



# The Kingdom of Ends

Up until the dawn of humanism, religion gave meaning to every sphere of life.

“In medieval Europe, the chief formula for knowledge was: knowledge = scriptures x logic.

If we want to know the answer to some important question, we should read scriptures and use our logic to understand the exact meaning of the text... In practice, that meant that scholars sought knowledge by spending years in schools and libraries reading more and more texts and sharpening their logic so they could understand the texts correctly” (Harari 2017: 237-8).

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

Yuval Noah Harari

New York Times Bestselling

Author of *Sapiens*



# Homo Deus

A Brief History  
of Tomorrow

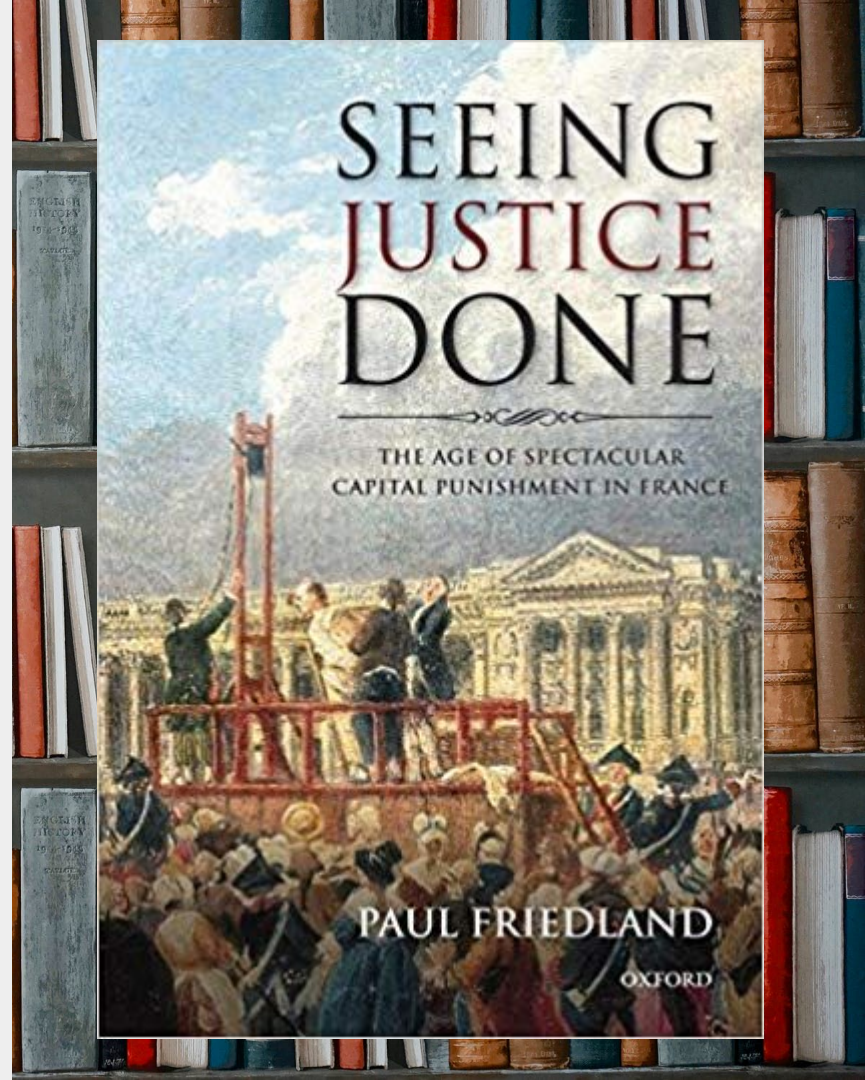
“Provocative. . . . The handiwork of a gifted thinker.”

—NEW YORK TIMES

**Religion gave meaning also to punishment...**

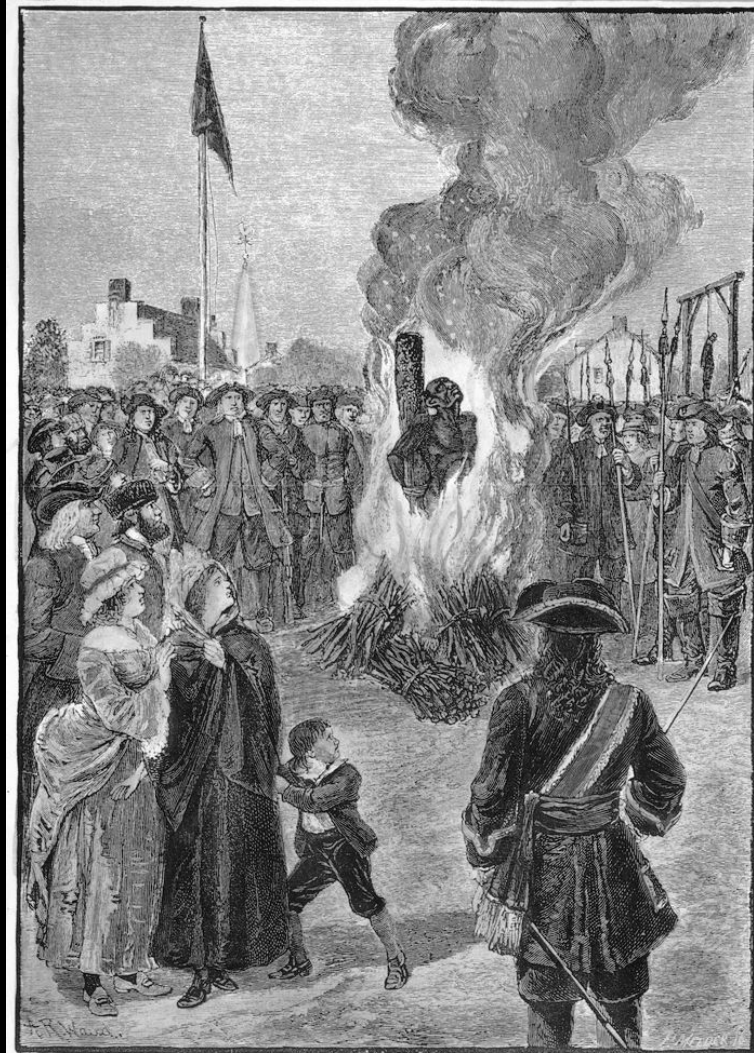
**“What does seem clear, however, is that executions consistently drew crowds throughout much of the late medieval and early modern periods...**

**Prior to the middle of the sixteenth century, those who attended executions—I will resist calling them ‘spectators’—did so largely out of a sincere desire to participate in a ceremony that held profound personal meaning for them, and not because they wanted to gawk from a distance at the suffering of others” (Friedland 2012: 119).**



“Spectators at executions behaved as if they were at a religious ceremony, praying with the patient and even alternating verses of prayers and hymns...

This allowed both the criminal to atone for his wrongdoing and the community to heal from it” (Friedland 2012: 103-4).



EXECUTING NEGROES IN NEW YORK.



In Paris... after 1500 or so, it was customary for the procession to stop in front of the convent of Filles-Dieu where the condemned criminal would receive a glass of wine and a piece of bread as a last meal from the nuns...

While the customary practice of the Filles-Dieu appears to have died out in the early modern period, confessors continued to take great care to impart a religious character to executions through the Revolutionary period, often taking last-minute confessions and consoling the patient to the very end” (Friedland 2012: 102).

**“Executions had the potential to be profoundly moving, even spiritual, events” (Friedland 2012: 104).**

**“So deeply meaningful and extraordinarily important were penal rituals to members of the community, that on those rare occasions when the ritual was interrupted, the crowd immediately responded with frustration and anger, almost as if a spell had been broken, and they suddenly realized that what, moments before, had seemed sacred, now appeared disturbingly profane” (Friedland 2012: 106).**





**So important was the penal ritual to the communities of early modern Europe that, in many cases, the punishment was inflicted on animals, corpses (for those guilty of suicide or those who did not survive punishments leading up to executions), and even effigies (mostly paintings) of the condemned (Friedland 2012: 107-116).**



This phenomenon was called  
'The Good Death.'  
See also Garrett Fagan's (2011)  
*The Lure of the Arena*, especially  
pages 70-74.

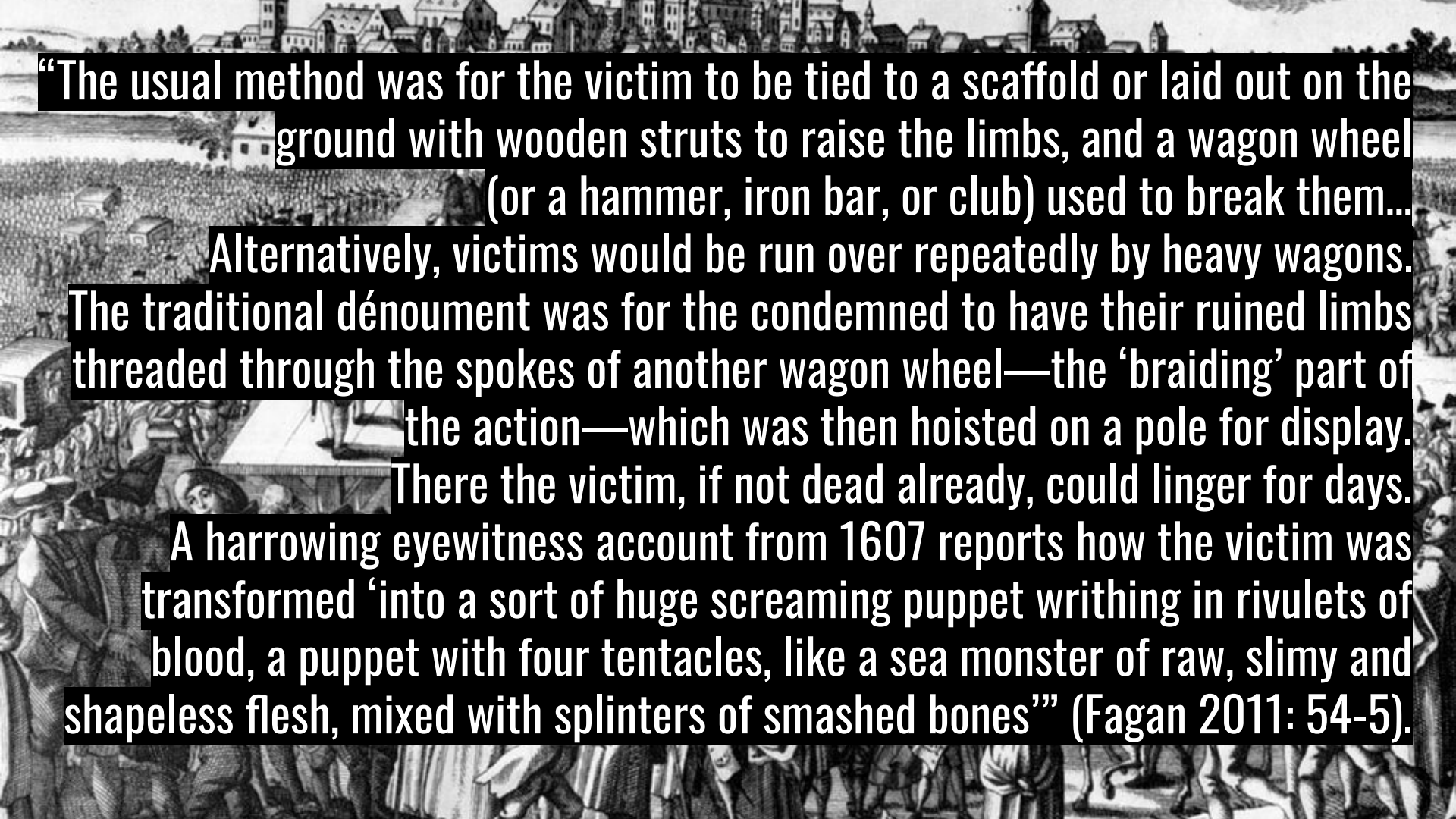


# *The Lure of the* **ARENA**

Social Psychology and the Crowd  
at the Roman Games

GARRETT G. FAGAN

CAMBRIDGE



**“The usual method was for the victim to be tied to a scaffold or laid out on the ground with wooden struts to raise the limbs, and a wagon wheel (or a hammer, iron bar, or club) used to break them...**

**Alternatively, victims would be run over repeatedly by heavy wagons. The traditional dénouement was for the condemned to have their ruined limbs threaded through the spokes of another wagon wheel—the ‘braiding’ part of the action—which was then hoisted on a pole for display. There the victim, if not dead already, could linger for days.**

**A harrowing eyewitness account from 1607 reports how the victim was transformed ‘into a sort of huge screaming puppet writhing in rivulets of blood, a puppet with four tentacles, like a sea monster of raw, slimy and shapeless flesh, mixed with splinters of smashed bones’” (Fagan 2011: 54-5).**



PHILOSOPHIÆ  
NATURALIS  
PRINCIPIA  
MATHEMATICA.

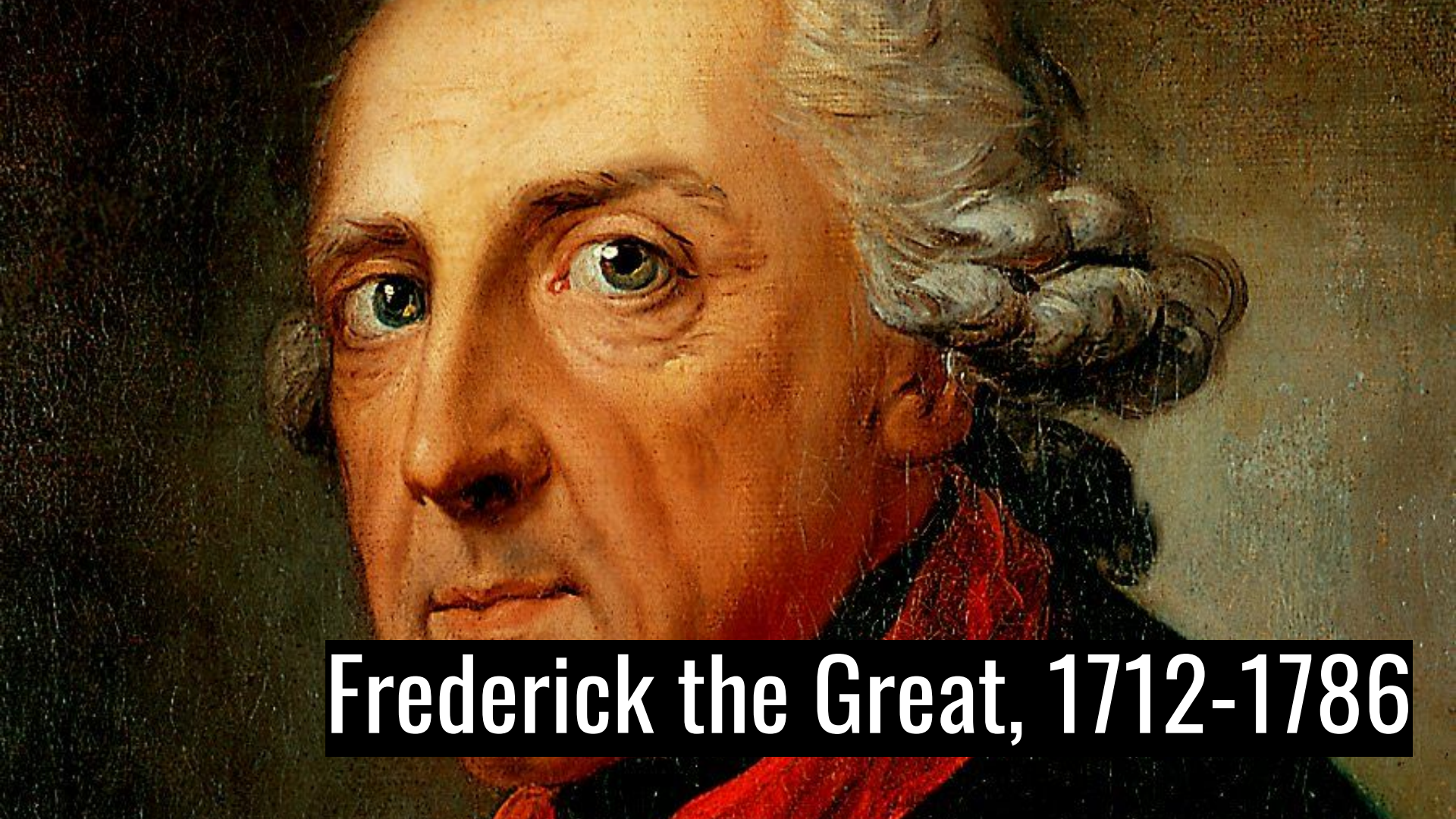
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AUCTORE  
ISAACO NEWTONO, EQ. AUR.

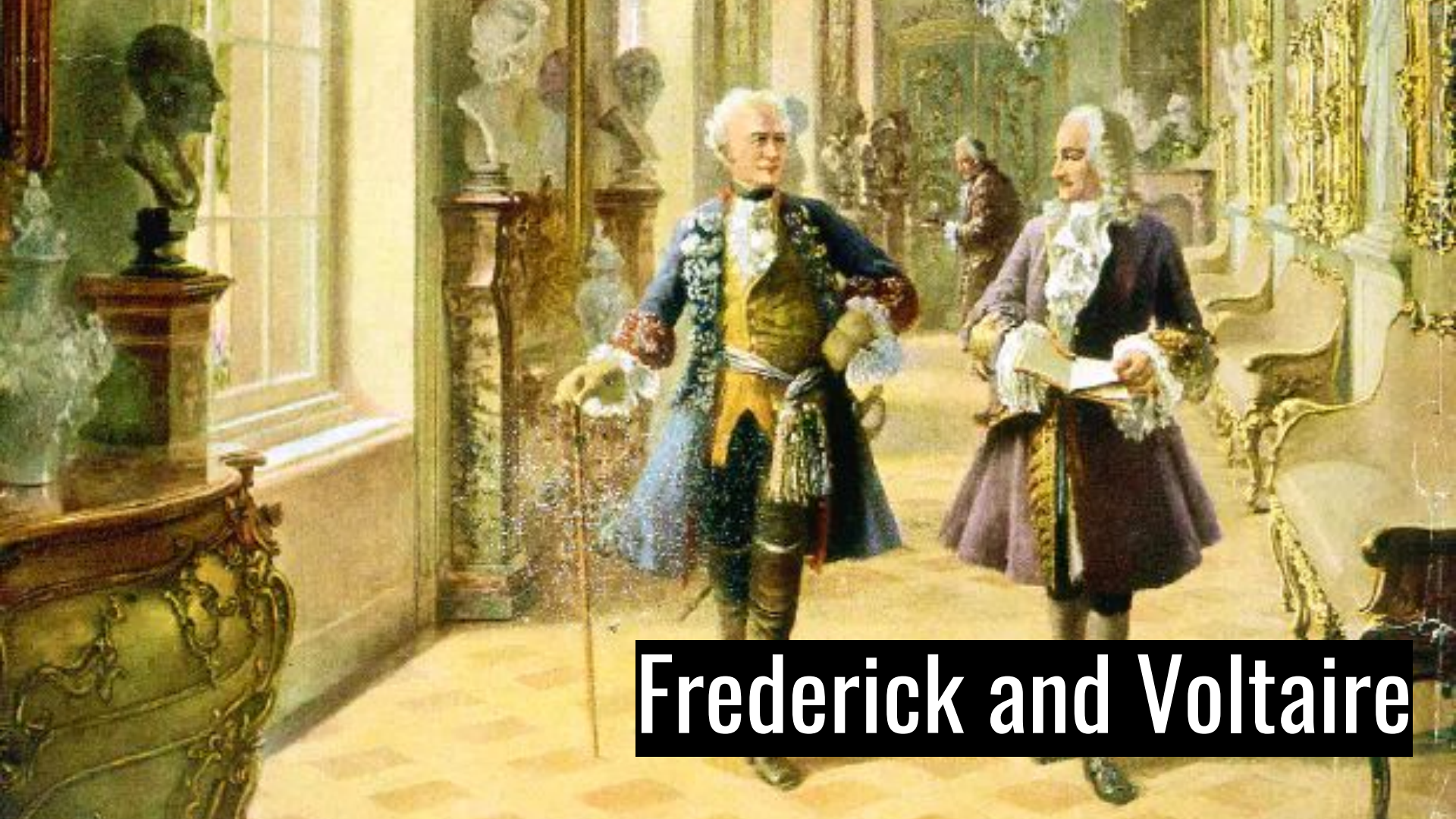
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Editio tertia aucta & emendata.

**The Age of Reason, 18th Century**



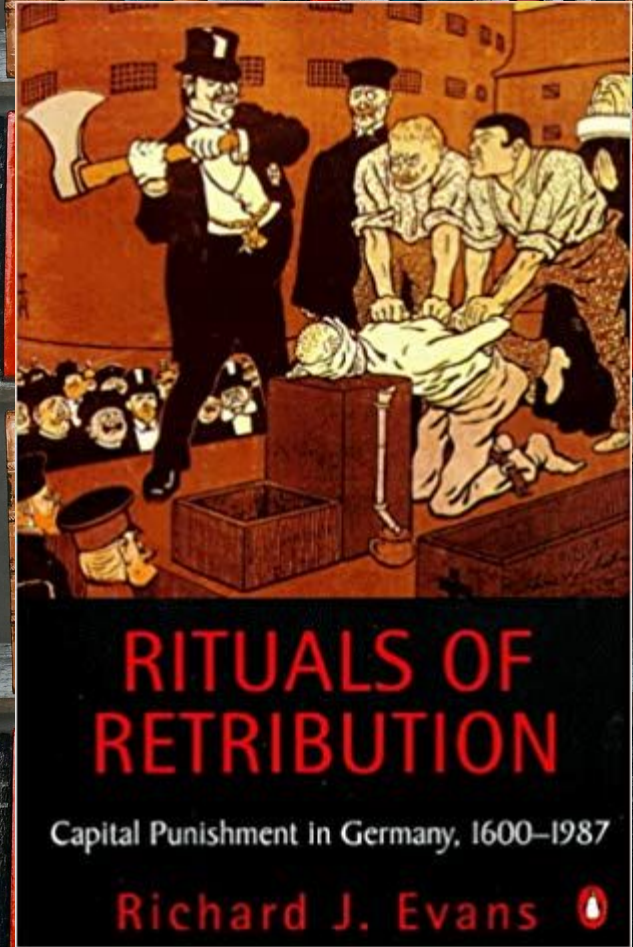
**Frederick the Great, 1712-1786**



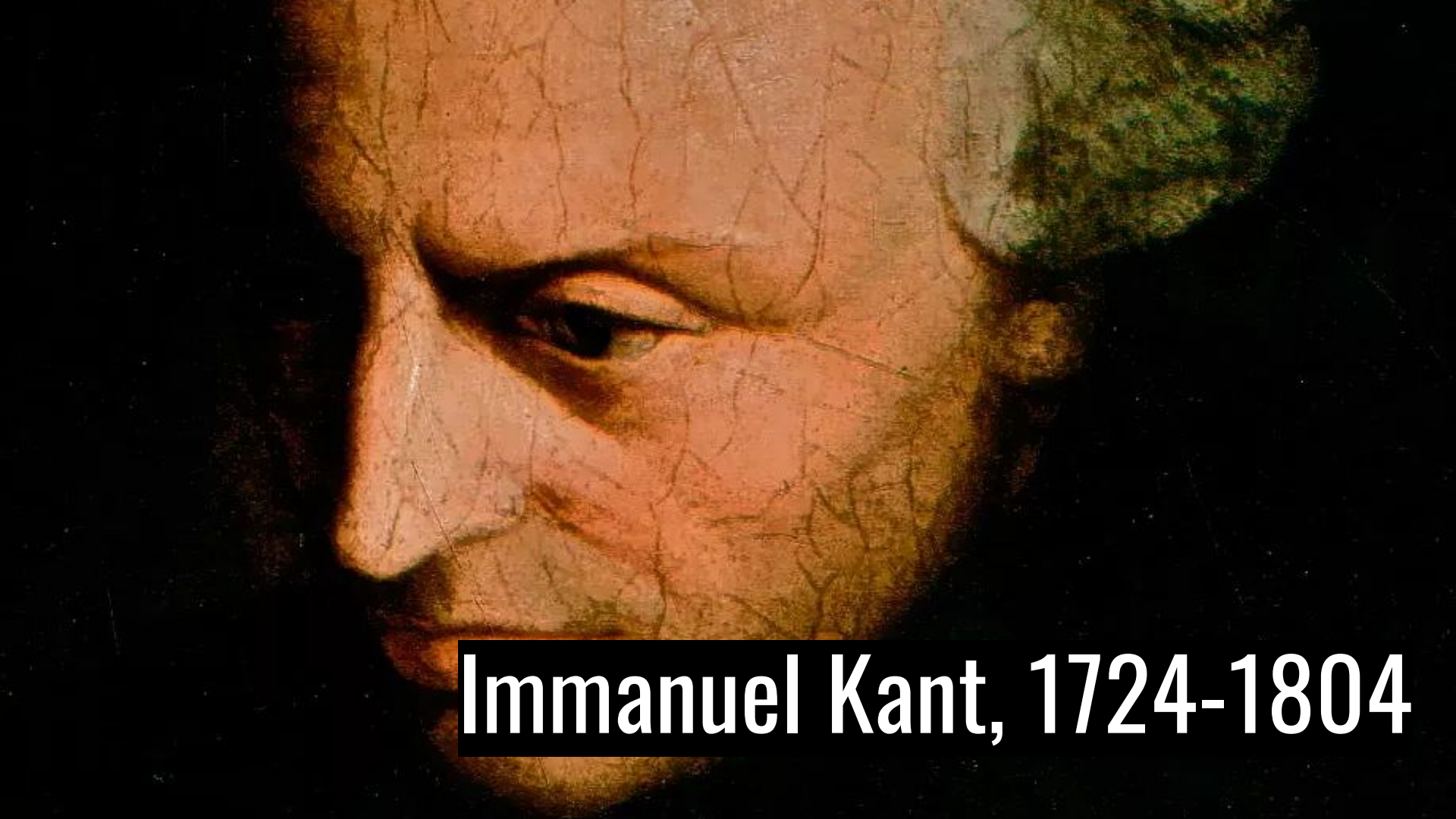
**Frederick and Voltaire**

In 1749, Frederick issued a decree stating that the objective of the punishment of 'breaking on the wheel' was "not to torment the criminal but rather to make a frightful example of him in order to arouse repugnance in others."

In all cases but the most abhorrent ones, the criminal was to be **secretly** strangled prior to the breaking on the wheel, without attracting the attention of the crowd.



**The religious meaning of punishment rituals  
was being supplanted by rational explanation...**



**Immanuel Kant, 1724-1804**



A close-up photograph of a red mechanical component, possibly a part of a motorcycle engine, with a large black gear and a gold chain visible in the background. The red component has some text on it, including "151" and "1103". The gear is black and has several teeth. The chain is gold and is positioned around the gear. The background is dark and out of focus.

# Deontology: Important Concepts

**Deontology** is the view that an action being right or wrong depends on the principle (or intention) that motivated the action.

**Consequentialism** is the view that an act is right or wrong depending on the consequences of that action.

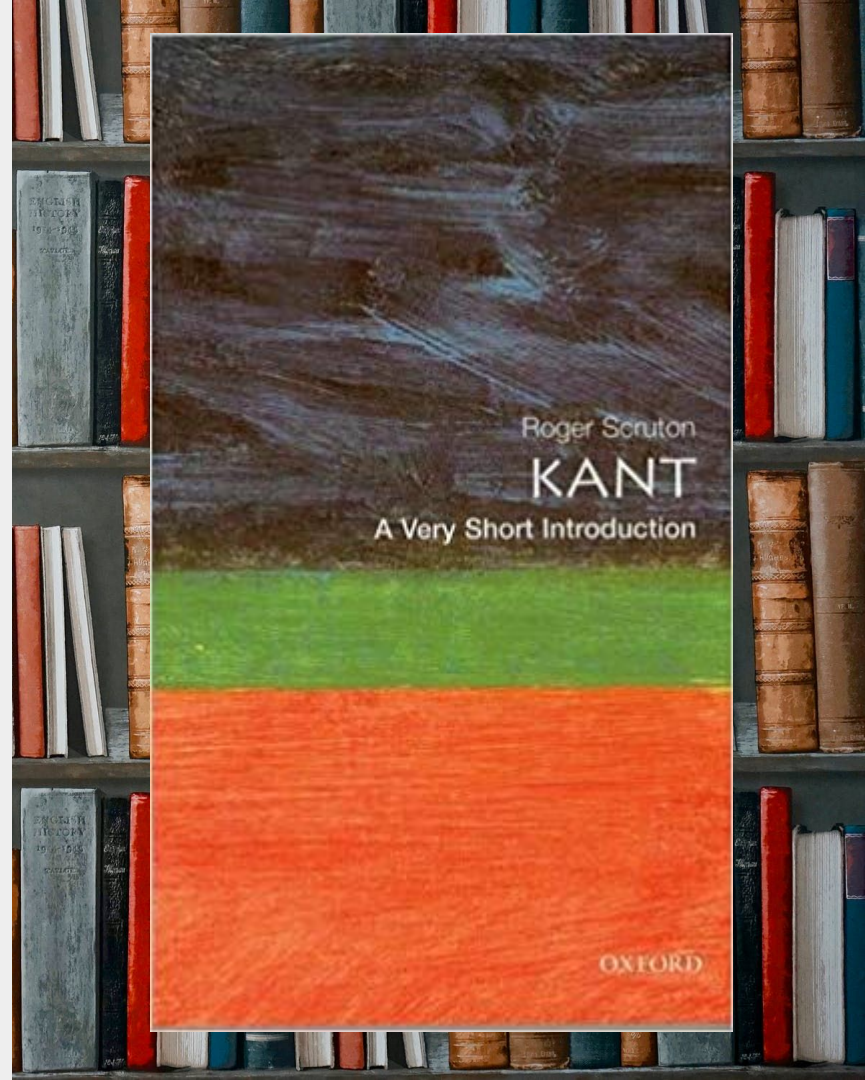
**The intuitive difference is that, to a deontologist, what makes an action right (or wrong) is that it is in line with some moral principle (or violates some moral principle), whereas a consequentialist believes that what makes an action right (or wrong) is that the action overall had good or neutral consequences (or negative consequences).**

**Kant is traditionally held as developing a robust, very complicated deontological system...**

**“The starting point of Kant’s ethics is the concept of freedom.**

**According to his famous maxim that ‘ought implies can’, the right action must always be possible: which is to say, I must always be free to perform it.**

**The moral agent ‘judges that he can do a certain things because he is conscious that he ought, and he recognises that he is free, a fact which, but for the moral law, he would have never known’”(Scruton 2001: 74).**



A **Rational Being** is a being that can live according to principles; **moral personhood** (i.e., the status of having moral rights) is only held by Rational Beings.





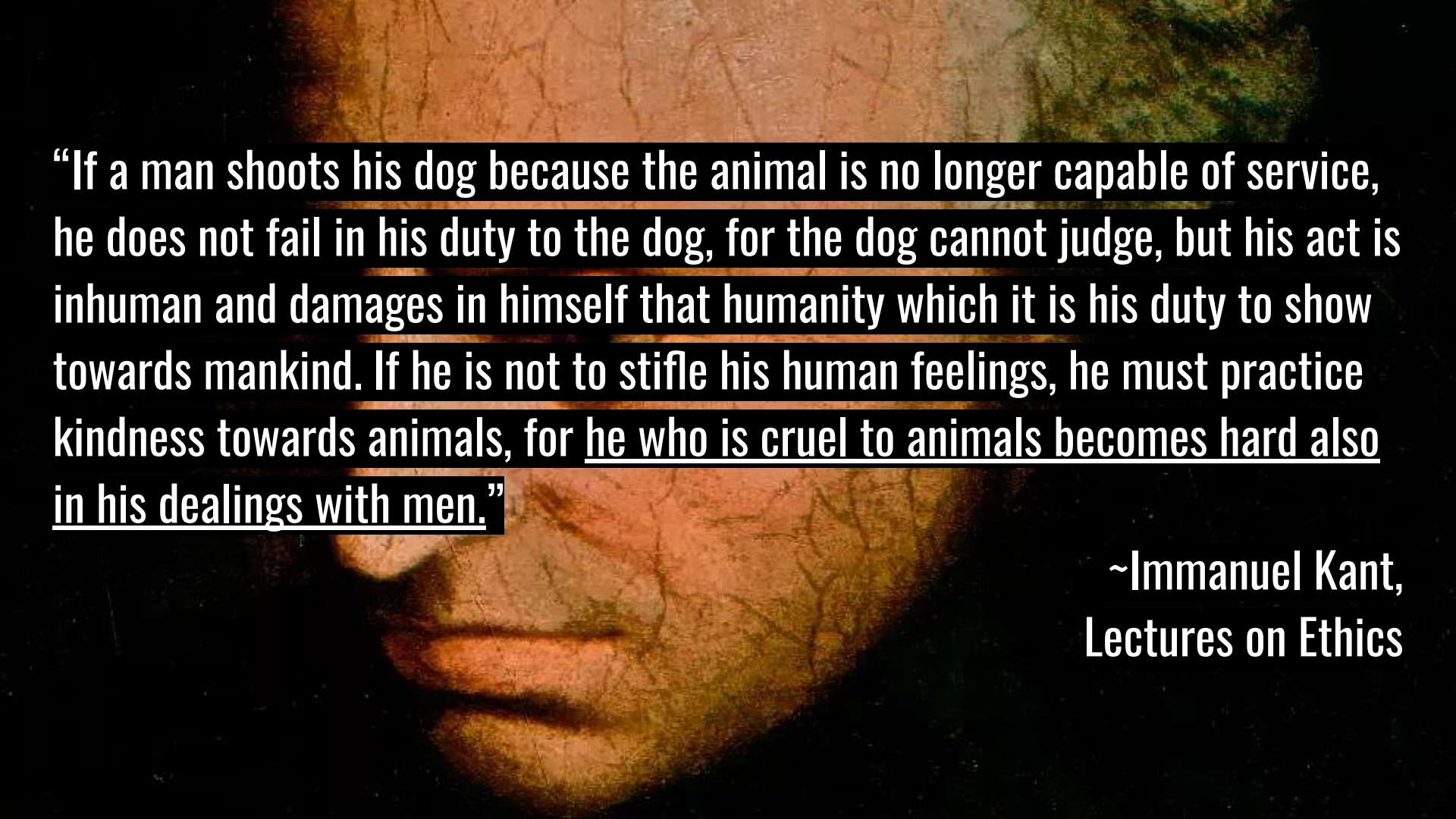


**Question:**

**Since animals have no rights, do we not need  
to treat them well?**

A close-up, high-contrast photograph of a person's face, focusing on the eyes and nose. The person has a contemplative or somber expression, looking slightly downwards. The lighting is dramatic, with deep shadows and bright highlights, emphasizing the texture of the skin and the intensity of the gaze. The background is dark and indistinct.

**Kant argues that we have indirect duties towards animals.  
Indirect duties are duties that arise solely in virtue of a direct duty**

A close-up, artistic photograph of a person's face, showing the nose, mouth, and chin. The lighting is dramatic, with strong highlights and deep shadows, giving it a textured, almost painterly appearance. The background is dark and indistinct.

**“If a man shoots his dog because the animal is no longer capable of service, he does not fail in his duty to the dog, for the dog cannot judge, but his act is inhuman and damages in himself that humanity which it is his duty to show towards mankind. If he is not to stifle his human feelings, he must practice kindness towards animals, for he who is cruel to animals becomes hard also in his dealings with men.”**

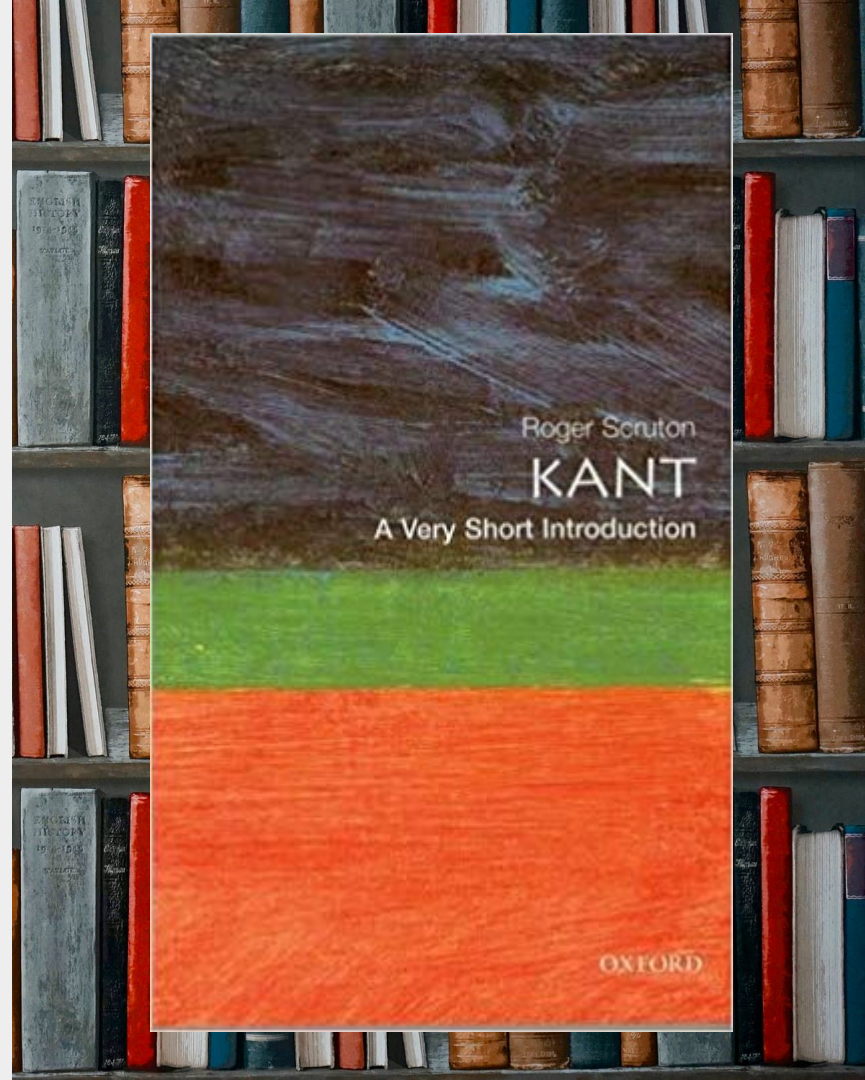
**~Immanuel Kant,  
Lectures on Ethics**

**Question:**  
**How can we be free?**

Kant argued that there are two distinct 'realms': the **empirical realm** (which is the world of phenomena that we perceive) and the **transcendental realm** (or the intelligible realm, the realm of things-in-themselves).

**“The law of cause and effect operates only in the realm of nature (the empirical realm).**

**Freedom, however, belongs, not to nature, but precisely to that ‘intelligible’ or transcendental realm to which categories like causality do not apply” (Scruton 2001: 75).\***



Because Kant's moral system is founded in the transcendental realm, he must rely solely on reason.

Kant argued that we can arrive at fundamental moral truths through **Pure Reason**; we do not need to look at the consequences of the action (in the empirical realm) to see whether they are right or wrong.

**Question:**  
**What is freedom?**





Kant points out that freedom is not just doing whatever you desire.

This is because some desires are not *genuinely* coming from us.







**Desires have either biological or social origins.**

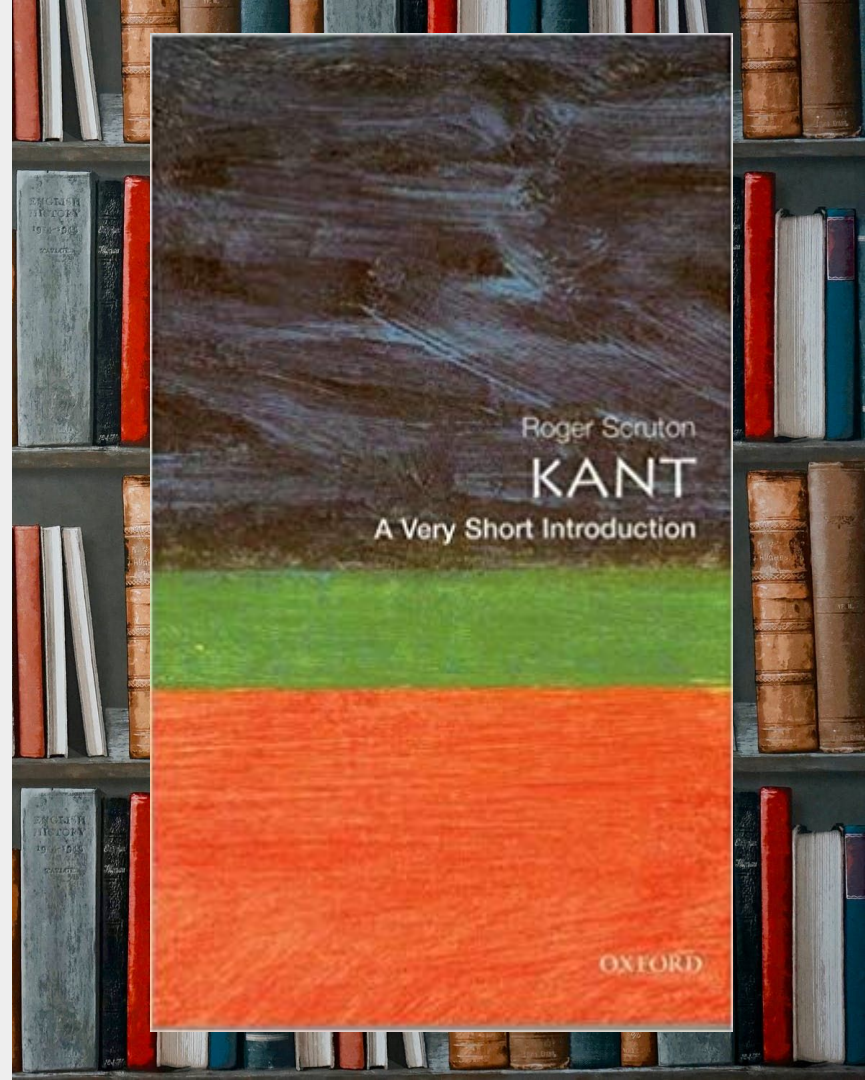
**So Kant argues that true freedom comes when you rid yourself of these non-rational desires.**

**What's left once we rid ourselves of desire?**

**Pure practical reason.**



**“Freedom is the ability to be governed by reason”(Scruton 2001: 81).**





# How Reason Guides Us

A **hypothetical imperative** is the sort of imperative (or command) where:

- a. you have a particular desired outcome or consequence, so
- b. you do a particular action as a means to that end.

For example, “Billy wants to get an A in the course, so he does all the homework and engages in class.”

Also, “Wendy is thirsty, so she got up to get some water.”



A **categorical imperative** is a command from reason that applies across any situation no matter what you desire, i.e. it's a set of rules you must follow, since they always apply.

Kant believes that morality is a categorical imperative. It is a moral law that is commanded upon us by our own reason.



**Here are some commands from reason:**

- **You may not conceive of a married bachelor.**
- **You may not conceive of a round square.**

# Moral Worth and Duty

For Kant, an action only has real **moral worth**, i.e. moral value, if it is done out of duty.

Doing something out of duty is to do something because one is motivated out of respect for moral law, even if one doesn't really want to do it. The moral worth of the act is derived not from the consequences of the act, but from the principle, or maxim, that motivated that act.

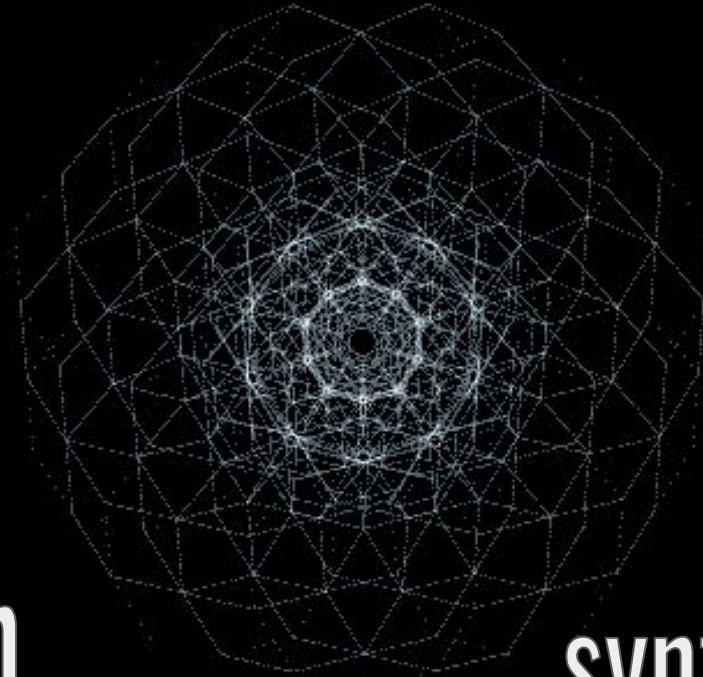


**For this reason, good will is the  
highest moral virtue.  
In fact, other virtues wouldn't  
be as good without the  
possession of good will first.**

**the divine**

**freedom**

**moral law**



**pure reason**

**synthetic a priori**