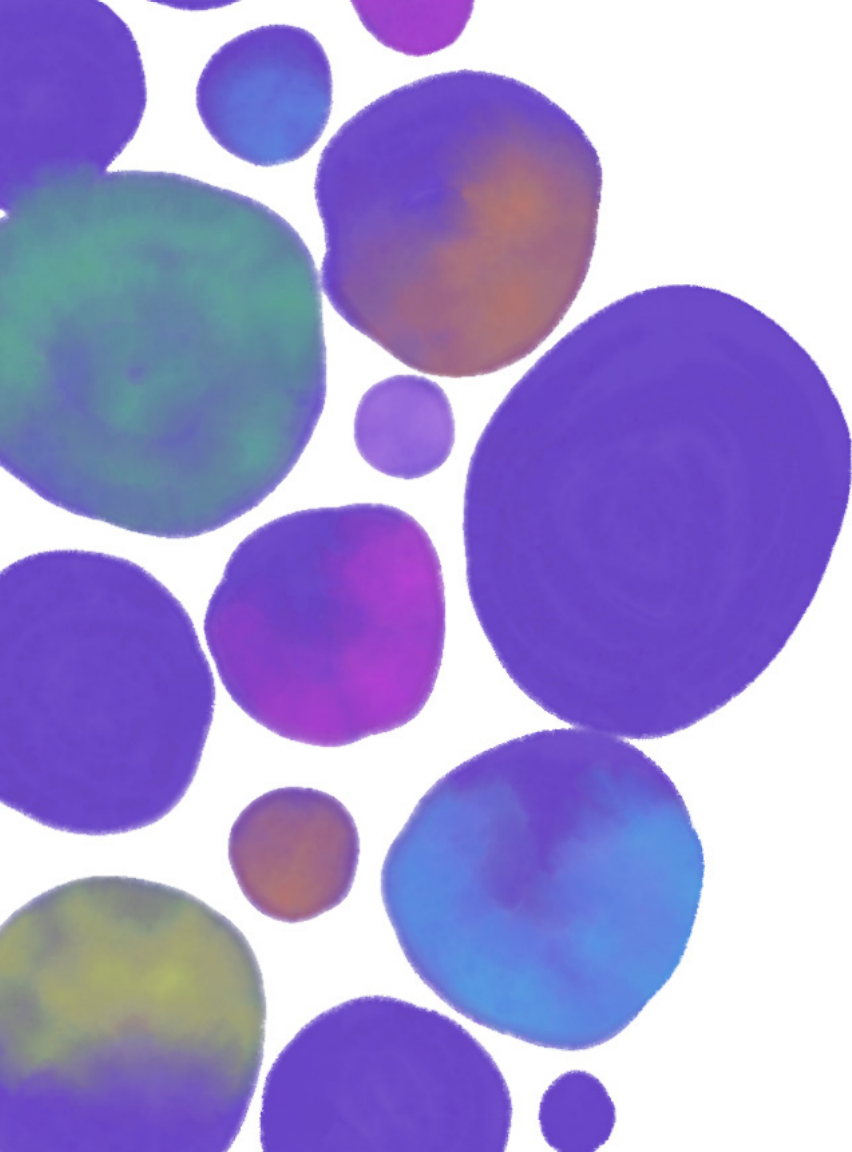


Episode #1

Origin stories

PurposePhil
concept book



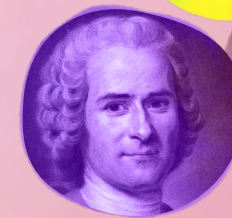


What you'll find here

- 1 Timeline of institutional philanthropy
- 2 Map of practices & concepts of philanthropic giving
- 3 Artists' reflections
- 4 *Personal reflection questions*

“ The first man who, having enclosed a piece of ground, bethought himself of saying ‘This is mine,’ and found people simple enough to believe him, was the real founder of civil society. From how many crimes, wars and murders, from how many horrors and misfortunes might not any one have saved mankind, by pulling up the stakes, or filling up the ditch, and crying to his fellows, “Beware of listening to this impostor; you are undone if you once forget that the fruits of the earth belong to us all, and the earth itself to nobody. ”

Discourse
on the Origin
of Inequality



Jean-Jacques
Rousseau

This little concept book introduces the idea that philanthropy as it looks today, in the West, emerged in response to increasing inequalities based in land ownership and agricultural surpluses thousands of years ago. Those disparities gave rise to both unmet human need and the desire for social stability.

Giving practices predate agrarian society and (as far as we know) extend to every society on record.



While Philosopher Thomas Hobbes famously described the natural state of humankind as “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short,” historians, anthropologists, evolutionary biologists, and even neuroscientists who study giving say that altruism and cooperation are just as essential to the human experience.



How, then, did we shift from informal giving practices to formalized giving structures, and who have those structures served to benefit?



If we look at cultures of giving as distinct from institutions of philanthropy, can we open-up some space to re-imagine what present day philanthropic institutions are for, and who gets to decide?



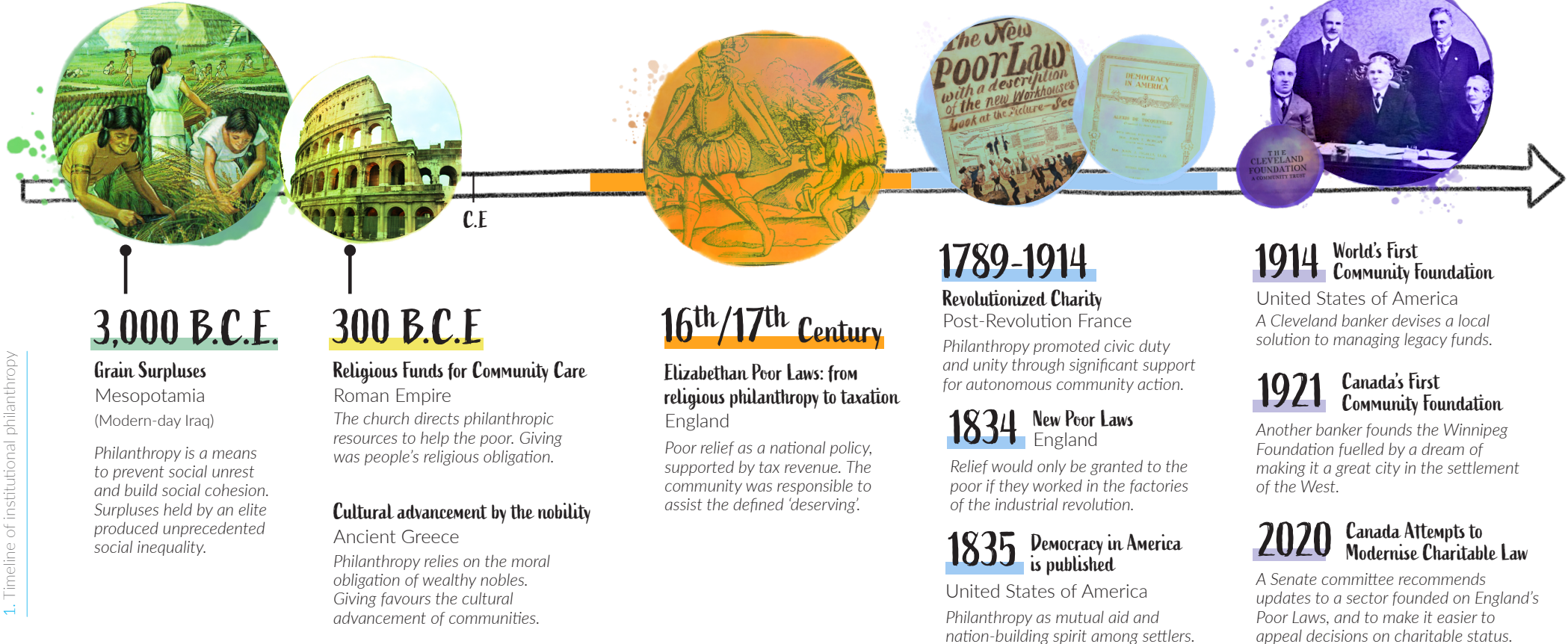
Historical inquiry can help us. As author Rutger Bregman reminds us in his book *Humankind*, “One of the basic lessons of history is that things can be different.”

Bregman is a Dutch historian, journalist, and author whose subjects include social and economic innovation, philosophy, human generosity and collaboration.



1. Timeline of institutional philanthropy

Timeline of institutional philanthropy





Grain Surpluses

3,000 B.C.E, Mesopotamia
(modern-day Iraq)



The first agrarian society produces unprecedented social inequality as grain surpluses are held by an elite class. The philanthropy that develops has a different pattern than previously: giving across people who hold very different social positions and radically different levels of wealth. The elite offer benevolence and protection to the poor, perhaps in exchange for their servitude and acceptance of the social order. Philanthropy is a means to prevent social unrest and build social cohesion.

Agrarian: Any community whose economy is based on producing and maintaining crops and farmland.

Image credit: image to the left, www.sutori.com "Ancient Mesopotamia".
Top right image, www.ancienthistorylists.com "Top 11 Inventions and Discoveries of Mesopotamia" by Saugat Adhikari, November 20, 2019

Religious Funds for Community Care

300 B.C.E, Roman Empire

Christianity becomes the official religion of the Roman Empire, and the church functions as a legal entity with enforcement powers, directing resources to philanthropic causes such as medical care, shelter, and the ransoming of captives. Bishops set up community funds and establish endowments that can be used to help the poor, forming the legal basis of modern-day foundations. People make monthly contributions in proportion to their wealth, as a religious obligation.



Cultural & Civic Advancement by the Nobility

300 B.C.E, Ancient Greece

Without an enforcing legal entity, such as the church in Rome, philanthropic actions rely purely on the moral obligation of wealthy nobles. Their efforts rally around building shared community infrastructure and fostering a common culture and sense of civic virtue. The Greeks choose to support libraries, universities, and colosseums as a means of charitable giving. Educational and cultural institutions, and the employment they create, are preferred to causes such as poverty alleviation.



Elizabethan Poor Laws: from religious philanthropy to taxation

16th & 17th Century, England

After the Church of England breaks away from the authority of the Catholic Church, all monasteries are dissolved, and with them a network of philanthropic support to the poor. This leads to great social instability and the beginning of British charitable laws. In 1601, the **Poor Relief Act** is declared and England becomes the first European country to launch poor relief as a national policy, executed by local government, and supported by tax revenue. The Act defines three categories of dependents, some deemed more worthy of support than others: the vagrant, the involuntary unemployed, and the helpless. Involuntary child labour placements are one tool of 'poverty relief.'

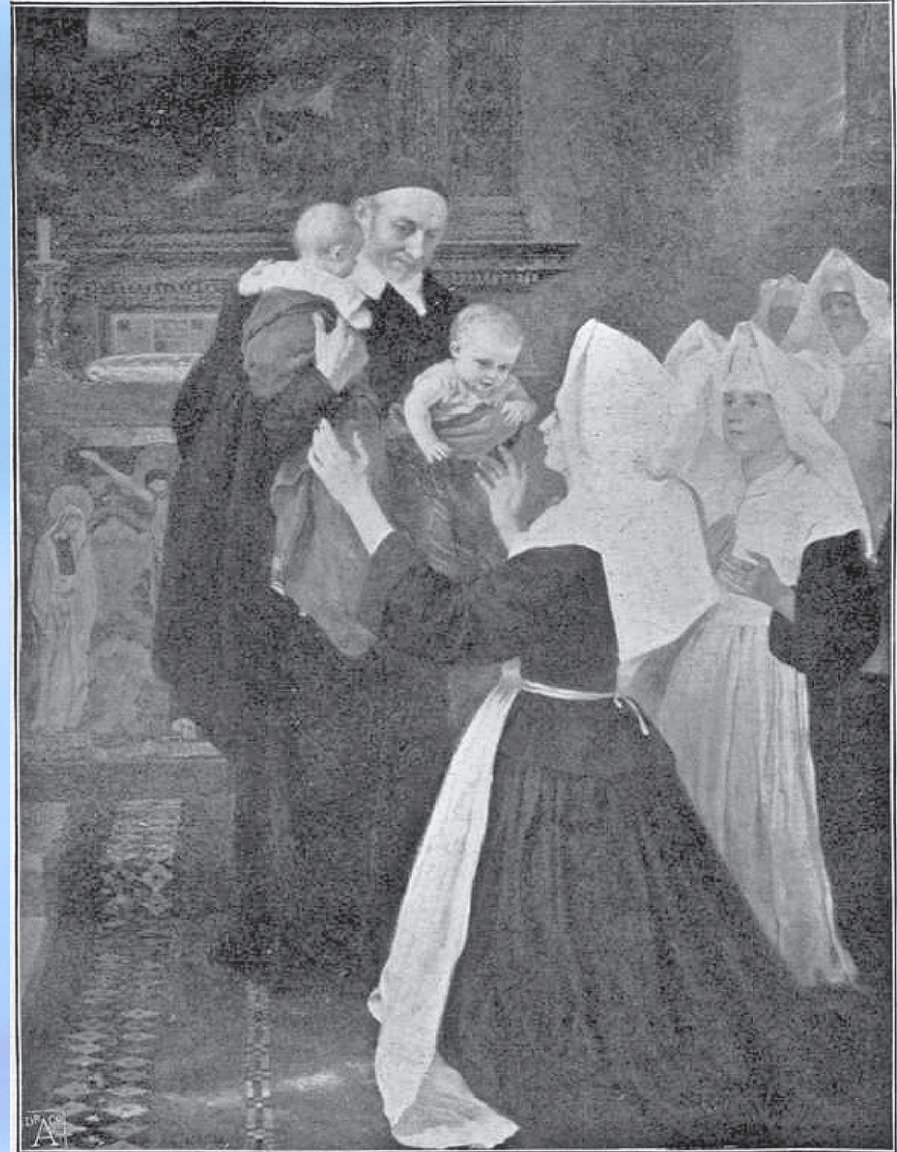


Image credit:
by Nicholas
Hilliard

Revolutionized Charity

1789-1914, Post-Revolution France

France is concerned with the question: what will tie the French people together post-feudalism? When it comes to addressing persistent inequality, the answer is charitable relationships. The nineteenth century sees the founding of the St. Vincent de Paul, and a spectrum of private to semi-public, gendered, faith-based associations. The state supports this autonomous community action by honouring charitable work with awards rather than significant public funds. Noble and bourgeois families minister to the poor in their own neighbourhoods, and nuns embed themselves in underserved areas. Post-revolutionary philanthropy runs counter to the modern rationalism that takes over other spheres of life, such as the economy and politics.



*Image credit:
by Gabriel
Von Hackl*

England's New Poor Laws

1834, England

1601 Poor Laws are amended based on arguments that continue to resonate almost two centuries later. Prominent thinkers like Thomas Malthus, Jeremy Bentham, and David Ricardo argue the existing relief is distorting the free market by making poverty too tolerable, and encouraging employers to keep wages artificially low, knowing workers will receive subsidies. The New Poor Law will grant relief only inside the poor house, a prison-like facility. At this time assistance is intentionally stigmatized and made “an object of wholesome horror” to encourage people to work instead. Sentencing those assessed as ‘lazy’ to the poor houses and underpaid labour reinforces the narrative of the ‘deserving’ and ‘undeserving’ poor.

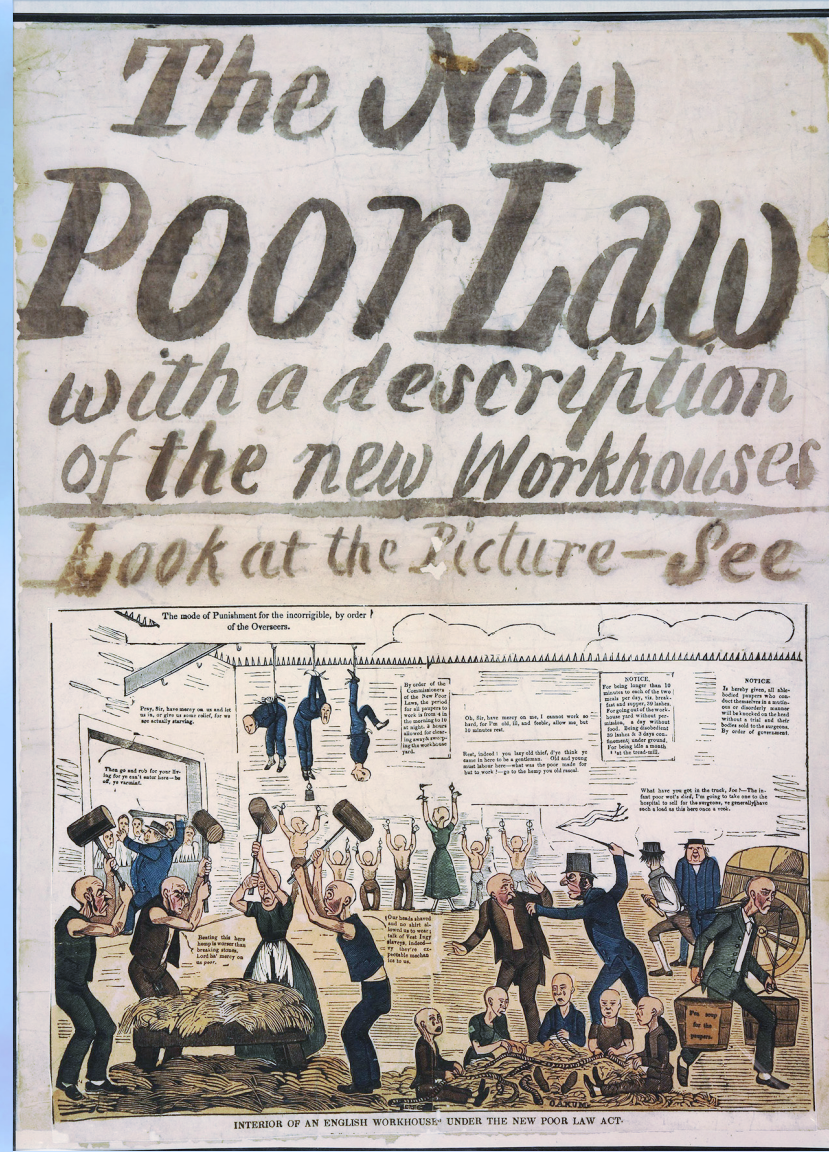


Image credit:
British Library
National Archive

Democracy in America published

1835, United States

Alexis de Tocqueville extols the virtues of the United States' mutual aid brand of philanthropy in which self interest and the common good are reconciled through a pioneering, nation-building spirit. He marvels at how Americans make things happen: barn-raising, library systems, etc. However, this mutual aid approach and concept of unity through American citizenship is reserved for settlers, and Tocqueville observes that the nation is built on African enslavement and Native American dispossession. The American way is of particular interest to the French whose philosophers are grappling with this question of what creates social cohesion in a republic.

DEMOCRACY IN AMERICA.

BY

ALEXIS DE TOCQUEVILLE,

AVOCAT A LA COUR ROYALE DE PARIS,
ETC., ETC.

TRANSLATED BY

HENRY REEVE, ESQ.

WITH AN ORIGINAL PREFACE AND NOTES,

BY JOHN C. SPENCER,
COUNSELLOR AT LAW.

NEW YORK:

GEORGE DEARBORN & CO., 38 GOLD STREET,
ADLARD AND SAUNDERS, 46 BROADWAY.

MDCCCXXXV.



Image credit: Beinecke
Rare Book & Manuscript
Library, Yale University



The World's First Community Foundation

1914, United States of America

The Cleveland Foundation is established by banker Frederick Harris Goff as a more elegant and local solution to the problem of managing legacy funds. Previously, charitable trusts created from the estates of donors upon death were held at banks and a committee of local bankers and citizens would decide how to disburse the income from the trusts. The Community Foundation takes on this role, supporting local charitable causes and offering to manage funds in a way that remains responsive to the changing needs of the day.

For the first half century of their existence, there are no donor-advised funds so it is entirely up to the new foundations to make choices about fund allocation.

Images credit: www.clevelandfoundation100.org/timeline

Resolution Creating the Foundation

Adopted by the Board of Directors of The Cleveland Trust Company, January 2nd, 1914

With a view to securing greater uniformity of purpose, powers and duties of administration in the management and control of property given, devised and bequeathed for charitable purposes, the Board of Directors of The Cleveland Trust Company agrees to accept of such gifts, devises and bequests as Trustee for the uses, purposes and with the powers and duties hereinafter set forth, all property so held to be known as constituting *The Cleveland Foundation*, and to be administered, managed and dealt with, save as hereinafter provided, as a single trust. From the time the donor or testator provides that income shall be available for use of such Foundation, such income, less proper charges and expenses, shall be annually devoted perpetually to charitable purposes, unless principal is distributed as hereinafter provided. Without limiting in any way the charitable purposes for which such income may be used, it shall be available for assisting charitable and educational institutions whether supported by private donations or public taxation, for promoting education, scientific research, for care of the sick, aged or helpless, to improve living conditions or to provide recreation for all classes, and for such other charitable purposes as will best make for the

THE CLEVELAND FOUNDATION is a fund created by the union of many gifts—many different estates or parts of estates—held in trust; contributed by the people of Cleveland and managed by them for the benefit of the City of Cleveland. It provides a plan of organization sufficiently flexible to meet conditions that cannot be anticipated.

F. H. Goff.

Objects

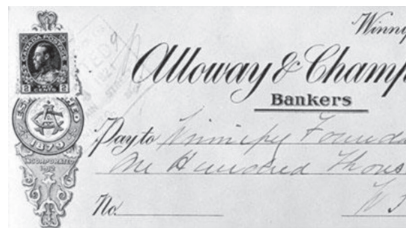
tions or public taxation, for promoting education, scientific research, for care of the sick, aged or helpless, to improve living conditions or to provide recreation for all classes, and for such other charitable purposes as will best make for the



Canada's First Community Foundation

1921, Canada

Following a similar path to the USA, the Winnipeg Foundation is founded by a trader and banker, and established as Canada's first community foundation in 1921. The founder, William Forbes Alloway, is motivated by the belief that the West must "fill up with people" and is known to have earned his fortune in part through exploitative trading in Métis scrip and horses, and government contracts awarded through cronyism.



From a desire to see Winnipeg become a prominent metropolis, and give back to the community, he donates his own personal funds, a starting gift of \$100,000.



Canada Attempts to Modernise Charitable Law

2020, Canada

The Special Senate Committee on the Charitable Sector releases its report on modernising Canada's charitable sector, which is currently governed by laws that still closely resemble Victorian Poor Laws, including their conceptions of deservingness and what constitutes charitable activity. Significant recommendations aim to make it easier for organizations to appeal the denial, or revocation, of charitable status, and present evidence, so that charitable laws will be reformed through more precedent-setting cases.



2. Map of practices & concepts of philanthropic giving

Map of practices and concepts of philanthropic giving

One way of understanding history is through events and dates.
Another way is through storytelling and concepts.

- 1 Saytk'ihl Wo'osim** (*Canada west coast*)
The Nisga'a philosophy of the common bowl.

Stl'e'áleq

Stó:lō word for their tradition colonially known as the Potlatch, an example of gift economy practices.

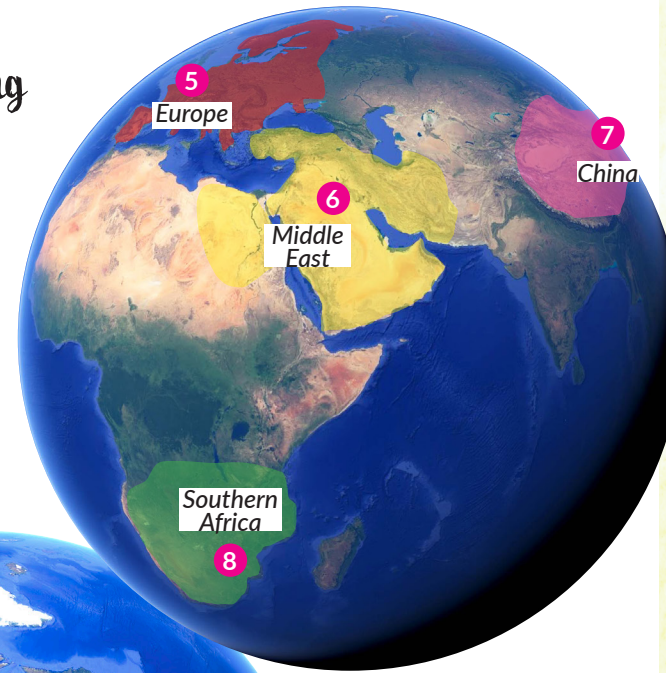
- 2 Central & Eastern Canada/USA**
Dibaakonige
Anishinaabemowin concept of justice or law.

Zaagidiwin

Love, from the Seven Sacred Grandfather Teachings.

- 3 The Gift Economy**
(*Multiple, northwest coast & south pacific*)
A system in which the altruism of philanthropy is fully integrated in the economy, rather than operating separately, with a distinct logic.

- 4 Mutual Aid/Self Help**
Achieving the common good through exercising one's private interest.



- 5 Philanthropy**
(*Roman and Greek empires & UK*)
Love of humankind, especially expressed through deeds.

- 6 Sadaqah**
Arabic, meaning 'righteousness', refers to voluntary acts of charity

Tzedakah

In the Jewish faith, deeds of justice.

Tikkun Olam

Repairing the world through contemplative actions.

- 7 Gōngyì (Shìyè)**
The public good or public welfare.

- 8 Ubuntu**
Nguni Bantu for "humanity" or "I am because we are".

Philanthropy

Love of humankind, especially expressed through deeds

Love of humankind, especially as expressed through deeds of practical beneficence and work for the good of others c. 1600.

From Late Latin philanthropia,

- from Greek philanthrōpia “kindliness, humanity, benevolence, love to mankind” (from gods, men, or things)
- from philanthrōpos (adj.) “loving mankind, useful to man,”
- from phil- “loving” (see philo-) + anthrōpos “mankind” (see anthropo-).

Reference: “Philanthropy.” 12.08.2021. [Etymonline.com](https://www.etymonline.com).

[Listen](#) to Calum Carmichael talk about the differences between the usage of “philanthropy” and “charity”.



Europe: Roman and Greek empires & UK



Southern Africa

Ubuntu

Nguni Bantu for “humanity” or “I am because we are”

Ubuntu informs an ideal of shared human subjectivity that promotes a community’s good through an unconditional recognition and appreciation of each human with their different capacities. It is through their mutual support that they can help each other to fully realize their human potential.

Reference: “Ubuntu Philosophy”. 12.08.2021. [Wikipedia.org](https://www.wikipedia.org).

[Listen](#) to Mvuselelo Ngcoya talk about Ubuntu and aid.



Tzedakah

In the Jewish faith, deeds of justice

Tzedakah derives from the Hebrew word tzedek meaning 'justice.' Performing deeds of justice is perhaps the most important obligation Judaism imposes on the Jew.

Throughout history, whenever Jewish communities were self-governing, Jews were assessed tzedakah just as everyone today is assessed taxes. Failure to give tzedakah was understood as not only unjust and mean-spirited, but also illegal.

Reference: "Tzedakah". 12.08.2021. [Jewishvirtuallibrary.org](https://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org).

[Listen](#) to Rabbi Dan Moskowitz talk about how Tzedakah "saves from death"



Middle East



Tikkun Olam

Repairing the world through contemplative actions

A Hebrew phrase that refers both to social policy (insuring a safeguard to those who may be at a disadvantage), and also repairs performed on an individual level.

The second meaning is more abstract and cosmological: the world is made up of good and evil and humans must restore it to the way G-d intended, through contemplative actions, eg. Prayer, following commandments.

References: "Tikkun Olam: Repairing the world". 08.12.2021. [MyJewishLearning.com](https://www.myjewishlearning.com)

"Tikkun Olam". 08.12.2021. [Learningtogive.com](https://www.learningtogive.com)

[Listen](#) to Rabbi Dan Moskowitz talk about Tikkun Olam, equity and equality "saves from death"



Sadaqah

Arabic, meaning 'righteousness', refers to voluntary acts of charity

Islamic term for an act of “giving something... without seeking a substitute in return and with the intention of pleasing Allah.”

From the Arabic root word ‘sidq’ which means sincerity. It is voluntary, unlike Zakat, which is a compulsory minimum. Acts of Sadaqah include a good word, administering justice between others, and every step taken towards prayer.

Reference: “Sadaqah”. 16.08.2021. [Wikipedia.org](https://www.wikipedia.org).

[Listen](#) to Mohamad Sawwah on different types of Islamic philanthropy: sadaqah, zakat, and waqf.



Middle East



China
(Mandarin)

Gōngyì (Shìyè)

The public good or public welfare

The Mandarin word Gōngyì refers to donations made for the sake of the public welfare. The Chinese law regulating such acts is Gōngyì shìyè juānzèng fǎ, where shìyè refers to an undertaking, project, or activity; a charitable cause; publicly funded institution, enterprise or foundation. The Chinese law allows for tax benefits to those who donate.

References: “Gōngyì shìyè.” 30.08.21. Yellowbridge Mandarin Dictionary and Thesaurus.
www.yellowbridge.com/chinese/dictionary

[Tipton, B. A. E. \(2012\). Follow the Money: Philanthropy in China - Who's Giving, to Whom, and Why? \(thesis\). UBC.](#)

[Listen](#) to Wenjuan Zheng talk about the meaning of Gōngyì



Zaagidiwin

Love, from the Seven Sacred Grandfather Teachings

Zaagidiwin, the Anishinaabemowin word for love, is one of the Seven Sacred Grandfather Teachings. It is described as reciprocal and unconditional. The teachings are traditional knowledge that collectively represent what is needed for community survival and to guide our actions for living well. The other six teachings include respect, truth, bravery, wisdom, generosity, and humility.

Reference: "The Gifts of the Seven Grandfathers."
20.08.21. [Ojibwe.net](https://www.ojibwe.net).

[Listen](#) to John Borrows talk about the Seven Grandmother and Grandfather Teachings of love



Central & Eastern
Canada/USA



Dibaakonige

Anishinaabemowin concept of justice or law

"Dibaa is the word for measure. Konige is this kind of action of ...responsibility. So ...justice as a measure of activity ...Another way of thinking about justice is in the stories we tell in the ...seven grandmother and grandfather teaching...And then justice is something that you see in the natural world surrounding us..."

Reference: Napier, N. M. L., & Schulman, S. B. (2021, April 13). John Borrows. personal.

[Listen](#) to John Borrows talk about justice as embedded in Wampum belts



Saytk'íhl Wo'osim

The Nisga'a philosophy of the common bowl

The common bowl philosophy refers to the understanding that everyone relies on the same resources and community, and all must contribute. This worldview is echoed in the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe and Wendat traditions.

Reference: "Government." 27.08.21. [Nisgaanation.ca](https://www.nisgaanation.ca).

[Listen](#) to John Borrows talk about the common bowl and other Indigenous ideas about wealth



half way up
west coast
of BC



American Mutual Aid/Self Help

Achieving the common good through exercising one's private interest

Circa 1840, the Frenchman Tocqueville observes "American moralists do not hold that a man should sacrifice himself for his fellow man because it is a great thing to do; they boldly assert rather, that such sacrifices are as necessary to the man who makes them as to the man who profits from them." The classic example of mutual aid is barn-raising.

Reference: Tocqueville, A. de, Bowen, F., Bradley, P., & Laski, H. J. (1945). *Democracy in America* (Vol. 2). A.A. Knopf.

[Listen](#) to Bruce Sievers talk about de Tocqueville's philanthropy



The Gift Economy

A system in which the altruism of philanthropy is fully integrated in the economy, rather than operating separately, with a distinct logic.

The gift economy is a product of a world view in which it is “the art of giving and receiving and the relationships created by these acts that matters.”

In a gift economy, giving is reciprocal rather than one-way, and “is not simply an act of charity. It is a system of mutual trust, obligation and solidarity.” Gifts are given without any explicit expectation that the favour will be returned; however, the act creates or deepens a relationship. The connection creates an obligation between the parties.

Northwest Coast Indigenous nations’ potlatch ritual is an example of a gift economy practice, in which prominent families host others over a period of time, feeding them, and offering gifts. The giving of gifts strengthens group relations and brings honour to the host.

Northwest
Coast

South Pacific/
New Zealand



“There are two distinct traditions of philanthropy at work in Aotearoa New Zealand, the Māori and the Anglo-Western, deriving from the country’s colonial heritage. At the moment, proponents of the two traditions are at risk of talking past each other because of the misreading of fundamental values associated with the two histories: one of gift exchange and reciprocity, the other of charity.”

M. Hēnare,
2015

References: “Gift Economy.” (June 21, 2017). [New World Encyclopedia](#). Retrieved September 13, 2021.

Hēnare, M. “Not Simply and Act of Charity: Māori gift exchange.” (2015, September 1). [Alliance Magazine](#).

Stl'e'áleq

Stó:lō word for their tradition colonially known as the Potlatch, and an example of gift economy practices.

Among other nations of the Northwest Coast of Turtle Island, the Stó:lō economy is one based in gift exchange. However, scholars argue that the expectations for how gifts to strangers will be reciprocated are actually made quite explicit, as the hope is to start a relationship of trade.

Reference: [Spiller, C., Wolfgramm, R., Kelly, D., & Kelly, P. \(2015\). An ethic of Reciprocity: Illuminating the Stó:lō Gift Economy. In Indigenous spiritualities at work: Transforming the spirit of enterprise \(pp. 191–208\). essay, Information Age Pub. Inc.](#)

Stó:lō



“

Stl'e'áleq encompasses the active practice of Stó:lō holism in the sense that the ceremonies provide the institutional space in which spiritual, cultural, health-related, legal, social, economic, and political ways of life converge. Their interconnection is a crucial aspect of their proper functioning, and Stl'e'áleq serves to fulfill a cohesive role for Stó:lō society. The integrated nature of Stl'e'áleq means that they involve extensive preparation for the ceremonial and feasting components of the event, responsibility for which is undertaken by members of an extended family. Typically, there is a key purpose that guides planning for Stl'e'áleq, such as conveying ancestral names, honoring achievement, confirming leadership roles, allocating property and resources, developing strategic partnerships, resolving disputes, and facilitating healing practices.

”

D. Kelly &
P. Kelly,
2015



3. Artists' reflections

Rawan

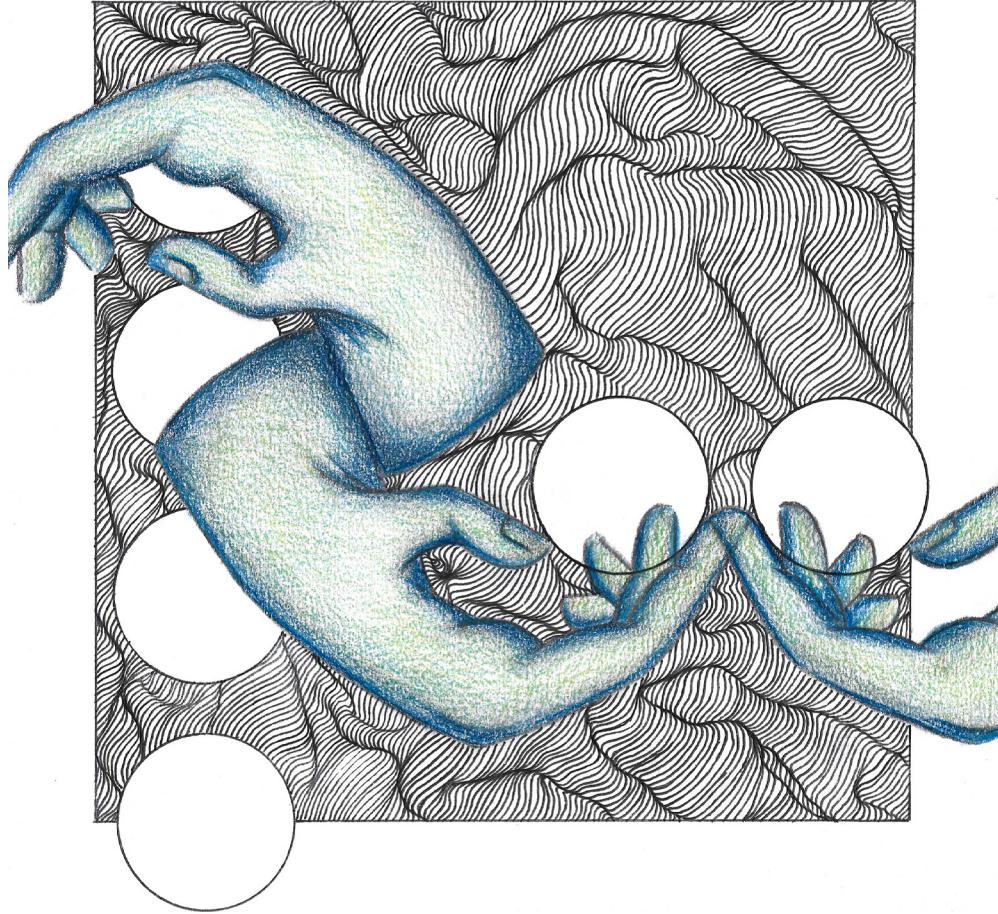


Randall Bear



For the first episode of the PurposePhil podcast, two original art pieces were commissioned: a cover and a complementary piece. These are made by two local artists and are a way to bring a visual approach -- a different way of processing and thinking -- to reflect on the ideas in the podcast.

Each artist was intentionally given an open ask: to listen to the episode and represent something that stuck with them, a theme that stood out and resonated with them. In the following pages you'll see their pieces and personal reflections on Origin Stories.



Episode #1: Origin stories

Episode cover by Rawan Hassan

Inspired by the quote “a human being is a human being because of other human beings” from Mvuselelo Ngcoya, this piece explores the concept of philanthropy and giving as growth. It compares the different forms of giving through the interactions of the hands; the difference between vertical giving (from one hand with many, to another hand with less), and horizontal giving (two hands on equal standing, directly giving). The artwork brings into question the potential gap between intention and impact, in the context of rising philanthropy and rising inequality; represented through the top hand missing the receiving one.



Episode #1: Origin stories

Transformation by Randall Bear Barnettson

This piece is my attempt to express several teachings I have learned from my Elders throughout my lifetime. An Elder told me that “even when a being is fully transformed it still has remnants of its former self”. That is why I chose to depict the Raven with human hands. As he ascends to the place of a Spirit being he still holds the parts of his former self. The necessity of transformation doesn’t make the process any easier.

Another Elder told me that the one of the only reasons why Indigenous peoples are so resilient is because of rootedness in our culture and our ability to stay grounded in our cultural ways of being. We have survived countless hardships because we stayed true to our culture and our inherent goal of preserving our ways and passing those onto future generations. That is why I chose to depict the sun, eyes, and hands the same colour. As the Raven wrestles with the transformation their eyes stay focused on their goal, and their hands act out that goal, as difficult as that may be.

As we continue towards our goal a better future for the generations to come we must not lose sight of our goals and remain grounded in our teachings, culture, and ways of being.

The background of the slide is composed of numerous overlapping circles in various shades of yellow and orange, creating a vibrant, abstract pattern. A large, semi-transparent orange circle is positioned on the right side of the slide, serving as a container for the section header.

4. Reflection

REFLECTIONS Looking Inside

Experiences & Observations

1. Can you trace the influences on your own ideas about philanthropy?

Reactions & Impressions

2. Placed alongside each other, do any particular historical or cultural ideas and practices of philanthropy inspire you? Make you uncomfortable, or leave you cold?

Questions & Hunches to Test

3. Which ideas would you like to explore further and understand in relation to your own understanding of modern philanthropy?

REFLECTIONS Looking Outside

Experiences & Observations

4. Where do you see, or where have you been exposed, to activity that more closely aligns with a different tradition of philanthropy or value set around the voluntary redistribution of resources? Does this activity have any relationship to the mission of VF?

Reactions & Impressions

5. What are some of your assumptions, fears, or concerns about how VF's stakeholder groups might react to different ideas and value sets around philanthropy?

Questions & Hunches to Test

6. As Vancouver Foundation pursues greater equity in the disbursements of its time, treasure, and talent, which ideas of philanthropy might need to be revisited?

Origin Stories / PurposePhil

Concept Book / Episode #1



Produced in partnership between:

vancouver
foundation

