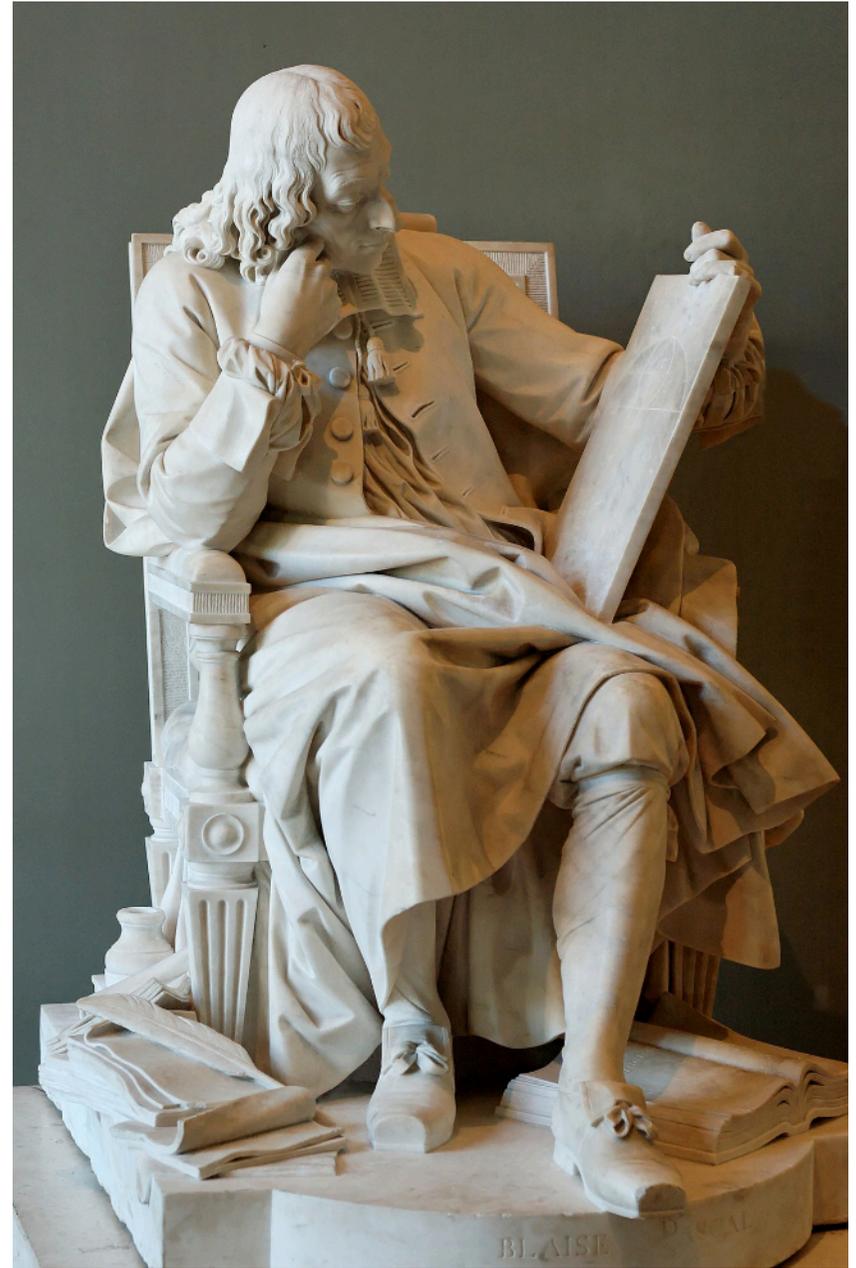
Rembrandt (1606-1669)

Aristotle with a Bust of Homer, 1653
The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US

B is for Blaise Pascal

Blaise Pascal (1623-1662)

Blaise Pascal was a French mathematician, physicist, inventor, writer, and philosopher, known for his contributions to the development of probability theory, fluid mechanics, and his philosophical work, "Pensées," which explores themes of faith, reason, and human existence



Augustin Pajou (1730-1809)
Blaise Pascal, mathématicien et philosophe, 1785
Musée du Louvre, Paris, France

C is for Confucius

Kong Qiu (551-479 BCE)

Kong Qiu, commonly known as Confucius, was an ancient Chinese philosopher, teacher, and politician, whose thoughts and teachings became the foundation of Confucianism, a major influence on Chinese culture and philosophy



François de Louvemont (1648-1690) after Philippe Couplet
Confucius sinarum philosophus, sive, Scientia sinensis latine
exposita, 1687

D is for Descartes, René

René Descartes (1596-1650)

René Descartes was a French philosopher, mathematician, and scientist often regarded as the father of modern philosophy for his development of a method of critical reasoning based on doubt



Frans Hals (c. 1582-1666)
Portrait de René Descartes, c. 1649-1700
Musée du Louvre, Paris, France

E is for Erasmus, Desiderius

Desiderius Erasmus (c. 1466-1536)

Desiderius Erasmus was a Dutch Renaissance humanist, theologian, and scholar, known for his critical writings on the Church and his efforts to reform Christianity through a return to classical education and a focus on inner piety



Hans Holbein the Younger (c. 1497-1543)
Portrait d'Érasme, 1528
Musée du Louvre, Paris, France

F is for Friedrich Nietzsche

Friedrich Nietzsche (1844-1900)

Friedrich Nietzsche was a German philosopher, cultural critic, and poet, whose work challenged the foundations of traditional morality and religion, and who is best known for his ideas on the will to power, the Übermensch (Overman), and the declaration that "God is dead"

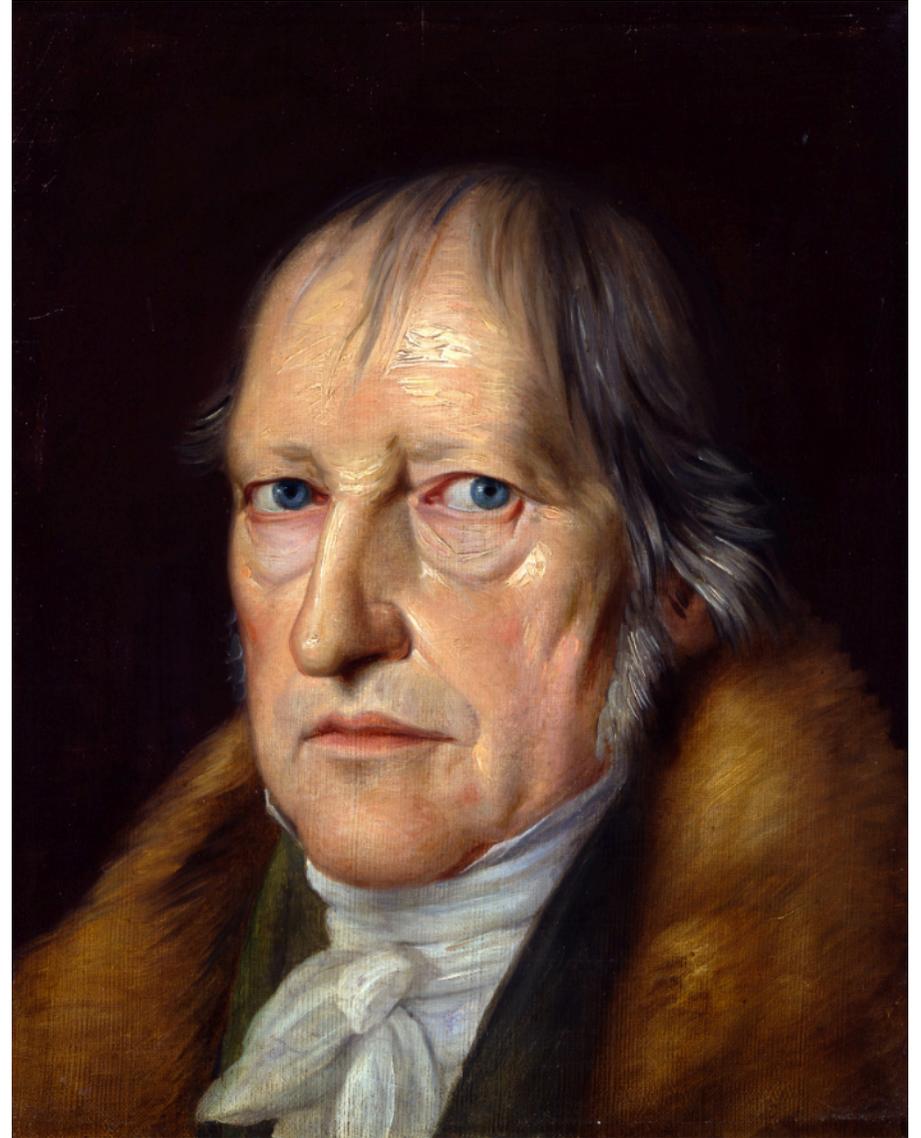


Edvard Munch (1863-1944)
Portrait of Friedrich Nietzsche, 1905
Munch Museet, Oslo, Norway

G is for Georg Hegel

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel (1770-1831)

Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel was a German philosopher and one of the most important figures in German idealism, whose work influenced a wide range of philosophical disciplines and thinkers, including existentialism, and modern political theory



Jakob Schlesinger (1792-1855)
Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel, 1831
Alte Nationalgalerie, Berlin, Germany

H is for Hypatia

Hypatia (c. 360-415)

Hypatia was a renowned Greek-Egyptian philosopher, mathematician, and astronomer in Alexandria, who became a symbol of learning and scientific inquiry in the late ancient world, and was one of the first women to make significant contributions to mathematics and philosophy



Henry Justice Ford (1860-1941)
Synesius attends the lectures of Hypatia, 1912
Private collection

I is for Ibn Sina

Ibn Sina (c. 980-1037)

Ibn Sina, also known as Avicenna, was a Persian polymath and one of the most significant physicians, philosophers, and scholars of the Islamic Golden Age, whose works in medicine, particularly "The Canon of Medicine," remained authoritative for centuries in both the Islamic world and Europe

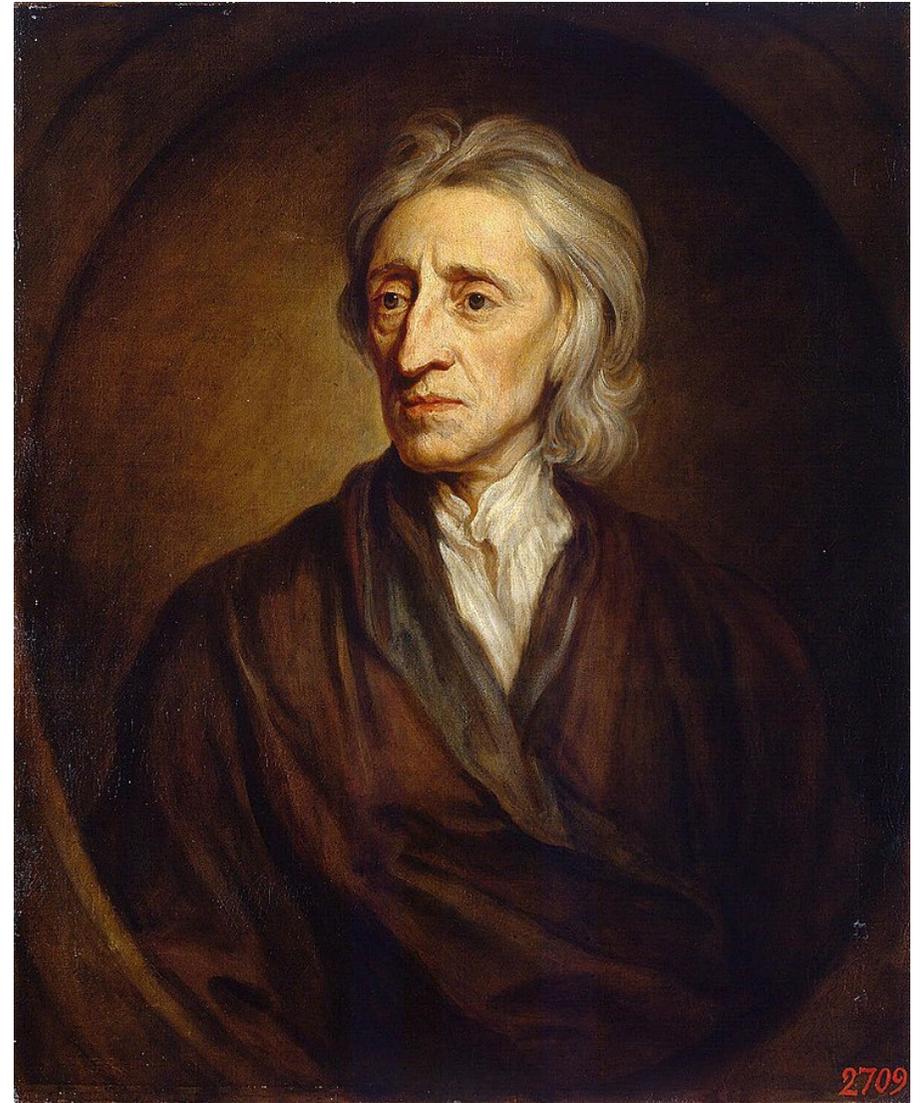


Unknown
Portrait of Avicenna, 14th century
Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Florence, Italy

J is for John Locke

John Locke (1632-1704)

John Locke was an English philosopher and physician, widely regarded as one of the most influential Enlightenment thinkers and the "father of liberalism," whose ideas on government, education, and human nature laid the groundwork for modern democratic theory



Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723)
Portrait of John Locke, 1697
Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg, Russia

K is for Kant, Immanuel

Immanuel Kant (1724-1804)

Immanuel Kant was a German philosopher who profoundly influenced modern philosophy with his work on epistemology, ethics, and metaphysics, particularly through his theory of transcendental idealism, which sought to explain the relationship between human experience and the nature of reality



Johann Gottlieb Becker (1720-1782)

Immanuel Kant, 1768

Schiller-Nationalmuseum, Marbach am Neckar, Germany

L is for Laozi



Nicholas Roerich (1874-1947)

Laozi, 1943

International Centre of the Roerichs, Moscow, Russia

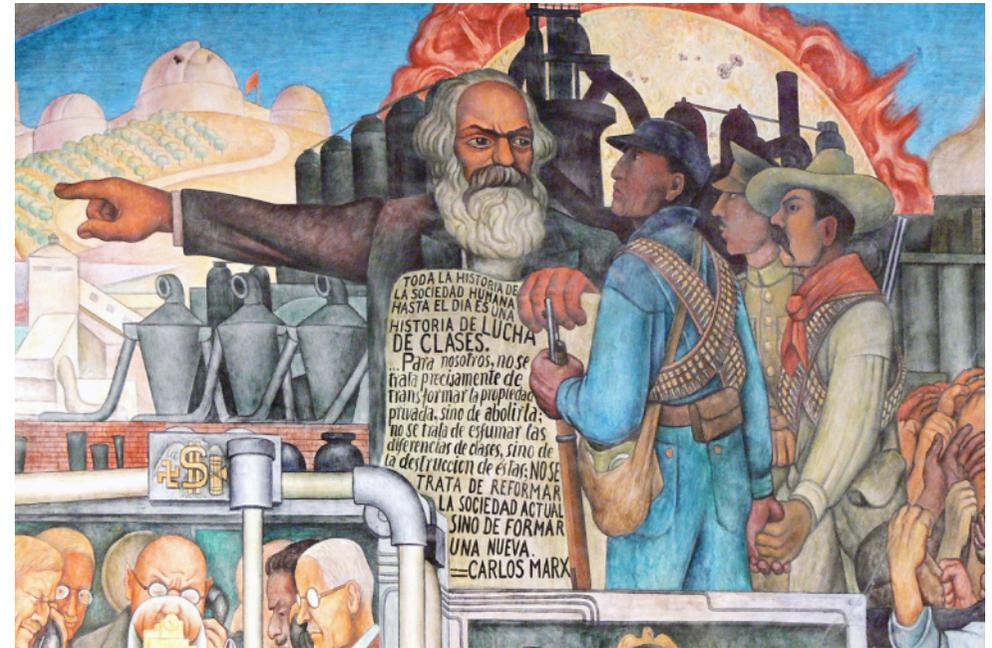
Laozi (6th BCE)

Laozi is a semi-legendary Chinese philosopher, credited as the founder of Daoism and traditionally regarded as the author of the foundational text, the "Tao Te Ching"

M is for Marx, Karl

Karl Marx (1818-1883)

Karl Marx was a German philosopher, economist, historian, and revolutionary socialist, best known for his critique of capitalism and his role in developing the theories of historical materialism and class struggle



Diego Rivera (1886-1957)

Featuring Karl Marx, part of History of Mexico murals, 1935
Palacio Nacional, Mexico City, Mexico

N is for Niccolò Machiavelli

Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527)

Niccolò Machiavelli was an Italian Renaissance political philosopher and statesman, best known for his work "The Prince," which offers pragmatic, sometimes ruthless advice on political leadership



Santi di Tito (1536-1603)
Portrait of Niccolò Machiavelli, c. 1572
Palazzo Vecchio, Florence, Italy

O is for Ockham, William of

William of Ockham (c. 1287-1347)

William of Ockham was an English Franciscan friar, philosopher, and theologian, known for his significant contributions to nominalism and for challenging the prevailing scholastic doctrines of his time

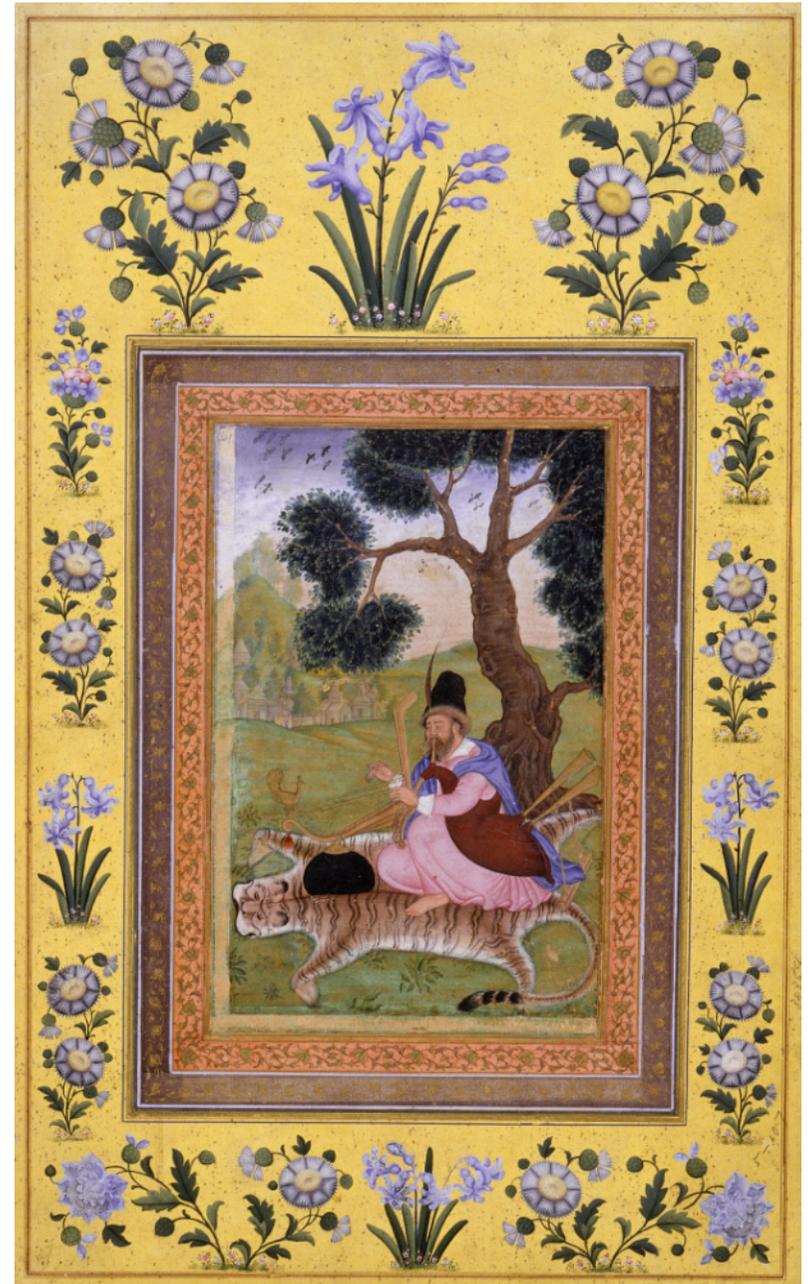


a stained glass window of William of Ockham
All Saints' Church, Ockham, UK

P is Plato

Plato (c. 427-348 BCE)

Plato was an ancient Greek philosopher, a student of Socrates, and the teacher of Aristotle, who founded the Academy in Athens, one of the earliest institutions of higher learning in the Western world



Mughal
Plato as a Musician, c. 1600
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, US

Q is for Qiu Chuji

Qiu Chuji (1148-1227)

Qiu Chuji was a prominent Taoist master and philosopher during the Jin dynasty, known for his leadership within the Quanzhen School of Taoism and his efforts to promote Taoist teachings throughout China, including his famed journey to meet Genghis Khan



Guo Xu (1456-c.1529)

Qiu Chuji, 1503

Shanghai Museum, Shanghai, China

R is for Rousseau, Jean-Jacques

Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778)

Jean-Jacques Rousseau was a Swiss-born French philosopher, writer, and composer whose ideas on education, politics, and society greatly influenced the Enlightenment in France and across Europe



Allan Ramsay (1713-1784)
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, 1766
National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh, UK

S is for Socrates

Socrates (c. 470-399 BCE)

Socrates was an ancient Greek philosopher from Athens who is often considered the father of Western philosophy, known for his contributions to ethics and epistemology, and for his method of dialectical questioning, later known as the Socratic method



Jacques Louis David (1748-1825)

The Death of Socrates, c. 1787

The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, US

T is for Thomas Aquinas

Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274)

Thomas Aquinas was an Italian Dominican friar, theologian, and philosopher, recognized as one of the most influential figures in the history of Western thought, particularly within the Catholic Church, where his works became the foundation for much of Catholic theology and philosophy



Anonymous Cusco School
Saint Thomas Aquinas, Protector of the University of Cusco,
c. 1690-1695
Museo de Arte de Lima, Lima, Peru

U is for Umar Khayyam

Umar Khayyam (1048-1131)

Umar ibn Ibrāhīm Nīsābūrī, commonly known as Omar Khayyam was a Persian polymath, mathematician, astronomer, philosopher, and poet, best known in the West for his "Rubaiyat," a collection of quatrains that reflect his philosophical thoughts on life, fate, and the nature of existence



Adelaide Hanscom and Blanche Cumming
The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam, 1905
Dodge Publishing Company, New York, US

V is for Voltaire

Voltaire (1694-1778)

Voltaire, born François-Marie Arouet, was a French Enlightenment writer, historian, and philosopher who became famous for his wit, criticism of the Catholic Church, and advocacy for freedom of speech and religion

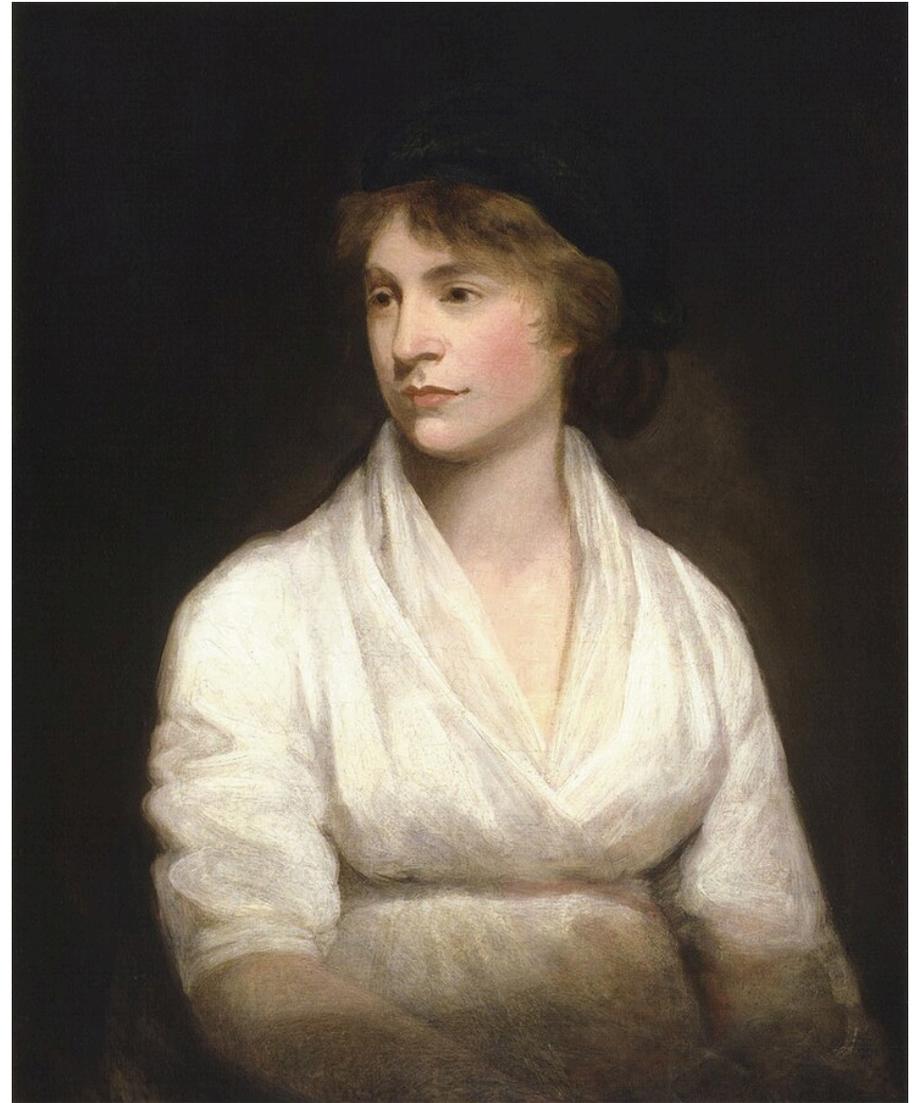


Jean-Baptiste Pigalle (1714-1785)
Portrait of Voltaire, c. 1778
Los Angeles County Museum of Art, Los Angeles, US

W is for Wollstonecraft, Mary

Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797)

Mary Wollstonecraft was an English writer, philosopher, and advocate of women's rights, best known for her pioneering work in feminist philosophy and her role in the early women's rights movement

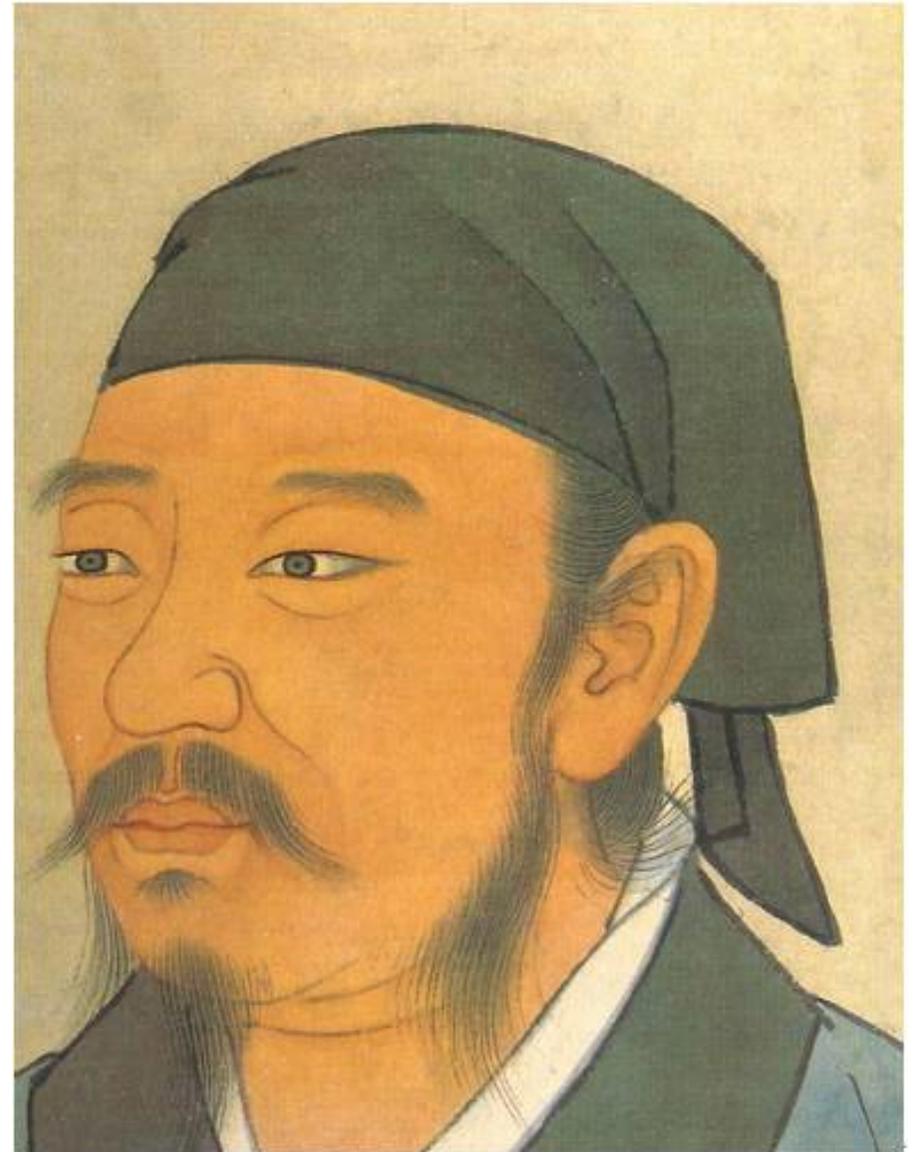


John Opie (1761-1807)
Mary Wollstonecraft, c. 1797
National Portrait Gallery, London, UK

X is for Xunzi

Xunzi (c. 310-235 BCE)

Xunzi was an influential Chinese philosopher during the late Warring States period, known for his contributions to Confucianism and his more pragmatic and sometimes skeptical view of human nature compared to other Confucian thinkers like Mencius



Unknown
Portrait of Xunzi
The Palace Museum, Beijing, China

Y is for Yi I

Yi I (1536-1584)

Yi I, also known by his pen name Yulgok, was a prominent Korean scholar, philosopher, and government official during the Joseon Dynasty, renowned for his significant contributions to Confucian thought and his influence on Korean education and governance



Kim Eunho (1892-1979)
Portrait of Yi I, 1965
Bank of Korea, Seoul, Republic of Korea

Z is for Zhuang Zhou

Zhuang Zhou (c. 369-286 BCE)

Zhuang Zhou, commonly known as Zhuangzi, was an influential Chinese philosopher who lived during the Warring States period and is best known for his contributions to Daoism, particularly through his text "Zhuangzi," which is one of the foundational works of Daoist philosophy



Ike Taiga (1723-1776)
Zhuang Zi Dreaming of a Butterfly
Private Collection