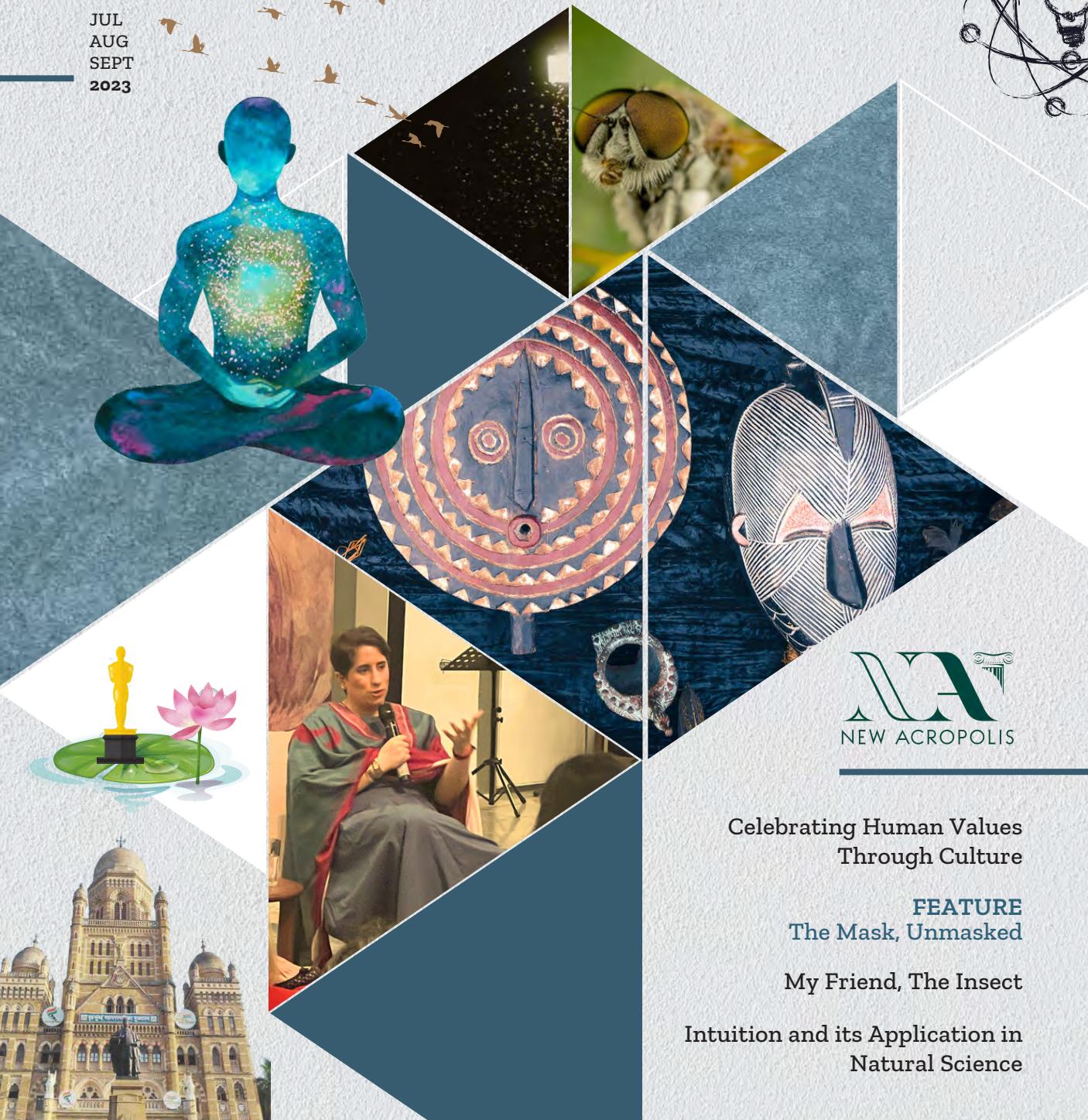


A Magazine on Philosophy, Culture & Volunteering

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2023



Celebrating Human Values
Through Culture

FEATURE
The Mask, Unmasked

My Friend, The Insect

Intuition and its Application in
Natural Science

FROM THE EDITORIAL DESK



Dear Reader,

We live in an era inundated with an overwhelming deluge of information, a lot of it often lacking in accuracy or relevance. To wade through this, we must cultivate the ability to discern the essential from the non-essential and the truth from various forms of falsehood.

It is the nature of our times also, to fragment and segregate. To live in harmony with each other requires embracing and celebrating our differences. Culture, in fact, can be a strong unifying force that nurtures human values, showing that there is a common thread that weaves through diverse ancient civilizations binds the multitude of expressions we see around us today.

In studying civilizations across time and geography, we repeatedly encounter the eternal human quest for understanding the self and the meaning of life. While we rely on our intellect and emotions to help us navigate through this mystery, as human beings we possess the innate potential of intuition, that can transcend the boundaries of reason and allows us to grasp more of the truth.

The search for truth and love of wisdom is the very essence of Philosophy. It offers a broader lens and a more profound perspective on life, enabling us to look beyond the surface and perceive the interconnectedness of existence.

Even in the simple proximity of an insect or the complexity of a bustling metropolis, we can find glimpses of life's principles and the beauty they hold. It is up to us to dare to Discover, Awaken, Transform.

Malini Nair
Editor



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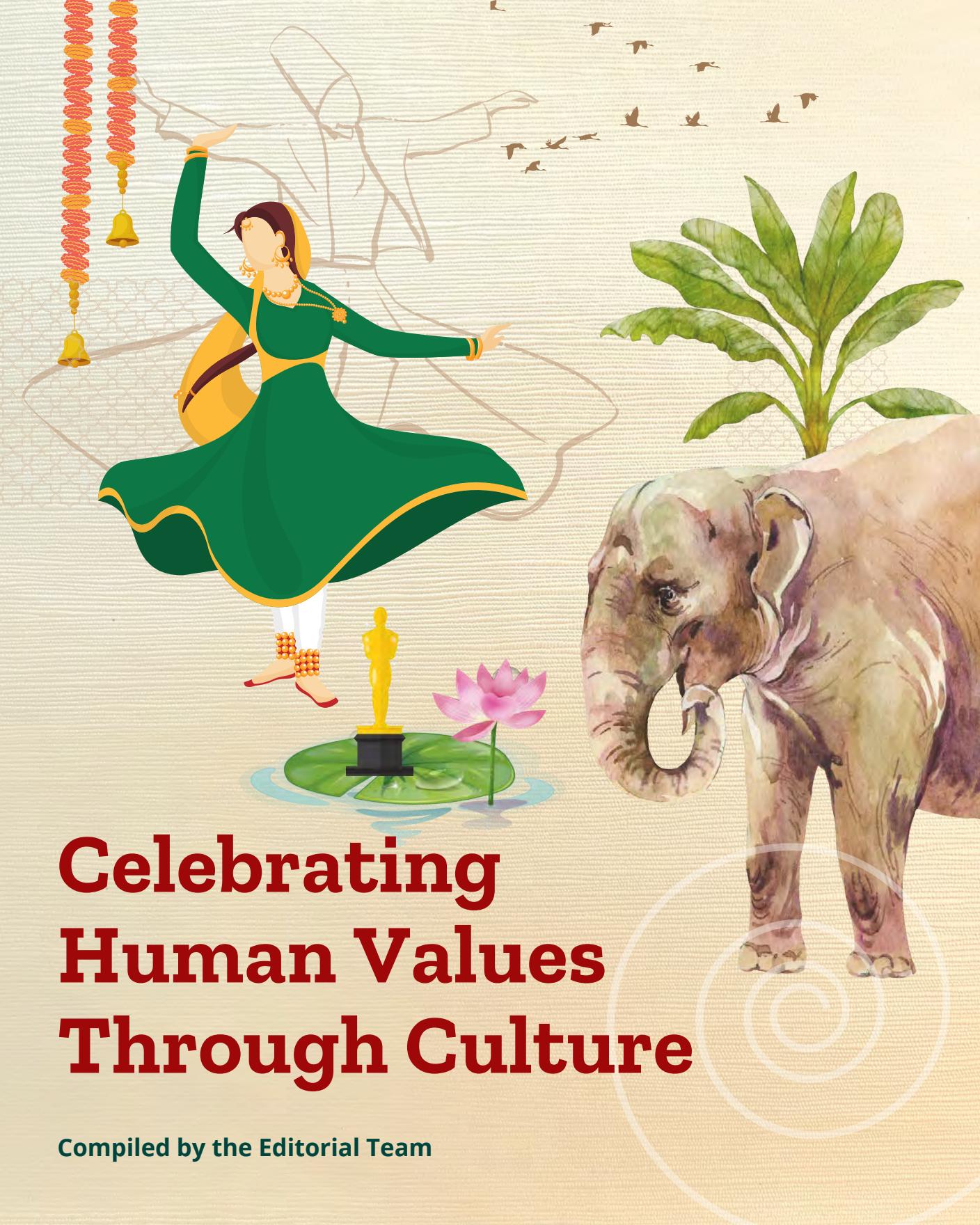
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Celebrating Human Values Through Culture

Compiled by the Editorial Team



Human Values are the noble, guiding principles that must shape our behaviour, attitude and interactions with others. Cultivating these values therefore, is crucial for fostering a harmonious and inclusive society. Culture, the rich tapestry of all the fine arts, as well as the philosophy that underlies customs and traditions, plays a significant role in nurturing and developing human values. To this end New Acropolis, in Mumbai, hosted a carefully curated selection of philosophy, film, music and dance on 10th June 2023, at the Chemould Prescott Road art gallery, to celebrate culture in its myriad forms.

The eminent panel of guests included film producer and Oscar winner for "The Elephant Whisperers" Guneet Monga Kapur; Kathak exponent Prachi Wagh; and Sufi singer Radhika Sood, accompanied by acclaimed guitarist Neil Mukerjee. National director of New Acropolis, India (North), Yaron Barzilay was the cohesive force, pointing out at the end of the evening, how the underlying yarn with which the rich fabric of all these diverse traditions has been spun, is the same philosophical truth: What is Beautiful, True and Just are all aspects of the same Divine Reality.

Art Is Wisdom Made Into Beauty - Jorge Angel Livraga

Explained Yaron, "The etymology of the word 'culture' shares the same Latin root as 'Cultivate'. The Roman orator Cicero used the term 'Cultura Animi', an interesting agricultural metaphor for the 'cultivation of a philosophical soul'. This suggests a beautiful allegory: just as a seed requires the right kind of nourishment, we too require the right soil to grow to our potential, and culture is that soil."

Culture can separate us, but on the other hand it has the ability to bring us closer, to bring harmony and unity, because the more we climb towards beauty, the more we awaken virtues within ourselves. Coming closer to unity is one of the gifts that culture offers."

Just as the evening began, suddenly there was an electrical outage in that part of the city, and the lights and air conditioning switched off. The volunteers of New Acropolis demonstrated commendable grace under pressure by moving the refreshment interval forward. In a quick turnaround, snacks and beverages were circulated freely among the audience, while regular updates about when we could expect to resume were being relayed.

Then, in what may well have been the highlight of the evening, Kathak dancer Prachi Wagh, who along with 3 young students, was due to present a specially choreographed dance, rehearsed to selected music, displayed the courage and determination of a true artist; though her presentation was slotted in for the latter part of the evening, she offered to put on an impromptu presentation, in the fading light coming through the open windows, to the accompaniment of her own vocalization. She prefaced her offering with these inspiring words: "My guru always said that a really excellent performance is never the result of the hours put into the rehearsal for the show, but based on regular and intense practice: true *riyaz* (hard work) as a *sadhana* (a disciplined and dedicated daily spiritual practice). We do not depend on the circumstances. We are here to do what we need to do. So, we give you a presentation today without any accompaniment, based only on the strength of our practice."



CULTURE

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The confident performance and intricate footwork displayed by the 3 young students, followed by the eloquent and graceful dance by Prachi evoked the admiration of all in the audience that evening, but what stole their hearts was the courage, grace and generosity of the dancers stepping forward to fill the need of the hour.

In pointing out the difference between entertainment and culture, Yaron said "We can make culture entertaining, but not everything that entertains is culture. The most important aspect of culture is that it elevates us"

Resonating with this, filmmaker Guneet speaking about the making of the documentary said, "I saw the selfless love of Bomman and Bellie for the baby elephant Raghu. When Bomman said 'I get everything from the forest, and it is enough', that was eye-opening for me. Working on a documentary seldom pays the bills, but it feeds the soul. We need to show up in our best form. We need to show up with our integrity. Then no obstacle is insurmountable. For every 10 No's you will get one Yes. So, I have learnt to celebrate my No's by saying to myself as I face a prospective sponsor, 'fine, quickly say no to me so I can move on, so that the Yes is just around the corner'. This example of determination and focus resonated with what Yaron referred to as "acting with our will, driven not by the external, but by our inner Acropolis, the higher city within ourselves. This is what allows us to connect with virtues and values and even awaken our intuition, to remember who we are", he said.

Sufi singer Radhika Sood expanded on this with a beautiful song from Bulleh Shah who explored the concept of self, by stating explicitly what I am not. The words are a quest for enlightenment, about how habituated we are to labels, to segregating everything into boxes, and about realizing the meaninglessness of compartmentalizing life; and Radhika's clear voice, articulating this and other deeply philosophical verses from Kabir and Tagore began to do what music innately has the power to do; to go deep within you and awaken something lying dormant in the innermost recesses of your soul.

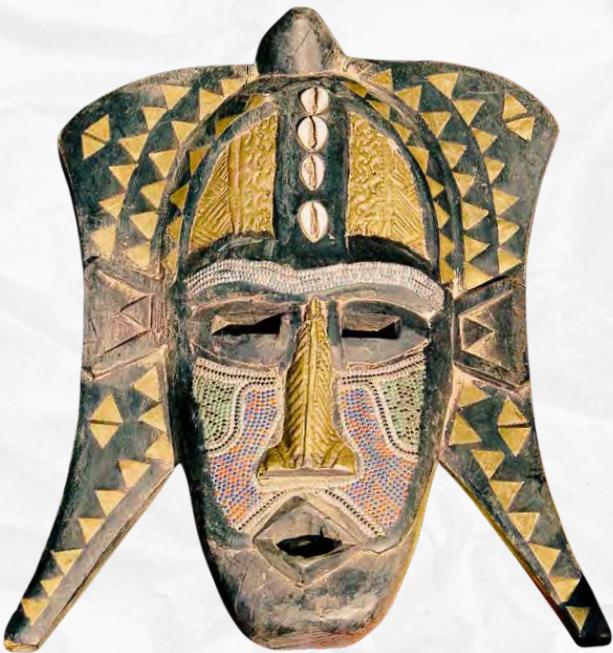
Truth Reveals Itself In Beauty - Tagore

In his succinct closing Yaron said "in a nutshell, culture is essential to awaken the human quality in ourselves. The sensitivity to beauty and divinity is uniquely human and that is the role of culture, not only for the performers, but equally for those in the audience. We don't all have to express beauty in a specific art form, because at the end of the day, our life is our art. Culture helps us become better at the art of Living. That is why it is so important for us to preserve and celebrate culture". 



The Mask, Unmasked

By Archana Samarth



Life is a mystery and in mysterious ways, invites us to unravel it. The Truth it guards so protectively is expressed in myriad symbolic forms, some of which have survived over centuries, civilizations, and cultures. For one who is on a philosophical adventure of seeking wisdom, these symbolic forms are a bridge to the hidden Truth, or at least to some aspect of it. One such intriguing form that literally and figuratively conceals the mystery that is man, is a mask.

Masks have been prevalent across cultures for thousands of years. The Israel Museum in Jerusalem is said to host the oldest mask dating back to the Pre-pottery, Neolithic age, 9000 years ago(1). The oldest stone mask, it is postulated, was used in cults or in magic rituals. Traditions across the world suggest that masks have been used in many contexts, varying from religious and

cultural to therapeutic and educational. A mask by definition, is an object that covers, conceals or hides. This highlights what seems to be a contradiction: If man, intrigued by the mysteries surrounding him sought to answer the question who am I, why was mask-making such a prevalent tradition across cultures? Why was the need to find forms to conceal oneself so widespread, when there has always been an interest in wanting to know and understand one's true nature? Perhaps, the mask is an enigma that reveals more than it hides.

Man has always been absorbed by the mystery of Life and Death.(2) Native cultures across the globe have been known to explore this relationship between the two worlds through rituals and ceremonies wherein masks have played an important role. These ceremonies were performed to please the spirits, seek blessing for the tribe or to evoke some aspect of the divine qualities, to remind man of his true identity. For example, the Kwakwaka'wakw, or natives of Northwest coast of the Pacific, make sun-masks to honour the Sun which is worshipped as the creator and source of life. Some natives of Papua New Guinea wear masks during a dance that celebrates the circle of life - embracing new life and also acknowledging death - perhaps as a way of education that life and death are continuous, aspects of one life, and that there is an ongoing relationship between the living and the deceased.

In the Egyptian culture where masks have been known to be prevalent since the 1st Century CE, there were essentially two types of masks: death masks and ritual masks.(3) The former, also known as funerary masks, are made to resemble the deceased as a way of honouring them and also as a way to connect with the spirit-world. The death mask, allowed the soul to recognize the body so that it could return to it, waiting to be escorted by the Egyptian God Anubis to the trial that would allow them to pass into the spiritual realm. These masks were also believed to keep malevolent spirits away. The well-known mask of the pharaoh Tutankhamen, made in gold and decorated with semi-precious stones is a burial mask, now housed in the Egyptian Museum in Cairo. The ritual masks on the other hand, as the name suggests, were worn during rituals, by the priest. Unlike the death masks, these masks were made

to resemble animal heads and heads of gods and goddesses of ancient Egypt. The mask with the head of a jackal for example, represented Anubis, the God of Death and was worn during funeral ceremonies. Priests who wore a mask with a god's head represented that god and were considered to be conveying his will.

The wearing of masks in the Balinese tradition for example, is a sacred task. It is said that the dancers and performers usually perform purification rituals before they begin. By wearing the mask and by performing the rituals, they are said to represent divine messengers who bring words from the Gods, or from the ancestors. Ancient philosophical doctrines speak about the dual nature of man - the earthly visible form that we are familiar with, and our spiritual nature which is masked by our material form



and the needs, desires and conditioning that characterise it. The need to bridge these two worlds, the earthly and the spiritual, and also the external world of expression and man's inner world, is affirmed by the use of masks which were employed as a tool to know and experience some aspects of the unknown. For example, "mask" in Latin is persona or false face. In current times, we are likely to interpret this as pretending to be someone who we are not.

However, the rituals mentioned above are perhaps a way of reminding us of this dual nature and inviting us to look within for our own divine nature. The Vajra dance of Tibet, today practiced as "Cham",⁽⁴⁾ is performed in a monastery for three days by monks. Masked, and in deep meditation, the monks celebrate Emperor Padmasambhava's conquest over the native cult and their deities and is regarded as a ritual for redirecting negative forces towards awakening our spiritual nature. In some dance forms an interesting connection between ritualistic connotations and the natural power they evoke is established

Masks seem to have played a twin role of inviting the audience to recognise their emotions while suggesting that they are only a transient aspect of oneself.

through masks,⁽⁵⁾ as in the Indian dance form that depicts Goddess Durga killing the evil demon. The mask plays a dual role of depicting the "vahana" or vehicle of the deity (lion) as well as the power of the deity as it kills the asura (demon).

In dances and theatres, masks were worn to help the artists get into the role of the "character" they were depicting- be it an animal, demon or a god. In dance performances of African tribes, masks are said to be brought alive with the spirits of the ancestors they represent.⁽⁶⁾ Some masks are a combination of human and animal features to depict man as an integral part of the environment he lives in. It can be said that masks emphasised the intimate relationship that humans share with nature and the spirit world. As in the case of Egyptian priests, the mask enabled them in those brief moments, to be the deity they were representing; embodying its higher nature. Perhaps, wearing the mask was a way to evoke that power within, to experience it briefly and also to evoke a similar sentiment among the audience.



Similarly, masks depicting various emotional states as anger, fear, hate, fury, sorrow, evil also remind us of these aspects of our earthly self. A case in point is the *hannya* mask used in Japanese Noh theatre.(7) This mask particularly depicts a jealous demon or is said to portray the souls of women who have become demons due to obsession or jealousy. Here again, masks seem to have played a twin role of inviting the audience to recognise their emotions while suggesting that they are only a transient aspect of oneself. The vibrant, colourful nature of masks make them both relatable wherein the audience is compelled to relate with what is being expressed and at the same time, they suggest a sense of transience, impermanence and artificiality.



The wearing of masks seems to convey that emotions do not define who we truly are. Thus, masks can be said to evoke a need to search for one's authentic self, to ask oneself, who am I truly and also, who do I want to be.

As a form of education, masks can be a powerful medium of conveying a social message. The Balinese tradition employs what is known as the Prime Minister's Mask which is worn commonly in the traditional Topeng dance that depicts fabled kings, heroes and myths.(8) This mask in particular, is made to resemble a human face and according to the Balinese, represents various human traits such as pride, ambition, cleverness, and even the foolishness of human nature. Often, masks are used in a backdrop of a social satirical play to emphasize social evils by enacting the role of wrongdoer or a mythological hero who corrects the wrong and depicts the path of Truth. The Puralia Chhau, for example, is a dance form of West Bengal wherein Chhau means chayya (mask or shadow). The themes of this folk dance revolve around evil and its punishment.

In current times, wherein we see a constant search for making school and college education creative and engaging, drama and masks have been found to be impactful. A recent research study in Australia concluded that use of masks to learn certain subjects or topics encouraged the students to reflect on their sense of identity and to become more aware of their own behaviour within school and outside the classroom.(9)

Similarly, masks have been found to be effective in psychological group therapy with adolescents. In a study conducted in Portugal, teenagers were asked to paint masks and through the medium of psycho-drama, were encouraged to express themselves. The teenagers reported that the "mask-technique" helped them to gain new insights and learn about themselves.(10)

The 21st Century has seen a revival of the mask and its magical powers in literature and movies. The underlying theme of these is the hidden or latent powers that are brought forth by wearing the mask. In the movie The Mask, the protagonist wears a mask to be become what he would ideally like to be. Other masked heroic characters emphasise the underlying search in human consciousness for a courageous being, fighting evil, emerging victorious and virtuous. The masked villain on the other hand depicts another aspect of reality; the shadows that exist in the human mind. Movies, dance and drama are sometimes more than just performances to entertain

with fantasy and dreams. Sometimes they do imitate life, and speak about life.

In ancient Greece for example, "theatre" was a platform for experiencing the theatre of life and for engaging with the mystical and spiritual aspect of life. Speaking of the Greek tradition, it is easy to relate the ancient aphorism "Know Thyself" inscribed in the Temple of Apollo at Delphi to the context of masks.

The enigma of masks can be unravelled by recognising the potential of masks as a powerful tool to know ourselves, to recognise our identity and perhaps arrive at an answer of the ubiquitous question, Who am I. They invite us to look within and reflect and ask ourselves - am I wearing a mask or am I the mask?

The most striking and common theme across cultures and times it appears, is the depiction of the dual nature of man: the terrestrial, animalistic or "demonic", as well as the heroic and the divine aspects within us. We can understand "animalistic

The enigma of masks can be unravelled by recognising the potential of masks as a powerful tool to know ourselves, to recognise our identity and perhaps arrive at an answer of the ubiquitous question, Who am I. They invite us to look within and reflect and ask ourselves - am I wearing a mask or am I the mask?





or demonic" as our baser impulses and emotions such as greed, self-centredness and self-righteousness, jealousy to name a few. These tendencies not only pose an obstacle for a harmonious coexistence but also suppress something that is more pure, good and beautiful which resides in us.

The divine within us can be said to express itself in the form of our ethics and the virtues which we have embodied, such as generosity, compassion, courage, tolerance, objectivity and more. Like myths, masks seem to be an allegoric way to awaken us to, and remind us of our true nature. They are used to evoke our higher nature and allow us to recognise that our "personality" (from the Latin term "persona") is only a mask which disguises our true identity, our soul - that which makes us more Human. They serve to emphasize that our personality which houses our physical body, our thoughts, desires, feelings, ambition, and opinions, are only a mask which hides something more essential, an eternal aspect of us that transcends lifetimes, and is waiting to be expressed.

Perhaps, it is time we started unmasking ourselves to know the treasure that lies within. 

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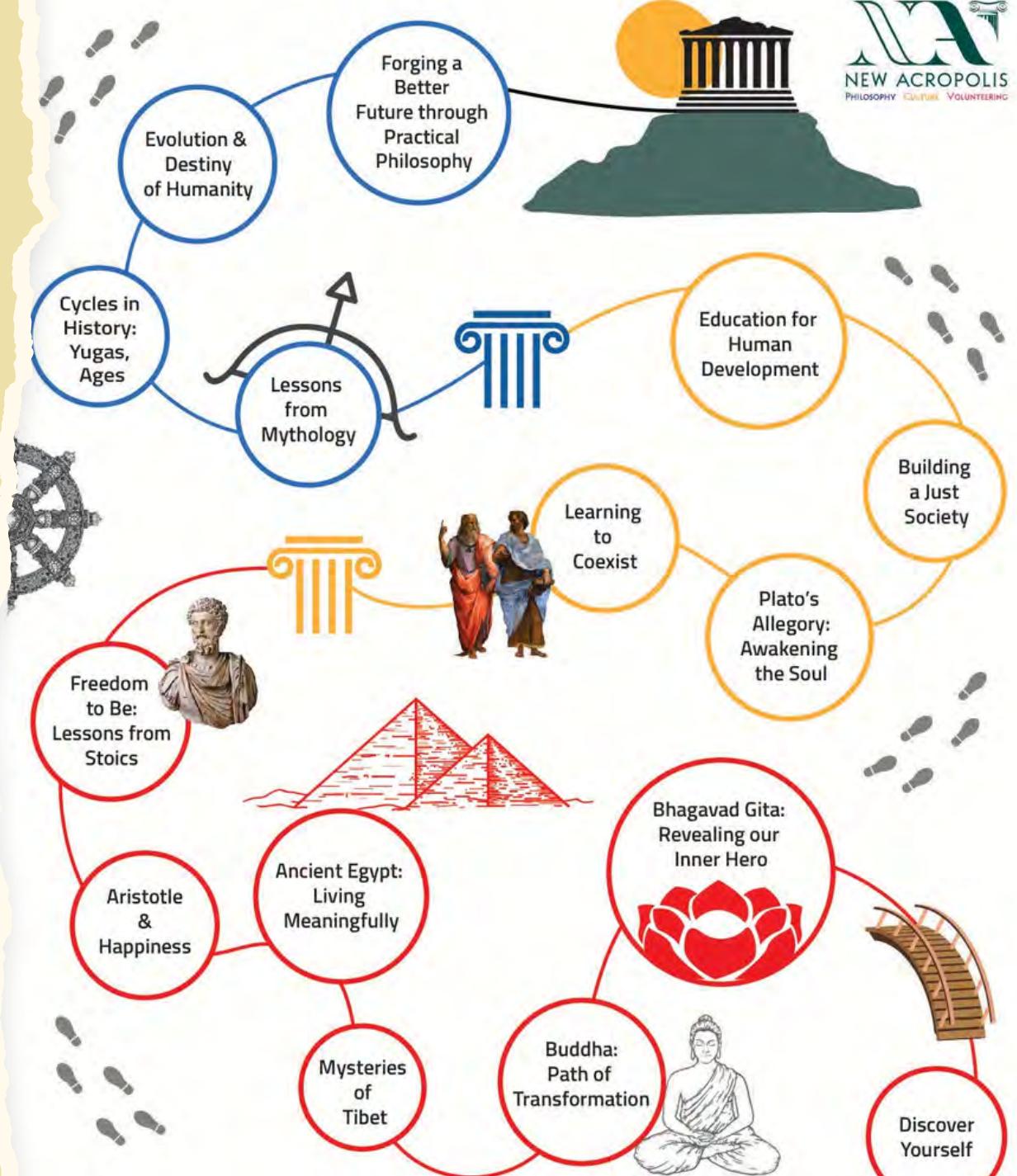




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MY FRIEND, THE INSECT.



By Carlos Adelantado Puchal

One night, like most nights, I was reading while lying in bed. It was a book of lectures by Professor Jorge A. Livraga.

It was the end of the day, darkness all around, silence....

By the light of the small lamp on the bedside table, my intellectual activity extended into the moments before sleep.

Reading, reflection, peace in my heart... Everything was perfect.

Suddenly, he appeared, a tiny insect. Bothersome, indifferent to my presence and incapable of sitting still.

I tried to get him away from my book, but it was useless; he kept coming back. Then I wanted to get it out of my mind, but I couldn't do that either. It was already an active part of the discomfort that penetrated me. The furtive guest would appear on the page I was reading and every time I turned the page, it would enter the scene again with a slight jump. Ufff, it was insufferable.

It was so annoying that I decided to give it my utmost attention.

That little creature had come to me attracted by the light of the little lamp. Of course! For him it was the right place to go, the only place. And I thought of all the beings who go towards the light, of all those who travel the long road of Life.

At that moment, the little insect became the representative of those attracted by the beautiful and the true, by the good and the just.

For an instant, the omnipresent law of evolution was revealed in its most authentic expression.

So, by mutual agreement, the insect and I shared Professor Livraga's wisdom.

Time passed, I cannot say exactly how much time, and just as it had arrived, the insect disappeared.

I looked for it among the pages of the book, truly fearing that it had suffered an involuntary accident. I didn't find it.

I looked around me among the sheets. It was not there.

I saw it no more. And I felt a kind of sorrow. For those who one day leave the presence of light and immerse themselves in dark unfamiliar places. For those who have marched by our side and one day, suddenly, cease to do so.

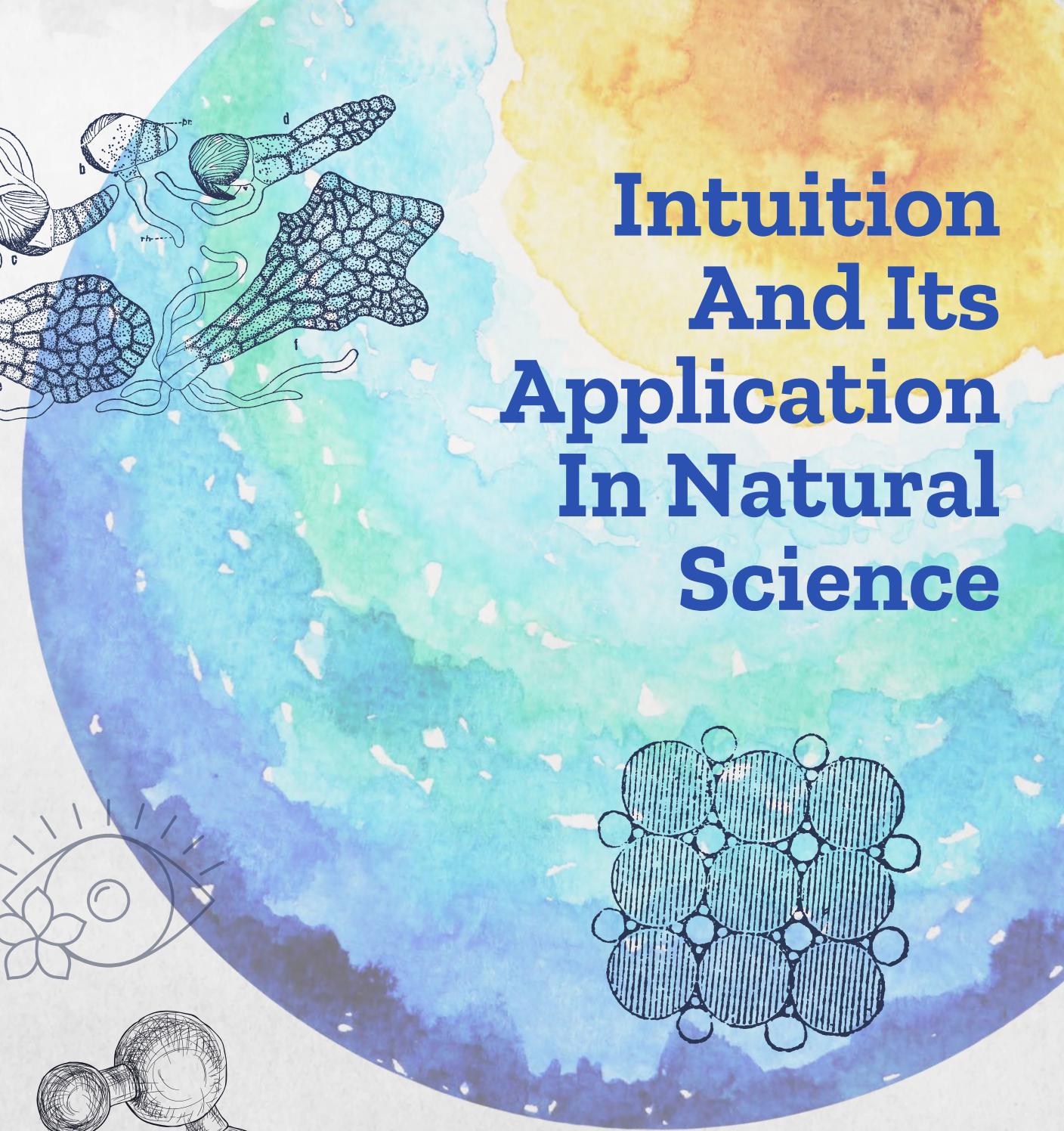
I can assure you that this tiny insect, a gigantic reference in its smallness, will be with me for a long time. In fact, several months have passed since we met, and I have not managed to forget it.

Nor do I want to.

It is of great help to me to remember that living beings are always moving towards the light, and that on that path of realization we will never be alone.

Along we go, the great and the small, the cyclical and the perennial, the slow and the swift, the conformists and the rebels, the sedentary and the adventurous, the elements and the potencies... everyone and everything!

The great symphony of life. 



Intuition And Its Application In Natural Science

By Sara Ortiz Rous

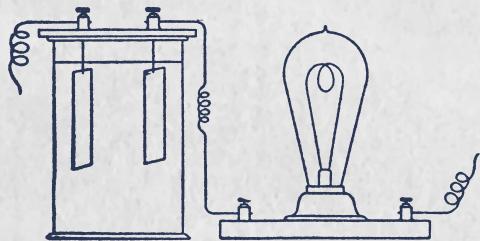
Our duty is to keep alive in the human being his spiritual intuitions.
H.P. Blavatsky

The only really valuable thing is intuition.
A. Einstein

Introduction

One of the main characteristics of the human mind is its ability to form concepts, principles and theories for the purpose of understanding the world around us. Einstein used to say in wonder that the most surprising thing about the universe is that it seemed intelligible. It might well not be, but it is. What we do not understand seems messy to us, and stimulates us to discover it. In the search for knowledge, human beings have not settled for beliefs, conjectures and hypotheses, we have the palpable desire to achieve certainty as a psychological experience and truth as a transcendent experience.

Thus, depending on the field in which we are working – psychological or metalogical – we like evidence and axioms. This work explores one of the characteristics we have to achieve this experience: intuition. Intuition is certainly a very controversial concept in science and philosophy.



Accepted by some as the basic source of all true knowledge, rejected by others as potentially misleading, intuition is revived again and again in philosophical disputes, in the foundations of the formal and natural sciences, in mystical considerations, in ethics and aesthetics, in pedagogy...(1)

1 (2) p. 10



Definitions and scope of the term "intuition"

Intuition is a term that designates the faculty to understand things immediately, without specific reasoning. It is also defined as the direct and immediate perception of an object and its relationships, by the knowing subject. The qualities that characterize it are sudden, total, and exact apprehension, and a radical opposition to rational processes. Intuition is related either to the senses, or to the capture of knowledge or to the vision of essences; in this way we have sensory, intellectual and suprarational intuition.

When related to sensory knowledge, intuitive knowledge is more or less equivalent to perception (i.e., concrete objects, images, diagrams). The term intellectual intuition can also be used to designate forms of immediate knowledge that is not sensory, that deals with concepts, formal relationships, theories. One can claim, for example, that the statement, "Every natural number has a successor" is intuitively acceptable, and in this case we have an intellectual intuition. In contrast, intuitive assessment of the weight of an object or the speed of a moving body would represent sensory intuitions.

The rapid identification of a thing, an event or a sign depends on the perceptual acuity of the subject, his memory, his intelligence, his experience and his information. In general, we do not perceive what we are not prepared to discover. We could say that

It is not always that sensory observations bring us closer to reality. Hundreds of years ago if we asked people does the earth move? They would have told us no...



before seeing we must believe, we must give ourselves the mental possibility that what we are going to perceive exists. I want to point out a reflection of Einstein: "A theory can be contrasted with experience, but there is no path from experience to the construction of a theory... Equations as complex as those of the gravitational field can only be found by finding a logically simple mathematical condition that determines the equations."(2)

We also say that something is intuitively clear when ideas are laid out in simple terms familiar to us. And that depends on our previous training in that area. The beginner intuits certain objects, but the initiate captures relationships and complexities that escape the novice.

There are those who have a capacity for interpretation and understand the physical meaning of equations; for example they see in the square of a magnitude, a form of

energy. And there are also others, who have an ease in transforming physical phenomena into equations or laws. In these cases we call perception, sensitive intuition.

Intellectual intuition also appears as the ability to correctly judge the importance and merits of a theory. Phronesis or sanity allows us to deduce the most "reasonable" alternative. The scientist, the technician, the artist develop a sense of smell or penetration with respect to the lines of research. No concept in science is absolutely and inherently intuitive or counterintuitive, it is usually relative to cognitive baggage, common sense that is gradually enriched by knowledge.(3)

This intuition is the product of several factors among which we must highlight concentration and introspection. To reflect,

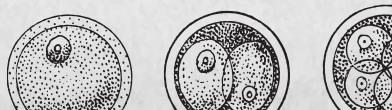
we must close our minds to external stimuli. When we reflect we start from a specific knowledge of the problem that we have acquired plus all our baggage of information, experiences..., the ideas are somewhere in the mind and it is about silencing everything else to be able to listen to them. So intellectual vision or intuition appears with the process of focusing inward, inhibiting irrelevant thoughts, and preparing to switch to new styles of thinking; this makes us much more likely to experience sudden intuition.

Very often intuition also means an elementary common sense, a primitive form of knowledge, as opposed to scientific conceptions and interpretations. Sometimes intuition is referred to as a global assumption for which an individual cannot offer a clear and complete justification. In contrast, according to some philosophers like Spinoza, intuition is the highest form of knowledge through which the very essence of things, and God Himself, is revealed.

The term intuition also has special connotations in particular domains. An example is moral intuition that would represent an a priori knowledge of the notions of "right" and "wrong." In Benedetto Croce's philosophy, intuition plays an essential role in aesthetic feelings. According to Croce, beauty is not the property of nature. It is rather the product of a specific type of selection and synthesis that is achieved by the human mind through intuition.(4)

3 (15) Paragraph III. 2.4

4 (6) Page 14.



Intuition in the natural sciences

The history of science is the biography of the successes and failures of empirical, rational, and intuitive cognitive activity(5). Scientists know that psychological evidence is no guarantee of truth, that it is highly personal and often plays tricks on us, but they appreciate intuition and creative imagination. The natural sciences are full of them. Heisenberg says he was on a Baltic island thinking about quantum mechanics when "I suddenly saw it clearly and I was happy".(6) Faraday, with very weak rational foundations, had for 23 years, the intuition that there was a connection between light and electricity and finally found it in the influence of magnetism on polarized light. In the twenties, Paul Dirac was motivated by purely formal and aesthetic considerations when he proposed an equation that accounted for both quantum physics and relativistic physics. His equation included four-by-four square matrices that had no physical interpretation. The equation he wrote was only the simplest mathematical equation that met certain requirements. But in imagining these matrices something new emerged: the prediction of the existence of antiparticles. Years later the positron would be discovered.(7) Russian scientist Dmitry Mendeleev discovered the pattern of sorting molecular elements. He wrote the items on cards according to their relative weight(8) and combined them on his worktable in a game of chemical patience, but there was no way to find the

relationships. It was in a dream that he was assaulted by the conviction that he had to leave gaps, that is, some cards were missing.(9)

What is the process we can follow for the discovery of a new scientific idea? There are different paths. One of them may be (10) to set one of the working hypotheses, or to break some hidden or visible prejudice. There are examples as simple as solving the riddle "You have dropped the ring in a completely full cup of coffee.

5 (15) Section III.3.3

6 (2) p. 70

7 (2) p. 108

8 The key to the arrangement was called the atomic number, which depended on the number of protons in the nucleus and not on the combination of protons and neutrons that gave the full weight, although at that time no one knew about those smaller constituents.

9 (14) p. 115

10 (2) p. 11

**Imagination
and intuition
are of great
help to us in
the limits of
knowledge.**



How to get it dry?", to (11) De Broglie's "absurd" idea of wave-corpuscle duality, or the Wright brothers' attempt to build an ingenuity to fly not "so stable" (but yes, stable to the right degree). Another path that has a lot to do with intuition, is to put the mind in a special state of consciousness where everyday experience disturbs less. Kekulé (1829-1896) says that fantasizing while dozing he conceived the hexagonal structure of benzene (C_6H_6). According to him, he was in Ghent writing a treatise of chemistry, but the work did not progress and he went back to the chimney to doze in the heat of the fire. As images of atoms danced before his eyes, his mental eye saw structures of various shapes in motion, writhing like snakes, and one of them clutched its own tail and moved mockingly. He woke up shaken by lightning and spent the rest of the night developing the consequences of this hypothesis. Let us not forget that his mind had been debating the subject for twelve years. The synthesis of his entire study was a vision like lightning, but then he proved it rationally and experimentally, because sometimes these conjectures are false. Warning: Dream, but then check! (12)

Newton, the giant hidden in the apple

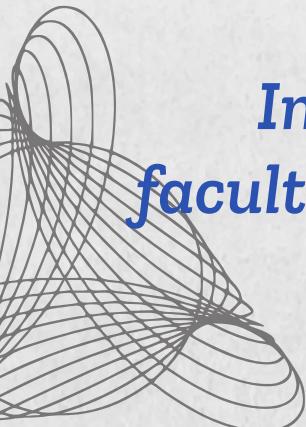


Newton, in relating the movements of the following objects: a pendulum, an apple falling from the tree, the Moon and the movements of the sea, unified the celestial and the earthly, the big and the small. Kepler had conceived laws describing the motions of the planets, developed empirically on the basis of data. Galileo described the trajectory of a ball flying in the air. However, it was Newton who understood that they were all examples of the same phenomenon: gravity. There was no deductive or inductive reasoning, he simply tried to imagine something common in various phenomena. The most important aspect of the Law of Universal Gravitation is the statement that gravity acts universally: Any two bodies, anywhere in the universe, attract each other. And that law appeared in an imaginative intuition in a brilliant mind inclined to study, research, and experimentation.

11 Maybe the coffee is in the form of a bean in the cup

12 (15) Section III.1.3

Intuition is a term that designates the faculty to understand things immediately, without specifying reasoning.



Maxwell's Equations: The Revolution of Contemporary Civilization

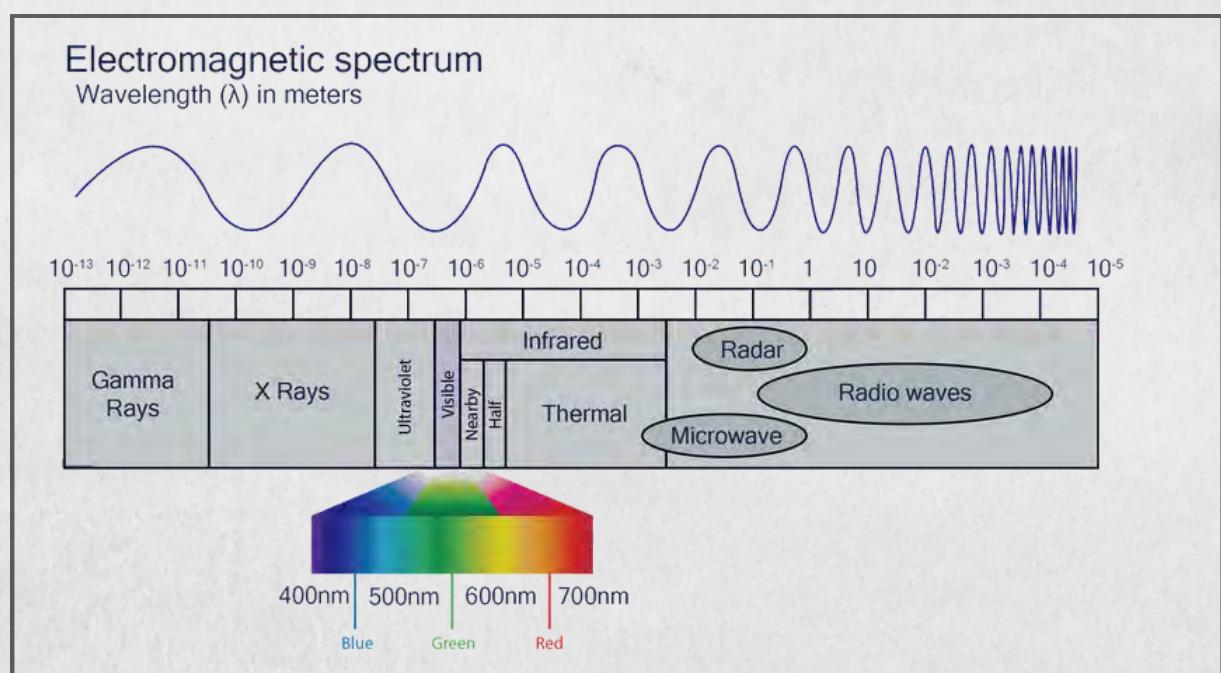
(13)

At the beginning of the nineteenth century most people lit their houses with candles. Gas lighting, which dates back to 1790, was occasionally used in business, and the standard way to send messages was to write a letter and send it in a horse carriage. After a hundred years, houses and streets had electric lighting, the telegraph was in ordinary use and people could talk to each other on the phone. Two scientists made the main discovery that triggered this social and technological revolution. One was the Englishman Michael Faraday, who established the basic physics of electromagnetism. The other was the Scotsman James Clerk Maxwell who turned Faraday's mechanical theories into mathematical equations and used them to predict the existence of radio frequencies moving at the speed of light.

At the time, most physicists working on electricity and magnetism were looking for analogies with gravity. It seemed sensible: opposite electric charges attract each other with a force that is proportional to the square of the distance separating them. The standard way of thinking was that gravity was a force through which one body mysteriously acted on another distant body without anything happening between them: it was assumed that electricity and magnetism acted in the same way. Faraday had a different idea: both are "fields," phenomena that fill space and can be detected by the forces they produce.

Faraday, who lacked mathematical training, had laid out his theories in terms of geometric structures, such as "lines of

13 (9) pp. 225-235



force" through which fields pull and push. Maxwell reformulated these ideas by analogy with fluid mathematics. For magnetic fields, Maxwell used the mental image of tiny vortices spinning in space. Electric fields were tiny charged spheres, and following this analogy Maxwell began to understand how a change in the electric force could create a magnetic field. As the electric spheres move, they cause the magnetic vortices to rotate, like a football fan passing through a tourniquet; the man moves through without turning, the tourniquet rotates without moving. The equations were published in 1864 in his famous article "A dynamical theory of the electromagnetic field". Maxwell's equations predicted that there must be electromagnetic waves of all kinds of lengths.

Heinrich Hertz, in 1886 built an apparatus that could generate, and another that could receive, radio frequencies. When asked about the implications of its discovery, he replied: "It has no use ... it only proves that Master Maxwell was right." Here imagination was lacking, Hertz's so-called useless experiment would lead to the invention of radio. Engineer Nikola Tesla invented and built all the main gadgets needed for radio transmission. The engineer Marconi in 1895 with the support of the British Post Office sent signals across distances of 1.5 km, 16 km... The entire collection of modern communications, radio, television, radar, mobile microwaves,

and even X-rays and T-rays, have been possible because two geniuses, Faraday and Maxwell realized that electricity and magnetism, joined forces to create a wave(14).

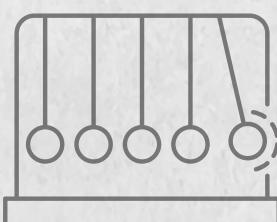
Thermodynamics (15)

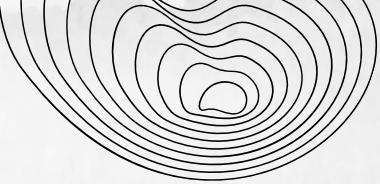
The first references to the power of steam came from the Roman architect and engineer Vitruvius who in 15 BC.C. described a machine called an aeolipile built by Heron of Alexandria years later. The discovery in modern times is attributed to James Watt (1736-1819). The anecdote recounts that, as a child, sitting in his mother's kitchen, watching as the steam raised the lid of a kettle, he had an inspiration: heat can do work.

Watt's contribution was to introduce a separate condenser for the steam, reducing heat loss and thus giving it an industrial use. And from there the basic question was born: How efficient could a steam engine be? The answer did more than describe the limits of steam engines; it created a new branch of physics, with applications that had almost no limits, explaining the complex processes of life itself. It was called thermodynamics: the movement of heat.

Relativity

Maxwell's equations showed that light was a wave, like sea waves that are waves in water, sound that are waves in the air, and





earthquakes that are waves on Earth. So the waves of light were waves in... what? By analogy physicists became convinced that there was a medium they called ether that held electromagnetic waves. Vibrations move faster the stiffer the medium and the light was very fast, so ether had to be extremely rigid. Although the planets could move through it without resistance. As it had not been detected, ether should have no mass, no viscosity, be incompressible and transparent to all forms of radiation. A combination of overwhelming attributes, but these were assumed because something had to carry the light wave. In 1887, Albert Michelson and Edward Morley carried out one of the most famous physical experiments despite its rebuttal character: they ruled out the existence of ether. And threatened to dismiss the theory of electromagnetism. (16)

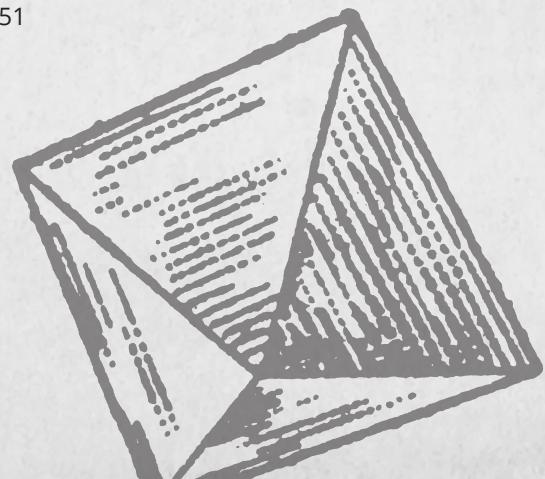
At this point Einstein appeared, who not only solved the problem, but changed the concepts of space, time, mass, and ceased to be the sensory intuitive concepts of Newtonian mechanics.(17) Einstein says in his autobiographical notes(18): "If I run behind a ray of light at the speed of light, I should perceive the luminous ray as a stationary electromagnetic field, albeit spatially oscillating." But the stationary field existed neither in experience nor in Maxwell's equations, because in truth what was wrong was the axiom of the absolute character of time that was inadvertently anchored in the unconscious.

Einstein assumed the constancy of the speed of light as the revelation of a universal law. Apparently, there is nothing amazing about this statement. It simply reiterates the faith of scientists in the harmony of natural laws. But assuming the constant speed of light regardless of motion, philosophically implies ceasing to look for an absolute and stationary space in the universe, and also discarding the idea of absolute time. It is difficult to accept that the instant we call now cannot be applied to the entire universe. The star Arthur, which is 33 light-years away, is a ghost; it is actually an image of the light that moved away from there in 1987. Our today is Arthur's yesterday. When science fiction considers traveling at the speed of light, the Twin Paradox appears. Imagine an astronaut twin who at the age of 30, travels to space in a ship at 267,000 km/s, and his brother stays on this blue planet. He returns after 10 Earth years, for him only five would have passed, so one would be 35 years old and another 40. What a business for aesthetic clinics, age

16 (9) Page 269-301

17 Newtonian Mechanics: An independent space and time and a mass and size of bodies that do not vary.

18 (1) p. 51



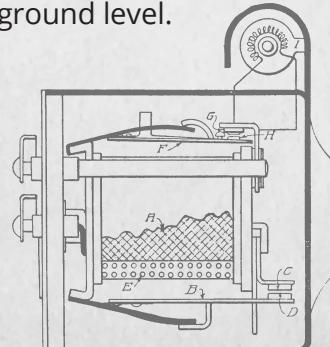
Newton, in relating the movements of the following objects: a pendulum, an apple falling from the tree, the Moon and the movements of the sea, unified the celestial and the earthly, the big and the small.

five years less than your friends! When these facts are first known to be difficult to digest, Einstein allowed his imagination to wonder: why is it stranger to think that clocks slow down and objects contract, than to think that they don't? My senses don't perceive it, but can we perceive everything?

It is not always that sensory observations bring us closer to reality. Hundreds of years ago if we would have asked people - does the earth move? They would have told us no, the leaves fall, the stars revolve around us, but the earth does not move, and yet... it moves.

Einstein later developed the general theory of relativity where he says he had the happiest occurrence of his life. He imagined an immensely tall building, inside which was an elevator with its cables gone loose. Inside, a group of physicists did experiments: the objects remain in the air because they are falling along with the elevator. In this situation, physicists might believe that they had been transported out of the earth's gravitational field. You cannot distinguish

whether you are at rest in a free space or falling in a gravitational field. According to Newton's Law of Gravitation, the forces of gravity were mysterious forces acting in the distance. Einstein proposed that masses are not subjected to distant forces, but that masses change space, like the shape of a mattress when we put a heavy object on top of it. To understand this idea, Einstein gave another brilliant example: Imagine a child playing with marbles on an irregular terrain, full of elevations and depressions. A man located ten stories above the street would not notice these irregularities of the terrain, and observing that the marbles avoid certain sections of the ground and move towards others, might think that the marbles were attracted by a force. But for the child the trajectory of the marbles is governed by the curvature of the soil. Newton is the observer from the window, and Einstein the child who plays at ground level.



The solutions of his equation had a surprising implication: the universe was not stationary, it moved. For once Einstein's imagination failed, he did not conceive of the motion of the Universe and introduced into the equations the cosmological constant to park it. In 1929, American astronomer Edwin Hubble found evidence of the expanding universe.

Quantum theory⁽¹⁹⁾

The intuition of the great physicist Lord Kelvin in 1900 was accurate when he said that the theory about heat and light, which was considered an almost complete description of nature, was "obscured by two clouds". The first had to do with the question, how could the Earth move in an elastic solid like the ether? The second with the partition of energy. The first gave rise to relativity and the second to quantum theory. The quantum world is different, strange and if someone doesn't appreciate how weird it is, they may not be grasping the implications of the theory. Here the deduction by processes of analogy or previous experience totally loses its meaning. In 1894 Max Planck tried to design the most efficient bulb possible and through experimental observations adapted a mathematical formula between

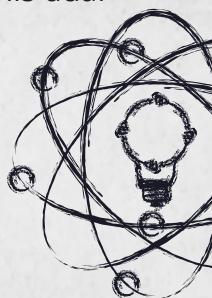
frequency and energy. The later interpretation he made was that the energy levels of a body's vibration modes could not form a continuum, but had to be discrete, and were multiples of a frequency we call Planck's constant, $h=6.62606937*10^{-34}$. We call the tiny packets of energy, quanta, from the Latin quantus. And that implied that nature at very small scales must be discreet, although it didn't initially occur to Planck.

Einstein, in 1905, his wonderful year, also investigated the photoelectric effect and realized that Planck's quanta of light explained why when light has a higher frequency, electrons have higher energies, and suggested that light, rather than being a wave, was composed of tiny particles called photons. A photon was a quantum of light. And so we came to wave-particle duality because there was abundant evidence that light was a wave, but the photoelectric effect showed that light was a particle.

As physicists understood nature at very small scales, they saw that it was not only light that had this duality, all matter had it. The first person to grasp this dual

19 (9) pp. 303-340

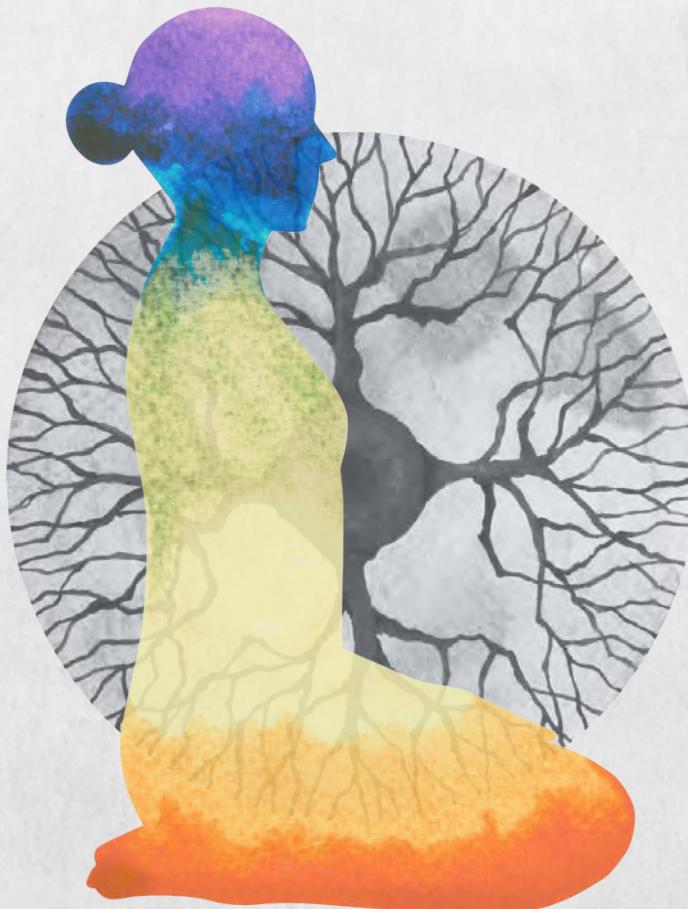
...the rigorous study of the impossible, of what is proposed by human imagination and intuition, has opened up new domains of science that are totally unexpected.



nature of matter was Louis-Victor de Broglie in 1924. It provoked a radical overhaul of the physics of the world at very small scales, in which each object has a wave function that describes a cloud of probability of possible states. The Copenhagen interpretation says that until someone observes the atom, it is a superposition of two states. In Schrödinger's famous thought experiment, the cat in the box is dead and alive at the same time. But beware, quantum superposition cannot be extended to the macroscopic world!

Conclusions

Michio Kaku in his book *Physics of the Impossible* raises as possible many proposals



that have arisen from human intuition and imagination, although he classifies them into three types. Those of class I, impossible with the technology today, but that do not violate the laws of physics, include teleportation, telepathy, invisibility and psychokinesis. Those of class II, that are at the limit of our understanding of our physical world, but perhaps in thousands or millions of years can be reached: time travel, travel in hyperspace, in wormholes. And there are the class III ones, that violate the laws of physics. But he very strongly affirms that the rigorous study of the impossible, of what is proposed by human imagination and intuition, has opened up new domains of science that are totally unexpected.(20) Imagination and intuition are of great help to us in the limits of knowledge. The questions are: why is there something instead of nothing? Why does this cosmos exist, with these laws? The answers need science and much more.

The boundaries between the psychic phenomena that we call sensory intuition, intellectual intuition, reason, and spiritual intuition are blurred, but exist. Intuition, hunch, are present in the human mind and are fertile. They acquire clarity and scope as they are refined and developed by reason. Uneducated intuition blocks access to reality, but it also happens that wrong reasoning spoils intuition.(21) One of the most interesting aspects that has emerged in almost all examples is the possibility of educating intuition and imagination, and would encompass aspects as interesting as,

avoiding being influenced by social pressure, daring to look for evidence that can disconfirm our intuitions, and learning to differentiate true intuitions from those that are not.

What are the virtues of the scientist who senses, imagines and creates? He must have a lot of curiosity, patience in observation, a broad culture to combine, choose and extrapolate different information, using it in a new way. In order not to drown in the enormous amount of information that exists, he must have discernment and capacity for analysis and synthesis. As for character, he needs empathy towards divergent ideas, and a lot of independence and autonomy, that is, to be freed from the opinion of others, from conventional restrictions and inhibitions, and finally a temperament with capacity for

play and fun. Michelson was once asked why he kept trying to test with complicated and repeated experiments the relative motion of the Earth with respect to the presumed ether, when the theory of relativity had already been formulated and long accepted. "It's that it amuses me a lot", he replied.(22) As Marcus du Sautoy says,(23) Wittgenstein's *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* can be given an even better ending than: "Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent". He proposes "From what cannot be known, our imagination draws material to play with." Fun is implicit in the minds of great scientists; imaginative and intuitive, they all have something of an artist and have fun with what they do. △△△

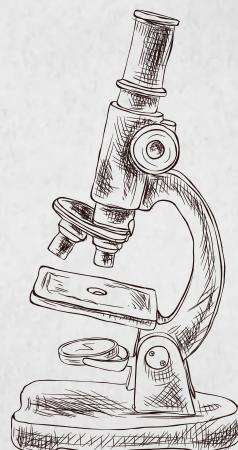
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- 1 (2) p. 10
- 2 (1) p. 83
- 3 (15) Paragraph III. 2.4
- 4 (6) Page 14.
- 5 (15) Section III.3.3
- 6 (2) p. 70
- 7 (2) p. 108
- 8 The key to the arrangement was called the atomic number, which depended on the number of protons in the nucleus and not on the combination of protons and neutrons that gave the full weight, although at that time no one knew about those smaller constituents.
- 9 (14) p. 115
- 10 (2) p. 11
- 11 Maybe the coffee is in the form of a bean in the cup
- 12 (15) Section III.1.3
- 13 (9) pp. 225-235
- 14 (9) Page 238-242
- 15 (9) Page 246- 268
- 16 (9) Page 269-301
- 17 Newtonian Mechanics: An independent space and time and a mass and size of bodies that do not vary.
- 18 (1) p. 51
- 19 (9) pp. 303-340



City Of Mumbai: Through The Eyes Of A Philosopher

By Vasant Sanzgiri





Mumbai has been my home for the past 45 years and this article is about my experience of the city which has shaped me and made me into much of what I am today. I received my shiksha - educational qualifications here; it is my karma bhumi - where I first started earning my living and it is here that I embarked on the journey of my spiritual development.

Many are attracted to Mumbai for the opportunity it offers, because it is here that fortunes have been made and lost. It is not without reason that it is called a Maya-Nagari (city of illusions). From the outside what may look spectacular, hides the truth: it is a tough city; like a hard taskmaster who wants your growth, it presents challenges for you to conquer and demands adaptation from you.

When man turned from a nomad to a settler, he created clusters of habitations in areas with an abundance of natural resources like fertile land and water, where he could get a steady source for food. Places with features like natural harbors, perennial rivers with fresh water, etc. were also attractive locations. These settlements over a period grew into hamlets that eventually became towns

and cities and some of these became teeming Metropoles. However, all seeds do not grow in the same way, despite similar potential and conditions, not all cities have evolved into the status of an iconic metropolis as Mumbai has. In my opinion, Mumbai was a special seed that grew into a deeply inspiring city!

Many cities are named after a local hero, a God or Goddess; Athens has been named after Goddess Athena, Rome after Romulus. The etymology of the name Mumbai is from the deity of the city - Mumba Devi derived from Maha Amba or the great divine mother, a form of Parvati, the consort of Lord Shiva (part of the trinity of the Indian pantheon of gods). Legend has it that she was born in a family of fisherfolk as Lord Shiva wanted her to imbibe the virtues of patience and



The name 'Bombay' is an anglicized version of the Portuguese name, Bom Bahia, meaning 'good bay'.

perseverance. A temple was built for goddess Mumba Devi in the mid 17th century near the docks at Bori Bandar, but in the late 18th Century it was moved to Pydhonie in central Mumbai (where it still stands today), to make way for the grand Victoria Terminus (currently Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus).(1) The name of the city has gone through various versions over the centuries. The name 'Bombay' is an anglicized version of the Portuguese name, Bom Bahia, meaning 'good bay'.(2) Natives however continued to call it Mumbai and finally in November 1995 its official name was restored to Mumbai.(3)

The form as well as the ideology of a city reflects the ideology of its founders. On the map today, Mumbai appears as a contiguous island, though originally it consisted of many islands, of which 7 were large and note-worthy. The Mumbai island was an attractive location as it had an all-weather natural harbor. It required the imagination of one man - Gerald Aungier, an officer with the British East India Company and the 2nd Governor of

Bombay (1669 to 1677), who visualized the potential of a malaria infested, forested island, as a major trading post for the company. He invited members of different communities to Mumbai to set up their businesses, and he allowed them to practice their religion. Soon places of worship of myriad different religions dotted the landscape: temples of different Hindu faiths, Zoroastrian fire temples or agiyaris, Jewish synagogues, Muslim mosques as well as Christian churches. . . It has been aptly described by historian S. M. Edwardes who states Aungier's great work was "...to weld into one homogeneous mass the discordant materials of Asiatic nationalities, to solve the problem which had never been solved before, as to how a great multitude of men of diverse religions and races should live together in peace and harmony, free from discord within and aggression without,"(4)

The evolution of Mumbai from a cluster of hamlets where the Aagri (salt farmers) and the Koli (fisherfolks) communities lived, to the Bombay of the East India Company was

...it is a tough city; like a hard taskmaster who wants your growth, it presents challenges for you to conquer and demands adaptation from you.

furthered due to the vision of Governor Sir Henry Bartle Edward Frere, Governor of the Bombay Presidency from 1862-1867, who expanded the city and built an administrative structure that catapulted Mumbai into the 'Urbs Prima in Indus'.

The seeds of cooperative co-existence and multicultural tolerance that were sown in the late 1600's, strengthened in the late 1800s, defined and developed the cosmopolitan character of Mumbai, still prevalent today, evident more recently, and to me most inspiringly during the unprecedented floods in Mumbai on 26th July 2006, when thousands of citizens left the safety of their own homes, wading through the floods to provide stranded strangers with food, water and shelter.

Their fervent passion, personal interest and generous contribution to Mumbai, is evident when we look beyond the undeniable functionality of the institutions they built, and view them as examples of immense beauty. Two areas of significant focus were Medical facilities

and Educational Institutions. The hospitals provided a new level of health care specially for the women and children in the city. The University and colleges exposed the young minds to new ideas and perspectives, in areas of civil liberties, governance, Law and all of which sowed the seeds for the future freedom movement in India.

Buildings are meant to provide covered for a specific purpose – as residences, offices, education institutions. Walking around the Fort area, it is evident that the awe inspiring stately buildings fulfilled their integrity to both design of form and practicality of purpose admirably.

Architects like F. W. Stevens used motifs to depict the local flora and fauna as decorative and symbolic architectural detail. To me, this has always reminded me of the concept of being one with nature. Architect George Wittet combined both Persian and Indian elements in buildings that to me today, tangibly embody the harmonious synthesis of vibrant and varied



cultures, and in a subtle way reduces the separation between the different communities.

A stellar example is the beautiful fountain in front of the St. Thomas Cathedral, a Protestant church, commissioned by Sir Cawasji Jahangir (CJ) a Parsee. The fountain enhances the beauty of the Gothic styled Cathedral and inscribed on it is the sentence:

Whosoever Drinketh Of The Water That I Shall Give Him, Shall Never Thirst.

Grand structures of Imperial Mumbai

There are, among the numerous architectural marvels in Mumbai, 5 personal favorites, which to me are physical metaphors for many of the intrinsic values and virtues that I try to imbibe in some small way from this fascinating city:



The Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus



This monumental building, designed by F. W. Stevens in 1888, is breathtaking in its grandeur. The diversity of its architectural features and at the same time its simple elegance makes it my most favorite building, and through the multitudinous throngs that use the reliable and punctual railways every day, I take the inspiration of strong work ethic; the discipline of holding one's rhythm of work no matter what the external challenges.

The Banganga Tank and the Venkateshwar Balaji Temple



Located in the oldest recorded inhabited center of pilgrimage in Mumbai, the large water body of the tank itself emanates a pious tranquility that is surprising, given that it is enveloped today by a brisk and busy precinct of a bustling metropolis. The Balaji temple (1798) is replete with symbolic elements from one of the oldest Hindu epics, The Ramayana, whose myths have served as an inspiration for me throughout my childhood, and as I understand the symbolism in a deeper way, the concepts of Fraternity, Loyalty to a higher cause, and holding to the principle of Truth above all, has left an indelible mark within me.

The Mumbai Municipal Corporation building



Expecting an unkept government office, this building surprises with its artistic character. Designed by F. W. Stevens (1893), I am sure its beauty continues to inspire and motivate those who manage the administrative affairs of Mumbai.

For me, it is a reminder that every place we spend a lot of time in, our homes, and especially our workplaces can be transformed with a little effort, in however small a way so that they can invigorate and energize us.

The Taj Mahal Hotel



Designed by Indian architects Sitaram Khanderao Vaidya and D.N. Mirza, this renowned hotel incorporated various styles of architecture (Moorish, Rajasthani, Islamic, Neo-classical, Gothic, Italian Renaissance) in a harmonious manner to create a unique structure that, to me is a symbol of how many varied streams of thought can come together smoothly, and add to each other.

The campus of University of Mumbai



Being a student of this University, I have a natural bias towards the awe-inspiring buildings on the campus; its convocation hall, library, the Rajabai clock tower and the central lawns around which are the lecture halls. The scale and beauty of these magnificent buildings, reminds me to strive to always bring both height and depth to my work, to remember to combine a larger vision with crucial detail, and to amalgamate all thought and action with both function and beauty.



In conclusion, I believe that the founders of Mumbai, in designing their vision of a city, brought in a deeper meaning that is reflected till today in its social fabric: Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, meaning The World Is One Family. This invisible thread of unity, living with harmony, the sentiment of mutual respect and multicultural co-existence is starkly visible to me in this city, and affords me moments of reflection and inspiration almost every time I pass these majestic monuments as I commute through this compelling city I call my home. △△△

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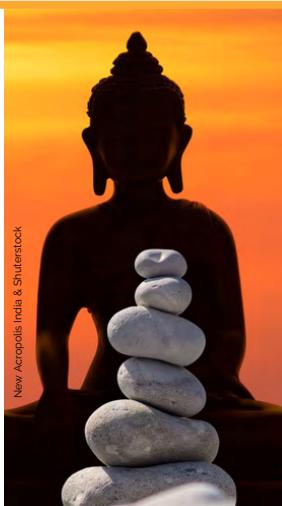
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Often, we feel out of balance - going from one extreme of acting with constant stress and pressure, to complete rest and inaction on the other hand. But perhaps the secret to balance lies somewhere in between.

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Are we truly free?

Perhaps more than the ability to do what I feel like when I feel like, freedom is the ability to stay true to myself despite the circumstances.

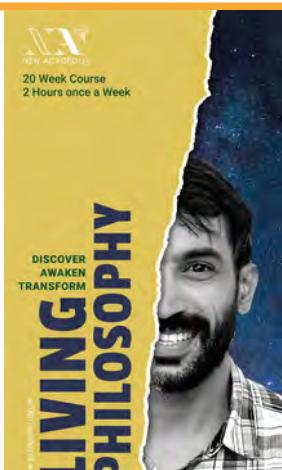
We invite you for an interactive workshop where together we will explore, express and deepen our understanding of our true Freedom.

This session is a glimpse into our Living Philosophy Course - An introduction to Philosophy as way of life.

**Thur
17 Aug**

**Free Open
House**

**7:30 pm (2 hrs)
at Mumbai
Branch
Register Here**



FREE INTRODUCTION SESSION TO LIVING PHILOSOPHY COURSE

20 week course | 2 hours once a week

Living Philosophy is an opportunity to discover ourselves and the world around us, with the insights of ancient philosophies and human wisdom put into practice in everyday life. Extract practical tools through the course to learn to live with more freedom and sustained happiness. Explore the path of inner change as a key to actively contribute towards building a better world.

This event is a Free Introduction to learn more about what this course offers.

PUBLIC EVENTS NEW ACROPOLIS MUMBAI

**Sat
26 Aug**

**Workshop:
Philosophy in
Action**

**6 pm (2 hrs)
at Mumbai Branch
Register Here**



DESIGNING MY LIFE FOR HAPPINESS

Does happiness arrive at my doorstep, tied up in a neat bow? Does it fade away just a few minutes after I hold it in my hands? Or can happiness be sustained as I sail through life, regardless of my circumstances?

Philosophy has answers... We invite you for a practical workshop to explore the nature of being happy.

This session is a glimpse into our Living Philosophy Course – An introduction to Philosophy as a way of life.

**Sat
2 Sept**

**Workshop:
Philosophy in
Action**

**6 pm (2 hrs)
at Mumbai Branch
Register Here**



ART OF CONCENTRATION IN A NOISY WORLD

In our constant rush against time and our ever-expanding To Do lists, we often lose our ability to bring our most previous contribution to our actions and interactions – our presence!

We at New Acropolis explore practically how we can develop this essential tool of Concentration amidst the many pulls and voices around us, in order to live with more clarity, depth and fulfilment.

This session is a glimpse into our Living Philosophy Course - An introduction to Philosophy as way of life.

**Sat
16 Sept**

**Workshop:
Philosophy in
Action**

**6 pm (2 hrs)
at Mumbai Branch
Register Here**



WHO AM I – BODY, MIND OR SOUL? AN INVITATION TO AN INNER ADVENTURE

We tend to define ourselves by our thoughts, emotions, roles and even external expectations. Yet wise men and women from the East and West remind us that there is a deeper, truer aspect of ourselves to discover, if only we dare to look within.

We invite you to take your first step in this inner adventure.

PUBLIC EVENTS NEW ACROPOLIS PUNE

**Sun
2 July**

**Free Talk
6 pm (2 hrs)
at Pune Branch
Register Here**



WEIGHING OF HEART – EGYPTIAN KEY TO A MEANINGFUL LIFE

From amidst the vast wisdom tradition of ancient Egypt, a striking visual depicts a scene called "The weighing of the Heart". On the surface it seems to be related to death, and judgement in the afterlife – but if we go deeper, through the language of symbolism, we can uncover very valuable practical keys for our lives in today's world: what does it mean to live fully? How can we lighten our heart to match the "feather of Ma'at"? How do we live a meaningful and ethical life? Join us to uncover these themes through this interactive session.

**Sat
5 Aug**

**Free Talk
6 pm (2 hrs)
at Pune Branch
Register Here**



ART OF IMAGINATION – TO TURN CHALLENGES TO OPPORTUNITIES

Imagination can be a tool with which we create. It can help us build ourselves and our lives, by facing reality and its challenges rather than escaping to overwhelming fantasies. Imagination can help us to find creative solutions, to thrive in the face of what we perceive as limitations and use them as opportunities to propel us forward. Join us as we explore the art of Imagination.

**Sun
13 Aug**

**Free Talk and
Workshop
6 pm (2 hrs)
at Pune Branch
Register Here**



WARLI – CELEBRATING THE MEANING OF LIFE (CULTURAL EVENT WITH AVANTI KULKARNI)

"They still look upon life as a gift to be celebrated; and this ancient Earth as one to be praised, worshipped, and also celebrated. They are the one to whom the earth is not something to be used, not a possession or an object for exploitation but a living entity, an object of reverence, and the relationship is one of sacred trust and loving intimacy." – Sitakant Mahapatra

Through this workshop on Warli art we seek to discover keys to lead meaningful lives, and a glimpse into our rich cultural heritage. Join us for a workshop with **Avanti Kulkarni**, a renowned artist and a practitioner of Warli Art form who will share her learnings as she continues her tireless efforts to preserve this artform and raise its awareness across the world.

PUBLIC EVENTS NEW ACROPOLIS PUNE

**Sun
3 Sept**

Free Talk

**6 pm (2 hrs)
at Pune Branch
Register Here**



YEARNING FOR INNER FREEDOM – INSIGHTS FROM KAHLIL GIBRAN

A man can be free without being great, but no man can be great without being free — Kahlil Gibran

Even after decades the verses of this mystic, artist, and philosopher compels us to improve our perspective towards life. It serves as a shining light on the path towards search for meaning. Join us as we glimpse into the thoughts of a seeker through his poems and parables, as Gibran investigates concepts like freedom and justice, love and friendship.

**Sat
16 Sept**

Free Talk

**6 pm (2 hrs)
at Pune Branch
Register Here**



OVERCOMING FEAR AND THE WAY OF COURAGE

We often find ourselves wanting to move forward but hesitating to take a step into the unknown. However, courage is not the absence of fear – it is the ability to move forward in spite of it. Join us as we explore teachings from ancient philosophers to learn how to work better with our fears and bring some courage to become better version of ourselves.



NEWS SPOTLIGHT

► Philosophy ► Culture ► Volunteering

A review of some of the activities that New Acropolis Mumbai and Pune hosted during March, April, May & June all with a philosophical essence at their heart.

The United Nations established April 22nd as **International Mother Earth Day** in 2009, to emphasize the importance of our relationship with nature. As part of the global celebration by Acropolitans all over the world, New Acropolis India (North) held four specially curated events around themes of Philosophy, Culture and Volunteering. Over 200 volunteers came together to sensitize themselves and others, to our responsibility to protect, nurture and celebrate this planet we call our home.



PHILOSOPHY

The goal of life is to make your heartbeat match the beat of the universe, to match your nature with Nature – Joseph Campbell

The flagship event was a lively panel discussion on **Philosophical Lessons from Nature**, held in Poona. The eminent panel included Shailaja Deshpande speaking on Eco-volunteering, Rajesh Kulkarni speaking on Nature inspired Art, Shakti Bishnoi speaking on Sacred Groves and Environmental Scientist Ketaki Ghate. National Director of New Acropolis India North Yaron Barzilay added a philosophical perspective to the enlightening conversation which gave the audience a varied perspective on how to live in tune with Mother Nature.

CULTURE

Art is born of the observation and investigation of nature - Cicero

Nature expresses her compassion and generosity in ways that are visible and tangible but have we developed the sensitivity to appreciate this? As a way of honoring the Earth on Mother Earth Day the Mumbai branch organized four creative art and craft workshops

headlined **The Wisdom of Nature**, that showcased some of nature's bountiful facets.

Participants explored the wonder of nature by creating extraordinary mandalas, a Buddhist spiritual symbol representing the connectedness of life. Stacking stones to make stone towers is prevalent in many cultures around the world. Symbolizing good luck, as well as the road less travelled, it was an exercise in patience as well as in perceiving stability and balance in nature. Blending essential oils to make healing balms and repellants was a way of recognizing nature's abundance and intelligence, and painting ancient symbols on flat stones which were taken home by participants served as a reminder of nature's simple and timeless beauty.



VOLUNTEERING

Don't explain your Philosophy. Embody it - Epictetus

Our ongoing **Mangrove Restoration Drive** tied in well with the Mother Earth Day celebrations all around the world. Volunteers from New Acropolis Mumbai, as well as teachers and students from BD Somani School, put in hours of work, cleaning plastic and garbage and undoing some of the inadvertent destruction caused to this unique environment right at our back door. In spite of the hard work on a hot Sunday morning, participants were energized by contributing to the forest of mangroves, and learning more about this marvelous eco-system that reduces the impact of storms on our coastline and provides sustenance to numerous species of birds, fish and small animals.



In Pune, members spent A weekend Dedicated to Mother Earth at our 10-acre rural centre, planting fruit saplings, building a bamboo fencing and reflecting and sharing how each one of us can contribute towards a more sustainable, interconnected and inclusive world.

AND MORE

The reading of all good books is like a conversation with the finest minds of past centuries – Rene Descartes

Aside from these activities that celebrated Mother Earth, both Mumbai and Pune branches held stimulating Book Discussions: **Path to Victory authored by Delia Steinberg Guzman**, Honorary President New Acropolis, was the fulcrum for a spirited conversation that explored the true meaning of success and victory over external and internal circumstances of our everyday lives. Philosophical extracts from **The Little Prince by Antoine de Saint Exupery** instigated reflection on how opening one's heart "to see rightly" allows us to engage with life more meaningfully.

A creative and immersive **Clay Workshop** was the platform for members to spend a carefree Sunday molding and understanding ancient cultural symbols that carry a deep traditional significance as keys to universal principles, while experientially imbibing philosophical lessons such as patience, precision and discipline. **Architect Sameep Padura** hosted members of New Acropolis Culture Circle at his studio in Mumbai, in an intimate discussion of how architecture can contribute to **Transforming the World Brick by Brick.**



Over 80 members of New Acropolis main centre commemorated the **Summer Solstice** with a celebration at Mukesh Mills in Colaba. A short, captivating performance from Miguel de Cervantes' Don Quixote, shed light on the spirit of adventure that a philosopher carries in his heart despite all odds.



Members also sang along to the evergreen version of "Top of the world" by the Carpenters, and the Eco Volunteering department shared their knowledge about terrariums as unique eco-systems and helped members put together terrariums to take home. It was an opportunity to tune into the universal themes of action and rejuvenation reflecting the vibrant energy of the season that the Summer Solstice represents.

Celebrating Human Values through Culture

One of the highlights of this quarter was an evening of music, dance and film, hosted by New Acropolis at **Chemould Prescott Road Art Gallery in Mumbai**, and covered extensively by the prestigious newspaper **Indian Express**.

With an audience of over 160, the event had an impressive line-up: **Oscar winning producer** for the short film 'The Elephant Whisperer' **Guneet Monga Kapoor** in a passionate discussion on her learnings in her career as a filmmaker; **Kathak exponent Prachi Wagh** with the children of Chhandam Nritya Bharti school, who demonstrated admirable courage by performing extemporaneously during a sudden power outage, without



any music and in the fading light streaming through the open windows at the back of the room; and **Singer Radhika Sood** accompanied by **Guitarist Neil Mukherji** who performed the works of mystic poets Bulleh Shah and Kabir, explaining the eternal ideas that underlie the melodious verses. They ended their performance with a rendition of Rabindranath Tagore's "Ekla Chalo Re" urging one to continue the journey despite all odds.



The Indian EXPRESS
JOURNALISM OF COURAGE

'We also take up films that don't make business sense... here we are with an Oscar'



Zarina Screwvala (L), member of New Acropolis, and Guneet Monga (R) at the event in Mumbai on Saturday. Express

HEENA KHANDELWAL
MUMBAI, JUNE 10

to celebrate my rejections." Another lesson she says was something she learnt from the

*To read the full article in
The Indian Express [Click Here](#)*

National Director Of New Acropolis, Yaron Barzilay in his closing remarks shared that this event was a true celebration of our shared humanity, a reminder that despite our differences, culture serves as a powerful tool to express our values and create bridges between people. **Journalist Heena Khandelwal** from the Indian Express publication who was present for the event remarked – The event put together by New Acropolis also put its learnings to the test. Within a few minutes of its beginning, there was a power disruption for over an hour, but putting the principles that this school of philosophy believes in and imparts, there wasn't any chaos even though there was uncertainty on when the electricity will be back. In fact, some of the experts and volunteers pitched in to keep the spirit of the attendees alive. As Yaron Barzilay, philosopher, New Acropolis, said towards the end of the event: **"We can't have philosophy without putting it in practice."**

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PHILOSOPHY

Philosophy, when it is practical, is educational. It helps us to know ourselves and to improve ourselves. To be a philosopher is a way of life committed to the best aspirations of humanity.



CULTURE



The practice of human values is the basis for a model of active and participative Culture, which brings out the qualities of each person, broadens the horizons of the mind and opens the human being up to all the expressions of the spirit.



VOLUNTEERING



Volunteering is the natural expression of a spirit of union with life and humanity, which manifests in the practice of values such as unselfishness, commitment and striving for the common good.



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