

# Slow Tourism in the Area of Slow Philosophy

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**Abstract** Philosophizing is an attempt to conceptualize and question the “philosophy” of the existing phenomena. It is in response to such a question that the circle of concepts and, as a result, the scope of human thought becomes wider, and the conceptual world, common among humans, is created; a world in which understanding will be easier. The present study aimed to find the share of slow tourism in the philosophical subject of “slowness” using descriptive analytics and conducting library studies. In this study, it was attempted to illustrate the kinship of these two concepts through explaining the philosophy of slow tourism and philosophy of slow life, and to show that this style of tourism, although initially born of postmodern thinking, has deep traces in intellectual tradition of humans. Slow tourism is itself saturated by a philosophical trend called “slowness” and is itself a practice for a slow life that educates tourists for a life with slow philosophy in this world, both on their travels and in their lives.

**Keywords** *Slow Philosophy, Slow Tourism.*

**Introduction** Although some attribute the onset of Slow Movement to the events of 1986 in Rome, which led to the Slow Food Movement, in fact, slow philosophy has a long history in the history of human philosophy. This study firstly explored the necessity to address such issues and secondly proposed the main research question along with its conceptual model. Then it attempted to define and explain slow philosophy and express the philosophy of slow tourism to establish a close kinship between these two issues. It was believed that this serious linking bridge has not been built between these two concepts so far, and such an approach is considered the innovation of this study.

## The importance of research

“Conceptualization” is considered the most important

human dignity during history and on this planet, and “set of concepts” is considered as the valuable human heritage. It is during asking questions about “philosophy” of phenomena that concepts are developed. Socrates believed that “not-tested life is not worth living”. Testing life means dealing with a set of concepts such as love, friendship, work, leisure, death, loneliness and so on. In other words, what is conceptualized is worth living.

Expanding conceptual circle and getting familiar with new looks are the duties of philosophy. Philosophy helps us to propose new questions, through which, we can achieve broader and more diverse concepts. The wider is the conceptual circle of human being toward phenomena, the more one can achieve freedom. Freedom in philosophical thinking means the establishment of a broad conceptual relation with the world of phenomena rather than having a narrow and dark vision. Freedom means evolution in the world of concepts. The one who has more concepts is a freer

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human. The one who has more concepts has more understanding of the world, and training is nothing but human freedom in the world of concepts (Jabbari, 2019a).

Philosophical dialogue and questioning the philosophy of things may not have acceptable answers, but “conceptualization” has taken place and human being needs to build a conceptual world and live in it. Moreover, there is a necessary and sufficient condition between understanding and dialogue and conceptual world; a mutual relationship that makes each side needy of the other

In the present study, the concept of “slow tourism” and “philosophy of slow life” and the relationship between these two were explored to create a larger conceptual world and broader understanding of thoughts

### Research objective

As mentioned, in 1986 at the most famous square in Rome, Piazza di Spagna, at the same time with the opening of a McDonald restaurant and the influx of cheap American fast-food to the heart of the city of Rome, frictions were created and there were protests. Carlo Petrini, the leftist Italian journalist, was among the protestors and launched a movement called “slow food”. He emphasized on the consumption of local products, high-quality and fair organic foods, ease in cooking, and relaxation in eating, and most of all enjoying original Italian taste.

Slow Food Movement in the late 1980s gradually turned into the idea of “slow cities”, and now about twenty branches of it are common in various countries: slow management, slow thinking, slow education, slow science, slow travel, slow tourism, slow city, slow design, and slow reading, which seems to be itself a part of a more major socio-cultural model called “Slow Movement”. This movement, although initiated in the modern era from the issue of food, it is opposed to the haste existing in today’s world, which has diminished pleasure and reduced awareness: deep enjoyment of a relationship, deep understanding of a book, and deep understanding of a destination. Today’s human is caught in superficial pleasures, superficial understanding, and superficial decision making (Lashkarboluki, 2018). So, although Slow Movement initially reacted to dietary modifications, now it is targeted at lifestyle modifications; the style in which deliberation in establishing relations with food, family, nature, and people is recalled in a world where everything is passing very fast. Slow Movement focuses on the experience, quality,

impact, and ultimately, better living. Thus, the present study aimed to show that slow tourism also has some characteristics and indications that can be placed under this philosophy. This style of tourism emphasizes general travelling and the exploration of the destination and familiarity with the culture and customs of the nations; and most importantly, since tourism is a knowledge-increasing system, it can be an empirical workshop for slow living.

### The main question of the research

What is the share of “slow tourism” in “slow philosophy”?

### Research method

To find the answer to the main research question, the researcher, through library studies and descriptive-analytic research method, has attempted to, according to the conceptual model presented in Fig. 1, show that whether slow tourism has any share in slow philosophy or it is merely one type among many different types of tourism that has emerged depending on the destination and the tourist.

### Slow philosophy

Milan Kundera<sup>1</sup> in his novel titled “slowness” showed that today’s human by his precipitance destroys his own psyche, and his own moral health, and displeases the whole life. Peter Berger<sup>2</sup>, the American social psychologist and sociologist, also devoted a chapter of his book to “slowness”. Spinoza<sup>3</sup> and Epicurus<sup>4</sup> believed that philosophical life is associated with peace. Schopenhauer<sup>5</sup> also stated that slowness is a good peace in a bad world (Malekian, 2019b).

Slowness and deliberation are effective in human understanding, contribute to his morality, and have also aesthetic dimensions (Malekian, 2016). The hasty man is deprived of the memory treasure. Deliberation increases one’s self-control and creates the density of pleasure. Philosophy of slowness has

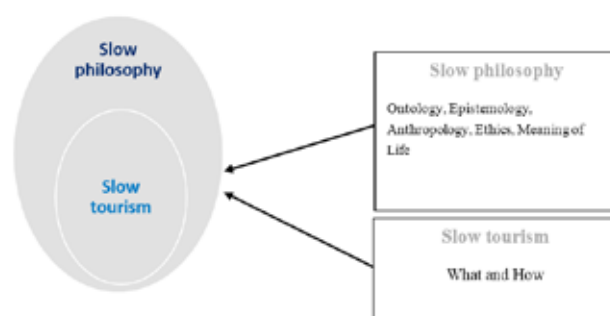


Fig. 1. Conceptual model of research. Source: author.

special principles that have been addressed by many scholars. The present study attempts to briefly state the details and key concepts of this philosophy that the author has chosen from among various expert opinions:

1. Silence; it means the silence of tongue and silence of mind. Clearly, by silence here it is not meant in its political and social sense, which means non-protest and inaction. Rather, it is the concept emphasized in the Buddhist religion that is speaking little and, more importantly, overcoming the association of meanings in the mind and conscience.
2. Living here and now; it means not having regret and hatred of the past and fear of the future that both cause immoral acts and vices. Living at the present is a skill that causes actualization of joys and deep pleasures of the present moment.
3. Uncontested action; this is an important principle in Hinduism, and is one of the common things in all practical mystics, which means that you should do what is the task of the present time and you find it right and proper, but leave the result to the being; the concept which is called “Tavakkol” (Trust) in religious teachings.
4. Wisdom of what it has to do with me; this wisdom is not a matter of practice but is a matter of theory. It means not overwhelming and disturbing the mind, rather, it means learning and knowing what is useful. It means avoiding “non-useful science” according to the prophet of Islam, or “liberation from knowledge”<sup>6</sup> as put by Krishnamurti<sup>7</sup>.
5. Love, yes; attachment, no; according to Buddha's teachings, attachment is the cause of human suffering. The real wisdom is that one should understand that the only constant principle of this world is “instability”.
6. Saying hello and farewell; in any visit to any creature in this world, say hello and farewell at the same time. Do not get separated from any phenomenon unless you have paid off all your debts to it.
7. Authentic life; it means not paying attention to the judgment of values by others. In other words, the criterion for the measurement of trueness and falseness is inside the person itself.
8. Improvement of the world is gradual; ambition to change oneself and the world and internal and external revolutions is fruitless.
9. Distinguishing between self and one's possessions; paying attention to one's own being and not one's own having (Malekian, 2014).
10. Face-to-face encountering with others; among the signs of slow thinking are Socratic walks, face-to-face encountering of Levinas, and hearing and listening conversations of Bakhtin. These three philosophers

had a methodological and slow approach to solve philosophical riddles. Walking through the city squares and having face-to-face conversations with people are evident in the style of all three.

11. Thinking beyond borders; thinking beyond temporal and spatial constraints and symmetries.
12. Thinking deliberately and voluntarily; like children's playing, there is no duty, and it can be postponed at any time. In other words, slow thinking has no other objects but itself. According to Agamben<sup>8</sup>, the concept of growth must be challenged at all stages of life. One must find another perception of flow of life that is not based on speed or its milestones.
13. The art of improvisation; a way to use the existing resources to create a solution.
14. Break in the process of daily routines; going beyond the current reality and taking steps into a higher order; some kind of dragging one's feet, pausing, waiting, and contemplating.
15. Delaying judgment; diversity, plurality, and multiplicity are time-consuming; openness in dealing with time-consuming matters, and being cautious.
16. Protecting; affection and attachment among human beings are provided in slow conditions<sup>9</sup>; valuing local cultures (in food, agriculture, etc.) against the fast-paced, digital rhythm and machine speed. Preserving these slower rhythms is more protective than conservative.
17. Ontology of events; the unexpected rupture in everyday world opens up new possibilities (Nicola D., 2018).
18. Strategic prescribing; focusing, meditating, thinking; focusing on one task at a time; deepening at the same work at that time and devoting full attention to it; controlling the greed in oneself to finish the job quickly. Coming and going and interruptions in doing multiple tasks, compared to the situation when you are focused on one task from the beginning to the end increases the time to do those tasks up to 5 times (Lashkarbolukhi, 2018).
19. Being is a mystery; “It is not our job to identify the secret of the rose/ it is better to float in the charm of the rose”. What is true is the present, and so, it is only in the container of present that one can seek happiness and enjoyment. The key to achieve happiness and pleasure is in freedom, having love but not attachment, and liberation. On the other side of the coin, there is love for the being and welcoming life; and being, as Spinoza put it, is another name for God (Malekian, 2019c).

Such an approach and philosophy of life results in some benefits for today's human being that can be summarized as follows:

1. Slowness destroys boredom; no two phenomena are the same. Hurry takes the novelty and emerging aspect of things and phenomena and makes them boring (Malekian, 2017). Schopenhauer, learning from Buddha, stated that human being like a pendant is wandering between pain and boredom. He escapes from the suffering of not having, and as soon as he achieves having and pleasure, his boredom begins. Slowness reduces the speed of boredom.
2. Slowness eliminates anxiety. In modern life, any kind of slowness is considered as a kind of backwardness. Modernism has caused man to do many things at any given moment, both of which increase anxiety in today's life (Malekian, 2019a). Deliberation means slowness resulted from relaxation. In other words, it means devoting any task to its specific time. This slow motion does not mean behavioral dullness but means a kind of behavioral relaxation; like an artist who throws some rings up and down and catches them; at the same time with having speed, he has tranquility and deliberation (Malekian, 2016).
3. Slowness makes life meaningful. We've got used to search for "meaning" within rational and predictable relationships. But all phenomena in this world seem to be meaningful. A transcendental spirit reflects further into events, takes them seriously, and tries to uncover the secret behind any event. But discovering the secret does not mean "solving" the secret, because basically secrets are not solvable. This is the problem that must be solved, since not only totality of a mystery is not present before us, but also this is the secret that has embraced us and we can never look at it from outside and cannot bring it with all its totality to the realm of our understanding. We can only get accustomed to the secret, and getting accustomed to the secret means discovering it. When we get accustomed to a secret, then the semantic implications also become clear. An unexpected meeting, an unpredictable event, and an "accident" lead us to a unique and special truth. Our ears hear better, and our eyes see better. We smell everything and hear the sound of everything. According to Molana: the speech of water and the speech of soil and the speech of mud/ are sensible by the senses of mystics. Events not only are no longer meaningless, but they carry the deepest meanings of existence. The whole world and what exists within it, appear to you in a slow pause and motion. In this slow motion, you will be able to see and understand things better; like watching a movie in slow-motion (Jabbari, 2019b).

### Slow tourism

Today's world is the world of speed, and most people

experience a busy and stressful life. Heavy workload exhausts the body and mind of people and increases anxiety and hopelessness. In such a daunting world, it seems as if the need for slowness has become more evident and more people decide to pay attention to slowness in spending their leisure time and finding the natural rhythm of being and enhancing their quality of life.

Thus, slow trips are developing more than before; trips that slow down the speed of daily life and in which people, by slowly discovering places, seem to be rediscovering themselves. Slow tourism is not synonymous with laziness, but it is exploring, listening to, and observing the mind of places and finding their hidden treasure; the same treasure with which one feels oneness.

Industrialized mass tourism could not even establish a real and deep relationship between the guests and hosts of a destination. In slow tourism, the guest becomes involved in real life of the host, becomes friend with local residents, talks to them, and creates unique memories. Face-to-face meetings with new people, testing different foods with the fascinating smell of fresh spices, exploring beautiful places and landscapes, smelling the flowers growing from the soil, feeling the cold water of rivers on the fingers, and listening to the sound of birds; aren't they unique experiences?!

Slow tourists often do not use fast vehicles to enjoy the journey route as well, and so, slow tourism is associated with the concepts of green travel and sustainable development tourism, too.

Various resources have provided definitions for slow tourism, which are acceptable translations of it, and some features have been listed for this type of tourism that are mentioned below (Fullagar, Markwell & Wilson, 2012); (Guiver & McGrath, 2017), (Dickinson & Lumsden, 2016).

1. A type of travel in which details receive attention and often occur in routes with fewer passengers, and in this way seeks to "feel" the spirit of places and cultures having been neglected rather than having a merely transient visit of them hastily and in a hurry. At the same time, it strives to be consistent with tourism standards.
2. In this type of tourism, to better understand the realities of people's lives and the destination environment, attention is paid to the simplicity and easiness of the travel. Slow tourists believe that time and enjoying every moment of traveling is the most luxurious thing that can be done during the trip.
3. Closeness to the local community and shopping directly from them and even eating at local or street



restaurants and buying fruits and vegetables from village shops are among the common activities in slow tourism. Tourists try to patiently get accustomed to the culture and customs of the destination people and gain valuable new experiences.

4. In slow tourism, environmental sensitivities receive much attention. Slow tourists, choosing public transportation, bicycles, or even walking, believe that passing the route is also part of the trip and one should enjoy the route as much as the destination itself. This type of tourism is sometimes called low-carbon traveling (Dickinson & Lumsden, 2016).

5. Slow tourist is someone who pays attention to the human and natural values of his environment, seeks for calmness and is increasingly inclined to understand and relate more deeply to the nature and way of living of human beings, and escapes from the fast-paced routine.

6. This type of tourism engages “human emotions” and establishes real and meaningful relationships between travelers and local people, places, monuments, cultures, foods, historical and cultural heritage, and the environment and nature as if it is an opportunity to experience the real taste of life.

7. The main purpose in this type of tourism is to enjoy. Unlike short term trips and short visits, it emphasizes on exploring, discovering, and the joy hidden in the slowness of visiting the destination.

8. In slow tourism, fatigue after traveling is also minimal because this fatigue is mainly due to the rush and stress to visit all the attractions of a tourist area in a short period of time. With slow tourism, the traveler will return home happily and energetically.

9. Selection of slow tourism reduces travel costs as well because luxury hotels and expensive restaurants will never be able to reveal the culture and customs of the touristic destination as eco-friendly residences and local restaurants do. Also, as slow tourists mostly walk on foot to explore and discover, transportation costs will also be greatly reduced.

10. The pre-requirement of slow tourism is first to have a calm mind; the second step is to establish close relations with local people. There is no need to force oneself to visit all the attractions of the destination. Rather, it is best not to bring any lists with you. Tourists who select slow tourism give themselves up to the events of the trip and have no fear of wasting time. The excitement and experience must be welcomed with open arms and all the pleasant and unpleasant emotions of the trip must be tasted.

11. It may be mistakenly assumed that this type of traveling and tourism is inevitably reserved for those who have enough time to spend their holidays and is

not suitable for busy people; but it should be said that in fact this type of tourism is a change of attitude in traveling and is naturally possible for everyone and on any traveling <sup>10</sup>.

12. Carpinelli (2009) enumerated Ten Commandments of Slow Tourists or “A manifesto for slow travel” as the following: 1) Start from home; the beginning of slow travel is mind; 2) Travel slowly; if possible, avoid travelling by plane and use ships, local buses, and slow trains instead; speed cuts your connection with the landscape; 3) Don't let the expectation to arrive at the destination overshadow pleasure of traveling; 4) Visit local markets; 5) Sit in a local café to be part of the urban landscape yourself; 6) Spend your time sensing the local language and accent; 7) Choose your place of residence in a place that is in relation to the community; 8) Do what locals do, not just what the guidebook says; 9) Taste unexpected flavors; consider the train delay or missing the bus as a new opportunity; 10) Think about what you can add to the community you are visiting.

13. Slow tourism can be considered one of the types of creative tourism: a conscious traveling with the least environmental impact and the most connection with the local community. Gardner stated: “slow tourism is a quality of mind; tourists must travel slowly; traveling is the inherent experience of the tourist; locality and interaction with locals; slowing down to enhance the enjoyment of the environmental scenery; having the opportunity for unexpected exploration” (Gardner, 2009).

14. Slow tourism has its own norms: stay away from your plans; stay in local homes to immerse yourself in the local culture; first start by exploring the nearest areas and then ask locals about other complementary places; buy from local farms and shops and buy organic food; learn new experiences from new places; always keep in mind that you are on holidays to have a good time and what is most important than everything is you.

15. The conceptual model of slow tourism is shown in Fig. 2:

16. The important differences between conventional tourism and slow tourism are shown in Table 1:

## Discussion and conclusion

As stated in detail, slow philosophy resists against today's modern culture which adores speed, motion, and result and condemns procrastination, playing, and slowness. In addition, it believes that slowness results in the density of enjoyment and makes life more meaningful and ethical.

Slowness is evident in the behavior of wise people.

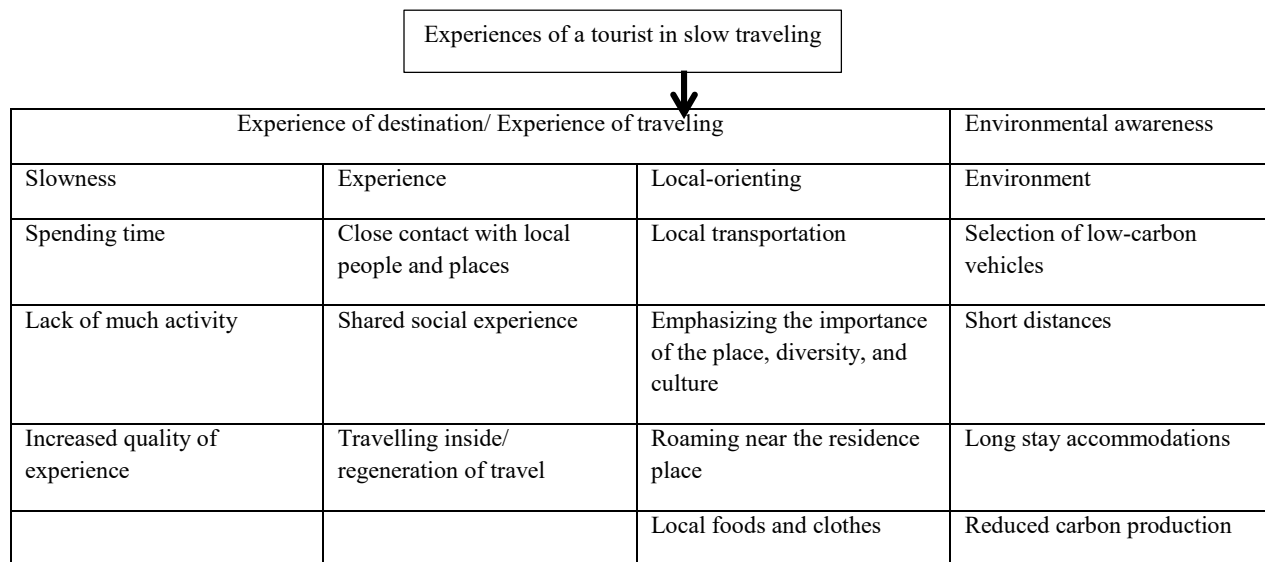


Fig. 2. Conceptual model of slow tourism. Source: Dickinson & Lumsden, 2016.

Table 1. The differences between conventional tourism and slow tourism. Source: Dickinson & Lumsden, 2016.

Conventional tourism	Slow tourism
Fast commuting	Slow commuting
Plane and car as vehicles	bicycle, train, and bus as vehicles
Get things done fast	Slowness and calmness
High resource use	Minimum resource use
Considering the path as a corridor to reach the destination	Considering the path as a destination and a significant part of the tourist's experience
Visiting a lot of attractions (the more the better)	Locality of visits and long stay
High carbon production	Low carbon production
Consumption and commodity-orienting	Avoiding consumption and commodity-orienting
Standard hospitality	Organic, local, and slow foods and drinks

They face everything calmly and slowly and never miss a moment in life. A great example of this in modern literature is André Gide's<sup>11</sup> *The Fruits of the Earth* where he states, "When you squeeze a peach with your teeth, squeeze it well and absorb it all little by little, then swallow the offal". For experiencing pleasure he does not need commotion or narcotics, rather, by Science Mental, he has enjoyed a peach in slowness.

There are other similar cases in history, as it has been reported that Hindu monks intended to criticize the Buddha. They came to him and each told of his miracles and powers. Then they said, "What are your

miracles, Master?"; He said, "I only eat when I'm eating and only sleep when I'm sleeping and only speak when I'm speaking!! Which of you are really able that when you are doing any job, nothing else occurs in the inner of your existence?"

From Epicurus, the father of the philosophy of pleasure, it has also been quoted that whenever he saw someone running, he said, "Where do you go? Walk slowly so that you will get both there and here. The one who goes fast neither gets there, nor here, and he loses both." In slowness, both the pleasure of reaching the destination and the pleasure of staying in the origin can be experienced.

Thus, when one puts the slow philosophy that is also rooted in ancient mysticism and philosophy in the face of the concept and characteristics of slow tourism, it can be seen that these two can feed each other and make each other more glorious.

As we have seen in modern conventional travels and tourism, intensive visit tours are provided on limited days; but really if in tourism the “time element” is not abundantly added to the “place element” and one cannot explore all angles of a destination with ease, can we say we have been familiarized with a different place?

Multiply short stops in each location due to the force to see multiple locations in a limited period of time, by inadequate reception infrastructures of that location and loss of time and delay of the planned schedule; this speed turns off the sense of valuing and appreciation, and this planning again resembles the same routine that the tourist has escaped from. The traveler who has come to traveling in search of calmness, returns more tired with a fast traveling.

Slow tourism is all about living in a place with low speed, and as it addresses the spiritual and transcendental needs of humans, in recent years, it has become more and more popular to people and tourism industry activists. Slow tourism helps people to attract the view and energy of nature. Slow tourism is the practice of a life in slow philosophy.

Slow travel seeks to create authentic, valid experiences

out of the traditional stereotypes. Interaction with people on a deeper level is much more enjoyable and unforgettable than taking thousands of photos of churches and monuments that tourists never look at. By slowing down, one can explore beyond the usual scenes. The unexpected things are more memorable than planned activities. Slow tourism provides the possibility of a flexible plan of traveling, something like an exploration. These unexpected experiences provide a more realistic insight into the place and local culture. This exploration is not just the discovery of the destination and other lovely people, beautiful landscapes, interesting traditions and customs, and delicious tastes of different foods, but it manifests itself in the process of slowing down the “time” and an opportunity is provided to rediscover the “self” and to find the lost inside. In slow tourism, no activity that disrupts the ecosystem is done and quality of travel overcomes its quantity.

In slowness humans discover new tastes and colors. This concept is particularly evident in slow foods. Slow tourist attractions also offer local cultural heritage (Fernandes, 2011). Slow tourism is a kind of liberation and being immersed in the destination; a kind of roaming and strolling in which the tourist, having enough time, chats with the locals, immerses in the local customs and culture, and tastes the local foods. If this is not a practical example and a workshop of a life in slow philosophy, then what is it?

## Endnote

1. French postmodern author born in 1929
2. Peter Ludwig Berger (1929–2017)
3. Baruch Spinoza\_ famous Dutch philosopher; he is considered one of the greatest rationalists and determinists of seventeenth-century philosophy, pioneering the rise of religious criticism as well as the era of Enlightenment in the eighteenth century.
4. Epicurus was a philosopher in ancient Greece and the founder of Epicurean thought system. Epicurean philosophy is considered one of the important schools of thought. Epicurus promoted the philosophy of pleasure, avoidance of worldly distractions, search for peace of mind, and relief from anxiety and suffering. Epicurus was born at 341 BC.

5. Arthur Schopenhauer is a German philosopher and one of greatest European philosophers and influential philosopher of history in the fields of ethics, art, contemporary literature, and modern psychology (1788-1860).
6. Liberation from knowledge is the name of one of the books by Krishnamurti, (B. Mersedeh Lesani, Trans) Publications.
7. Jiddu Krishnamurti
8. Giorgio Agamben, Italian philosopher and author
9. Gotharm Fluista, Norwegian philosopher (De Nicola)
10. <https://blog.iranmarcopolo.com/>
11. Paul Guillaume André Gide (1869-1951), French writer, winner of Noble Prize in literature in 1947.

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