

# Heroism and the Struggle for Liberty

Tom G. Palmer  
Cato Benefactor Summit  
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# Epic of Gilgamesh

## 2,800 – 2,500 B.C.E.

“Powerful, superb, knowledgeable and expert, Gilgamesh would not leave the young girls alone, the daughters of warriors, the brides of young men. The gods often heard their complaints.”



# Enkidu Comes Forth to Challenge Powerful Gilgamesh

“And for Godlike  
Gilgamesh an equal  
match was found.  
Enkidu blocked his  
access at the door of  
the father-in-law’s  
house, He would not  
allow Gilgamesh to  
enter.”



Together, they leave the city and accomplish many heroic feats...the city flourishes

“After they had slain the Bull of Heaven, they bore its heart aloft and set it before Shamash.”



# Reforms of Urukagina of Lagash ca. 2378-2371 B.C.E.

Urukagina “established the freedom” of the citizens of Lagash; he freed the markets, eliminated the taxes, and respected property.



# The People of Israel Demand a King....and Are Warned....

“This will be the manner of the king that shall reign over you: He will take your sons, and appoint them for himself, for his chariots, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots.”

--1 Samuel 8

# Rise of Greek Civilization

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- Ca. 500 B.C.E.  
Athens reaches  
a high level of  
wealth and  
personal  
freedom  
through trade....



# Persian Invasions of Greece

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- First Invasion – under Darius – and Battle of Marathon, 490 B.C.E.
- Second Invasion – under Xerxes – and Battle of Thermopylae, 480 B.C.E.



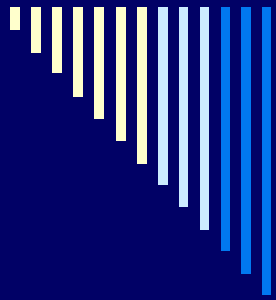


# War Between Sparta and Athens 431 – 404 B.C.E.

■ “Each one of our citizens, in all the manifold aspects of life, is able to show himself the rightful lord and owner of his own person....”

■ Pericles, Funeral Oration, 430 B.C.E.



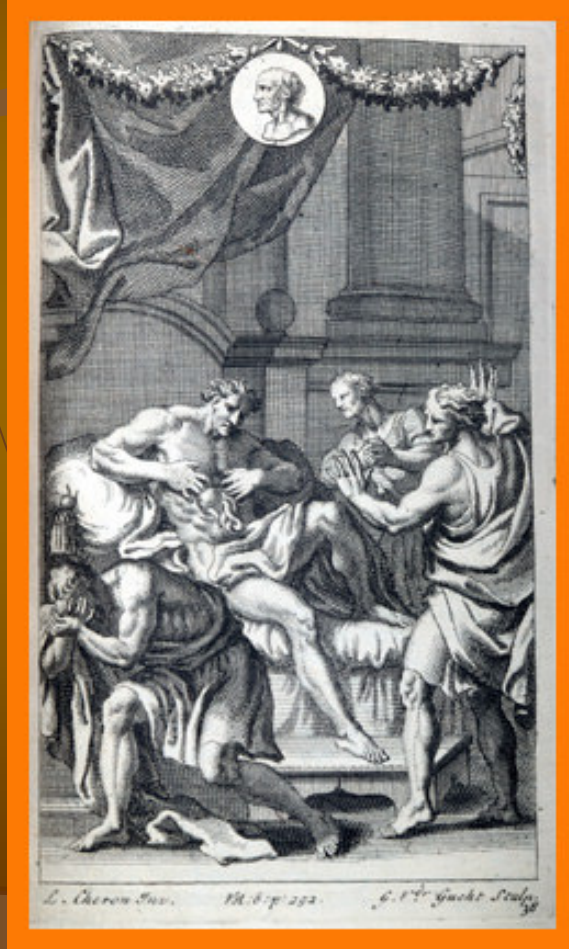


# Rise of the Roman Republic

- ca. 510-509 B.C.E., Monarchy overthrown and Republic established
- Ca. 367 B.C.E., reforms instituted to diminish hereditary privilege
- 326 B.C.E. debt slavery eliminated for plebians

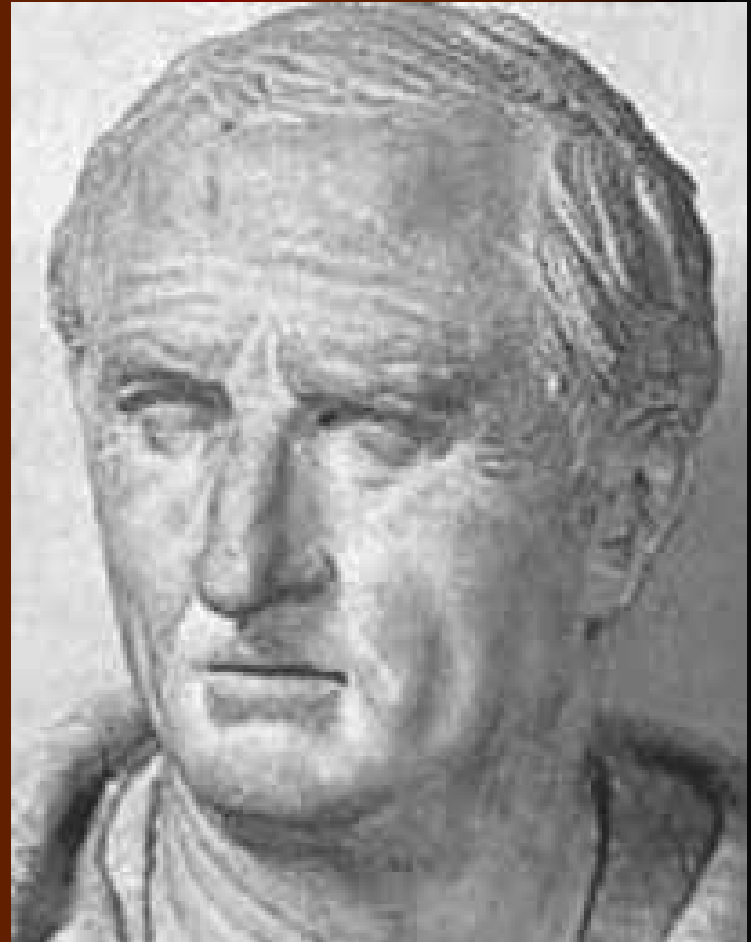
# The Republic is Destroyed: Suicide of Cato the Younger, Last Free and Independent Man in Rome

- 46 B.C.E., after his defeat by Julius Caesar at the Battle of Thapsus, Cato commits suicide and becomes an inspiration to defenders of republicanism



# Murder of Marcus Tullius Cicero

- 43 B.C.E., Cicero is murdered, his head and his hands cut off and displayed in the Forum, and a pin pushed through his tongue



# Cicero's Legacy to the World

- “We are all constrained by one and the same law of nature; and if that is true, then we are certainly forbidden by the law of nature from acting violently against another person.”

■ De Officiis, III, 26-27

# Gregorian Reformation – “Freedom of the Church” Separates Church from State

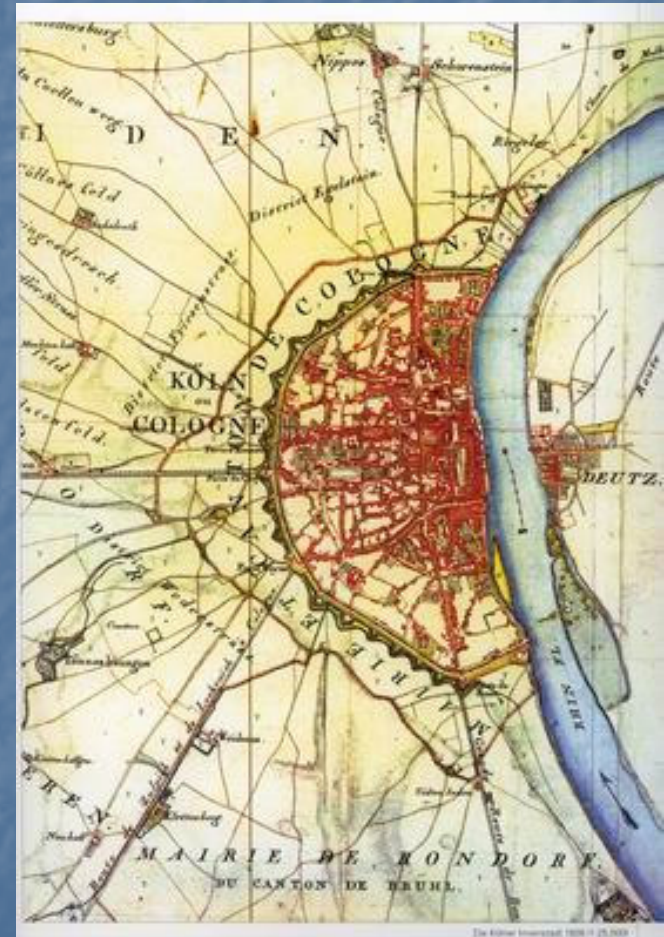
- 1073 – The German monk Hildebrand becomes Pope Gregory VII
- 1075 -- Gregory Issues Dictates of the Pope
- 1077 – Emperor Henry IV asks forgiveness at Canossa





# Growth of Medieval “Communes” – Independent Cities

- “Stadtluft macht frei, nach Ablaufe von Jahr und Tag.”
- “City air makes you free, after the lapse of a year and a day.”



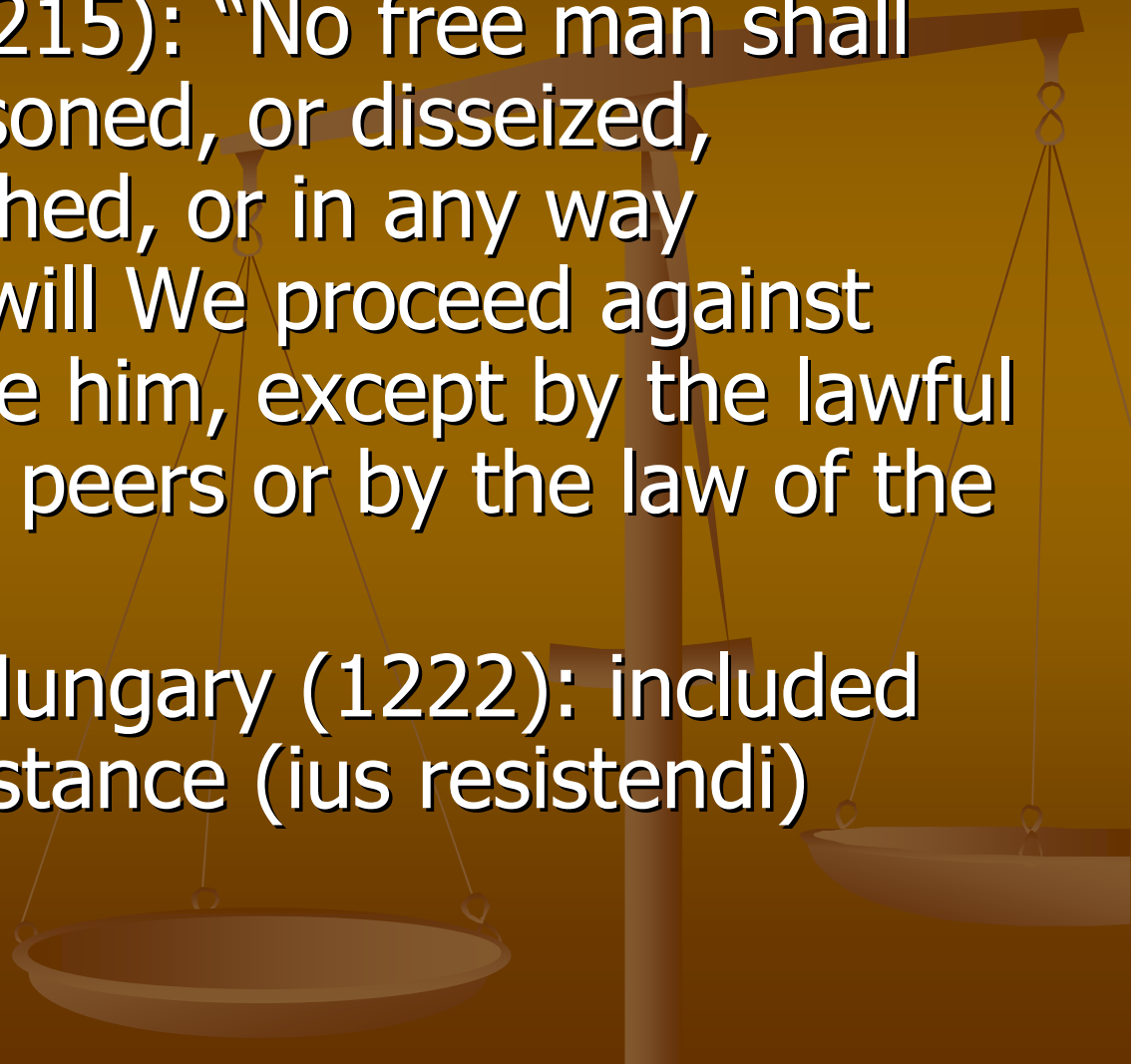
# Growth of Civil Society

- Latin – Civitas – gives us “civil,” as in a mode of behavior
- German – Burg – gives us Pittsburgh, Hillsborough, “bourgeois” (thanks to the French), and the “House of Burgesses”



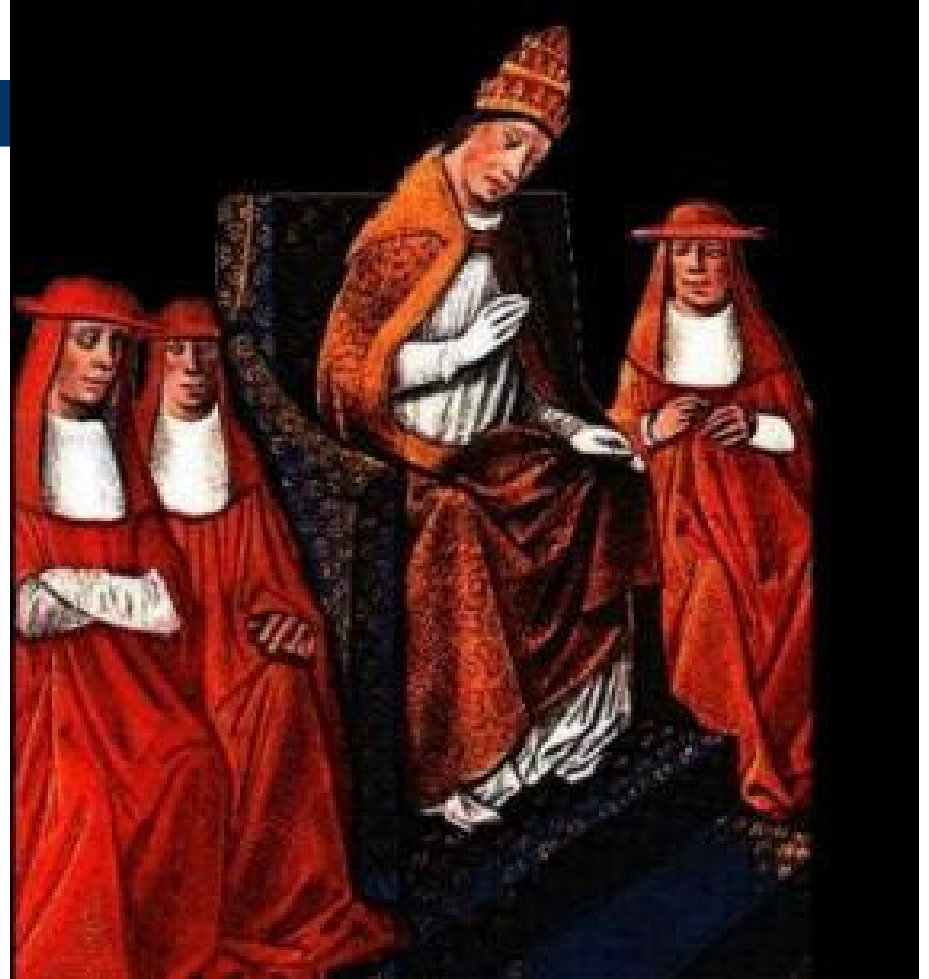
# Written Charters of Privileges and Immunities

- Magna Carta (1215): “No free man shall be taken, imprisoned, or disseized, outlawed, banished, or in any way destroyed, nor will We proceed against him or prosecute him, except by the lawful judgment of his peers or by the law of the land.”
- Golden Bull of Hungary (1222): included the right of resistance (*ius resistendi*)



# Emergence of Modern Doctrine of Individual Rights

- “I maintain, therefore, that dominium, possession, and jurisdiction can belong to infidels licitly and without sin, for these things were made not only for the faithful, but for every rational creature as has been said.”
- Innocent IV, ca. 1250



# Respect for Individual Rights the Foundation of Justice

- “The proper matter of justice consists of those things that belong to our interaction with other men.... ‘a man is said to be just because he respects the rights of others.’”
- --Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II<sup>a</sup>, II<sup>ae</sup>, Q. 58



# Rights Recognized as Valid for All Humans

"Inasmuch as he is a person, every Indian has free will, and, consequently, is the master of his actions";  
"By natural law, every man has the right to his own life and to physical and mental integrity."

Francisco de Vitoria,  
1492-1546



# Movement to Abolish Slavery

“Among our Indians ... there are important kingdoms, large numbers of people who live settled lives in a society, great cities, kings, judges and laws, persons who engage in commerce, buying, selling, lending, and the other contracts of the law of nations....”

**Bartolomé de las Casas, 1484-1566**



# The Dutch Revolt Against the Spanish and Establish a Free Republic, with Toleration, Free Trade, and Low Taxes

- “The maintenance of the right by the little provinces of Holland and Zealand in the sixteenth, by Holland and England united in the seventeenth, and by the United States of America in the eighteenth centuries, forms but a single chapter in the great volume of human fate; for the so-called revolutions of Holland, England, and America, are all links of one chain.”
  - John Lathrop Motley, *The Rise of the Dutch Republic*, 1855



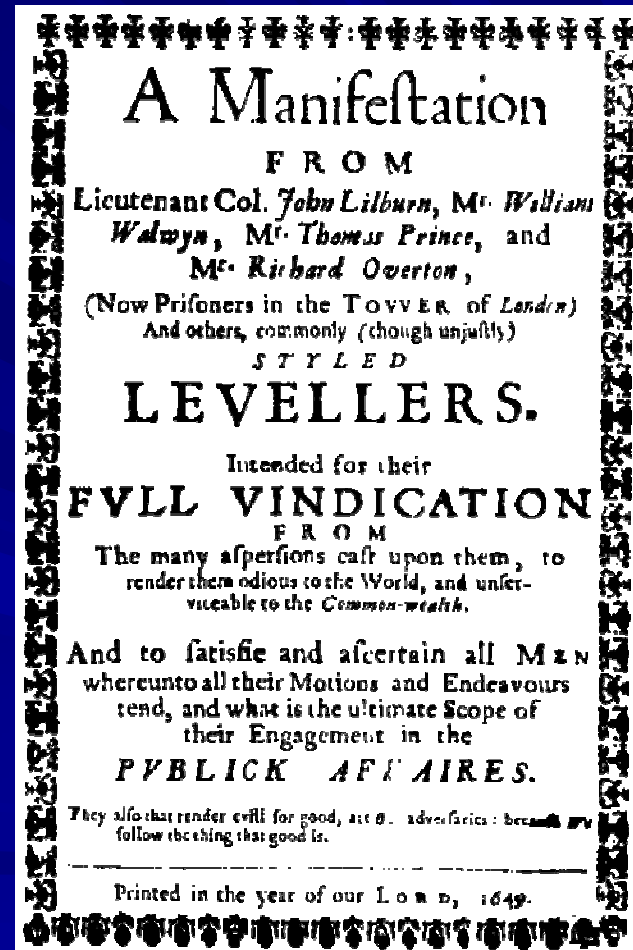
# The English Put Law Above King

- “If the king were without a bridle, that is, the law, they ought to put a bridle upon him.”
- “When an act of Parliament is against common right and reason, or repugnant, or impossible to be performed, the common law will controul it, and adjudge such Act to be void.”
- Sir Edward Coke, 1552–1634



# The Levellers: the First Consistent Libertarians

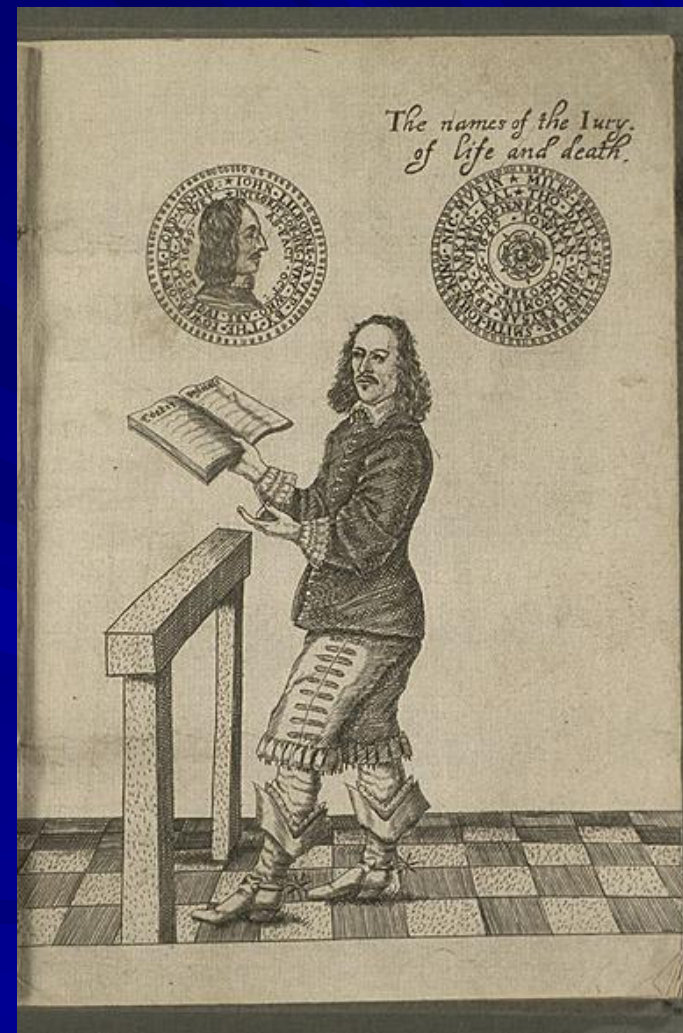
The Levellers demanded religious freedom, elimination of arbitrary power, protection of property, free trade, trial by jury, equal rights for all....





# John Lilburne, 1615-1657

- Lilburne died in the arms of his wife Elizabeth, also an active Leveller, when let out of prison: “I shall leave this Testimony behind me, that I died for the Laws and Liberties of this Nation.”



# Levellers in the Army refused to invade Ireland

- Levellers captured and executed in the churchyard of Burford; in the church, scratched on the baptismal font, can be read, “Anthony Sedley, Prisoner, 1649”



# John Locke and the Radical Whigs Carry Out Much of the Leveller Programme

“Though the earth, and all inferior creatures, be common to all men, yet every man has a property in his own person: this no body has any right to but himself. The labour of his body, and the work of his hands, we may say, are properly his.”

John Locke, 1632-1704



# The Great Turgot, 1727-1781

- Eliminated or cut many taxes; abolished forced labor, restrictions on trade, and government enforced monopolies; advised the Americans to “reduce to the smallest number the kinds of affairs of which the government of each state should take charge.”



# The True *American Revolution*

- “What do we mean by the Revolution? The war? That was no part of the Revolution; it was only an effect and consequence of it. The Revolution was in the minds of the people, and this was effected, from 1760 to 1775, in the course of fifteen years before a drop of blood was shed at Lexington. The records of the thirteen legislatures, the pamphlets, newspapers in all the colonies, ought to be consulted during that period to ascertain the steps by which the public opinion was enlightened and informed concerning the authority of Parliament over the colonies.” — John Adams to Thomas Jefferson, 1815

# The American Declaration of Independence

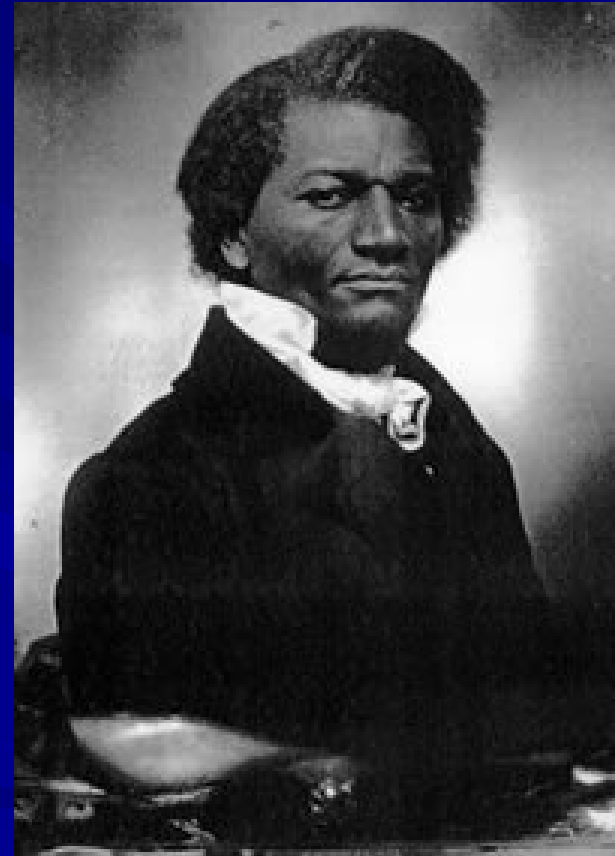
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“This was the object of the Declaration of Independence. Not to find new principles, or new arguments, never before thought of, not merely to say things which had never been said before; but to place before mankind the common sense of the subject, in terms so plain and firm as to command their assent, and to justify ourselves in the independent stand we are compelled to take. Neither aiming at originality of sentiment, nor yet copied from any particular and previous writing, it was intended to be an expression of the American mind, and to give to that expression the proper tone and spirit called for by the occasion.” Thomas Jefferson to Henry Lee, 1825



# The Libertarian Struggle Against Slavery

- “The contest was now ended; the chain was severed; God and right stood vindicated. I was A FREEMAN, and the voice of peace and joy thrilled my heart.” – Frederick Douglass, 1817? - 1895



Many of the Heroes of Liberty Are  
Well Known....

But not all ...





# Who...

- Published the Books....
- Financed the Schools....
- Provided the Resources....

# ?

# What Can One Person Do?

# Without This Man, How Much Freedom Would We Have Today?

- **Jacques Claude Marie Vincent de Gournay**, 1712-1759
- Successful merchant and businessman
- Intendant of Commerce, 1751-1758
- Translator, financier, and publisher of works explaining the free-market
- Promoter of the slogan “laissez-faire, laissez-passer”
- Teacher and mentor to **Anne Robert Jacques Turgot**, in turn a great promoter of freedom, friend and collaborator of **Adam Smith**, advisor to the **American Founders**, enemy of slavery....and inspiration to a century of classical liberals

# **Let Us Celebrate the Sponsors of Liberty.....**



- **Referring to London, the true monument of Sir Christopher Wren, the great architect: Reader, if you seek his monument, look around you.**
- **If you seek the monument to the supporters of liberty...look around you...at the freedom, the individuality, the progress, the wealth, and the prosperity of the modern world**