

OCT - DEC 2014

THE ACROPOLITAN

A Magazine on Philosophy, Culture & Volunteering

FEATURE

HOW TO SOLVE THE ECONOMIC CRISIS

Ideas Ancient & Modern

BEST CAREER
IN THE WORLD

IDEALIST IN ACTION:
SONAM WANGCHUK

PEARLS OF WISDOM:
LAO TZU

SCHEDULE OF
PUBLIC EVENTS


NEW ACROPOLIS

THE ACROPOLITAN

In Ancient Greece, the Acropolis referred to the sacred centre, that lay higher than the rest of the city. It was a place of inspiration; a bridge that enabled citizens to connect to the divine, evoking the expression of the higher human virtues. Deriving inspiration from its purpose, The Acropolitan Magazine serves as a tribute to every citizen yearning for these higher principles in all aspects of Life: **Truth, Beauty, Justice, Goodness.**



PHILOSOPHY when practical, helps us to know and improve ourselves. It is a way of life, not an intellectual attitude, committed to the best aspirations of humanity.



CULTURE broadens our understanding of life, and fosters a spirit of mutual respect and solidarity, strengthening human dignity and facilitating harmonious coexistence.



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.



FROM THE EDITORIAL DESK

Dear Reader,

With this first issue of The Acropolitan, we endeavour to bring to you inspiration from ancient traditions, in the form of advice and practical solutions to improving the human condition. Beyond advances in technology, scientific discovery, and medicine, and developments in various faculties, we continue to ask the same fundamental questions about human purpose and destiny, that ancient civilizations pondered. Their investigations led them to answers that are still astonishingly relevant to our times.

Our context offers us a specific opportunity to revive idealism as an approach to life, not just as a utopian concept, but as a practical ability to improve the world around us. In this issue we explore the meaning of Idealism in the present-day scenario, and investigate attempts of Idealists, both ancient and contemporary, who have invested time and effort to engage with Life, and make a true difference. Perhaps the work of these exemplary few, can inspire many many more.

We dedicate this first issue of The Acropolitan to the founder, and first International President, of International Organization New Acropolis, Professor Jorge Ángel Livraga Rizzi.

The Editorial Team

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NA
NEW ACROPOLIS



THE ACROPOLITAN
October - December 2014
Volume 1 - Issue 1

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THE WISDOM OF LAO TZU

BY BHAVNA ROY



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If it were kosher to have a favorite philosopher, Lao Tzu would be the favorite of many. His teachings and aphorisms are intriguingly contemporary and personal. We live in times where even ethical behavior is characterized by moral outrage rather than moral values. Although people claim intellectual expertise on solving the problems of the world, solutions continue to evade us, in the absence of an ability to reflect and take responsibility through self-understanding. In such times, a man who simply states: "Respect for ourselves guides our morals; respect for others, our manners", is priceless in his worth.

A philosopher and poet from ancient China, Lao Tzu is believed to have lived around the 6th century BC, and is credited with having authored the bedrock of Taoism, a treatise entitled "Tao Te Ching". He was an older contemporary of another iconic Chinese philosopher, Confucius. Lao Tzu spoke about spiritual love being a necessary ingredient of social interaction. Although modern society, in many ways, is obsessed with love, the manifestation of this beautiful virtue is often adversarial, negotiatory or self-centered. In such

times, Lao Tzu teaches: **"Being deeply loved by someone gives you strength, while loving someone deeply gives you courage"**.

In the middle of the 20th century, there emerged serious doubt among scholars about the historical existence of Lao Tzu. However, the philosophical pitfalls of history-centrism, and the politics that surround it, are best left as idle ruminations of the non-subtle literalists.

Today it is widely accepted that Lao Tzu was a native of the settlement of Chu Jen in village Li, in the state of Ch'u. He was the designated Historian-in-Charge of the archives in the court of the Chou dynasty. A man of untold wisdom, even in the absence of a formal school established by him, he is said to have been surrounded by many disciples. He lived in Ch'u for a long time, but seeing the state's eventual decline he decided to leave. According to legend, as he was leaving, a simple guard named Yinxi, on the western gates of the city, recognized him. He requested the Master to write down his teachings for posterity; what emerged was the works of Lao Tzu, in the



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PEARLS OF WISDOM

.....

He who knows his innocence and
recognizes his evil, Te will not fail him.

.....

Be Content with what you have;
rejoice in the way things are.
When you realize there is nothing lacking,
the whole world belongs to you.

.....

Ever desireless, one can see the
mysteries. Ever desirous, one can see the
manifestations.

.....

LAO TZU

two volumes of the "Tao Te Ching". He is thought to have travelled westward atop a water buffalo and lived as a hermit till the ripe old age of 160. Some apocryphal accounts hold that his travels led him to India, where he is thought to have instructed Siddhartha Gautama.

He who understands others is intelligent. He who understands himself is enlightened. He who conquers others has force. He who is able to control himself is mighty.

Tao Te Ching

Tao means "the way", "the path" or "the creative force". It is conceptualized as the source of life and the cosmos, spirit and matter, soul and body. Tao is much like the Hindu concept of Dharma; it is the way life naturally, and rightfully, is.

Te means Virtue. It is akin to the formless Archetypes, to which Plato refers (Beauty, Justice, etc.) which are expressed in numerous forms. Tao, the creative force, gives birth to thousands of entities or Te; which he calls the "ten thousand things". These ten thousand things carry Yin (feminine impulse) and Yang (masculine impulse). They achieve harmony by combining.

Ching can be loosely translated as "the great book". Therefore, the Tao Te Ching is the "Great Book of the Way of Virtue". Lao Tzu prescribes a means by which to re-unite with Tao, called Wu Wei. Wu means "without" and Wei translates as "action", "effort", "doing". Modern scholars with an affinity for non-philosophical observations have interpreted this beautiful concept as passive

escapism from active engagement with the world. On the contrary, Wu Wei is the purest form of action, in which the doer and the deed are in a state of oneness, and deliberate effort becomes redundant; "nothing is left undone" in this non-action.

Lao Tzu states that the one who realizes the Tao is in a state of Wei Wu Wei – doing without doing. This assertion reflects his faith in the intelligence of the cosmos which results in the dissolution of separateness and a merging with the cosmic force of the universe – the Tao. When in this state, one would be able to say again, with humility, that "I am the Tao" - reminiscent of the Hindu assertion of oneness, "Aham Brahmasmi": I am Brahman.

The state of Wei Wu Wei can be observed in a ballerina performing a flawless grand jeté or a pirouette; a gymnast performing effortlessly on a balance beam; a samurai warrior moving in harmony with nature; a sufi mevlevi dervish mystically whirling around his axis in a state of mesmeric spiritual ecstasy; as the planets naturally orbiting the Sun, in a state of "effortlessness".

Compassion will make you brave, economy will make you generous, humility will help you be of service.

What blocks the play of these forces within human beings is the ego, which creates the illusion of exclusion from the universe, of which we are an integral part. Lao Tzu's legacy endorses the need to live in unison with Life and the cosmos. ★★★

BEST CAREER IN THE WORLD: TO BE AN IDEALIST

BY YARON BARZILAY



Which might be the best career in the world? Trying to answer this might suggest ideas such as "do nothing, earn a lot". Maybe it involves working in some exotic destination, making money while having fun, etc. But when talking about a 'career', rather than a 'job', we are referring to a process of self-improvement and personal growth, not only of earning. So which then, may be the best career for us? What can offer the best possibility of growth? Well, of course, this depends entirely on the individual asking the question; what answers the call for self development and fulfillment. Keeping this in mind, we'd like to suggest one career opportunity: To Be an Idealist.

Making your prime objective in life to follow an Ideal, beyond all personal motives and interests, is a career we invite you to consider. Yes, it has no direct monetary gain. This means you might need to earn a living from a 'side job'. In addition, it is not always seen positively to be called an idealist these days; ironically it may be perceived as being disconnected from 'real life' or being naïve. Yet if your 'business' deals with Truth,

and Service to the world's real needs, you may consider Idealism as your main career, the very best one to practice. It will always demand from you to improve, and to better yourself, echoing Gandhi's words, "Be the change you wish to see in the world." You'll have to ask yourself, "What does the world really need?" Not only will you have to deal with symptoms and immediate repairs, but it will be necessary to go beyond the many shadows our world is darkened by, and search

If your 'business' deals with Truth, and Service to the world's real needs, you may consider Idealism as your main career, the very best one to practice.

for the light above - an ideal of what the world could, and therefore must, be. Can anything, but the truth, be considered a sustainable solution

to the world's problems? Is there a reality of an ideal world for mankind that we can imagine, and follow? A better model for human life? A higher state of mind? Of a real fraternity with one another, and with nature around us? A higher city in the sky, like the ancients always seemed to cherish; an Acropolis of heart and mind?

You can not distort an Ideal by bringing it down, to your own personal perception. Instead you must always rise up to it, and make an ongoing effort to understand the ideal you are following. A good intention alone, you may already be aware, can be very dangerous, if not followed up with right action. Therefore, being an idealist is far from intellectualism alone. On the contrary, service with the highest efficiency, and putting words into practice, is a basic must for the true idealist. Far from intellectual debate, the idealist will not be satisfied just by thinking about how to solve the world's problems, while seated idle behind the desk. Demonstrations in the streets, only to point out what is wrong, without offering an example of the right path, only add more chaos to the world; it does not improve it. It is said that, "The World follows Examples, Not Advice."

On the other hand, to act without knowledge is also dangerous. Superficial ideas and false solutions can cause great, sometimes irreparable, damage. In order to gain right knowledge and understand the needs of the world, one may turn to Philosophy, the love and pursuit of Wisdom. It is not without reason that the ancient world considered philosophy the mother of all sciences, a necessary foundation for any higher study. One needs to understand 'why' and 'what', before he learns the 'how' and starts to act. This also means to know why we live before engaging in the race of life itself.

One needs to observe carefully the reasons beyond one's actions, and must always remember that to follow an ideal is to act with the mind, the heart, and both hands, all together. To learn and to act, to act and to learn, can never be separated. From this perspective, there might not be so much of a difference between the concept of an Idealist and that of a Disciple seeking wisdom; both are required to investigate the truth, practice it and dedicate themselves to the betterment of the world. Can one follow Wisdom and Truth without

**A good intention alone...
can be very dangerous,
if not followed up with
right action.**

acting in their service? Is it possible to speak of spiritual growth, of expanding the boundaries of the self, without concern for the fate of the other? Following an ideal will put one across fellow companions in the service of humanity, who are working for what unites us, rather than highlighting what separates and divides. Here, age, gender, religion or social background cannot darken the natural fraternity that exists amongst men; that truly works for the benefit of others. To care for, and to be concerned for, the other, means to think less of yourself, and to be less enslaved by the selfish mind that separates us from the oneness of Life, the enigmatic ocean without shores. Therefore, to follow an ideal, to work for the needs of the world, is to follow a spiritual path, and is to be a disciple of truth. It cannot serve a personal goal that is only meant to benefit or to satisfy a moral concern, without making the effort to investigate what is really needed, beneficial and effective.

If you seek the best career in the world, one that is truly needed and is beneficial for the self and the whole...consider being an Idealist. You are certainly needed.



To follow an ideal demands constant change and improvement, and resolution of ethical doubts, while facing challenges and resistance from time to time. This means that constant effort is to be made, which may not be easy to accept, if we glorify a life of tranquility and the warmth of a comfort zone. But is it easier to accept life, without a concern for its meaning? Can we accept that our life's deeds shall be written on the sand, while we are unaware of the coming waves, that will wash them away? History is full of deeds of men and women who lived their life, leaving

might reveal that the many ideals, are truly but different facets of the one IDEAL. Then maybe one can explore that 'The IDEAL' is everywhere and exclusively nowhere; you may find it in the mountains, covered with pure white snow; or in the trees and flowers pointing towards the sun; in a cry of a soldier fighting for a noble cause, or within a poem written by an unknown wise man of antiquity. You may also find it in the beauty that lies within nature itself. But if you find it, and if you are able to serve it, and call yourself an Idealist - isn't it already what you ever wished for?

Becoming a bridge between the celestial heights, towards where the ideal vertically points, and the horizontal earth, where man lives and dies, is to become an Idealist.

behind monuments to last forever: the Pyramids, many temples, and examples of art, literature, and ideas in service of mankind. Many will never be recognized by name, but their actions will echo through eternity. Isn't that worth dedicating our life to? Isn't it worth making a career out of? Becoming a bridge between the celestial heights, towards where the ideal vertically points, and the horizontal earth, where man lives and dies, is to become an Idealist. Following an ideal, like a chosen path climbing towards a mountain peak,

Follow the call, if your heart hears it, because it is needed today, not less than before, but maybe much more. During the day, when the blazing sun shines in the middle of the sky, a cool shade is clearly a blessing for many who can't bear the direct heat. But in other moments, of cold darkness, a humble bonfire is sought, with great necessity. When night falls, many far away suns can be viewed in all their might and glory. When night falls, the inner parts of houses are easily seen and their secrets revealed. These are challenging moments of great importance, when all become more materialistic, multiply and separate. It is a time for you to stand upright and aim high - to the Good, the Truth, the Just and the Beautiful. This is the time when idealists are most needed. If you seek the best career in the world, one that is truly needed and is beneficial for the self and the whole...consider being an Idealist. You are certainly needed. ★★★

Yaron Barzilay is the National Director of New Acropolis Cultural Organization (India).



IN CONVERSATION WITH SONAM WANGCHUK

BY TRISHYA SCREWVALA



On September 19th 2014, New Acropolis invited educationist and environmentalist Sonam Wangchuk for a conversation about his work in Ladakh, to shed light on what drives his choices and actions. Sonam is the person that inspired the protagonist Phunsuk Wangdu in Chetan Bhagat's, 3 Idiots. His life and work truly reflect that of a philosopher; someone driven by the needs of others, over his own.

Although he graduated with a degree in mechanical engineering, his academic training took a back seat when he discovered that the graduation rate among students of Standard 10 in Ladakh was an appalling 5%. He learnt that one of the reasons for this was that the medium of instruction in Ladakhi schools was Urdu, which although spoken widely in Kashmir, is not the native language in the region of Ladakh. Furthermore, Standard 10 board exams were administered in English, even though it was not introduced into the curriculum until Standard 8. Prior to Sonam's efforts, Ladakhi children were often ridiculed as being unserious, while teachers were uninterested. In reality, however,

the system itself was faulty. Sonam explains, "I believe that until and unless we do some justice to our Government schools where the whole of India except for a few study, we wont, as a nation, get anywhere...my effort has been to bring some parity, do some justice to this educational mess in Government schools."

Over the last 25 years, Sonam created Students' Educational and Cultural Movement of Ladakh (SECMOL), to tackle the complex issue of education reform. He has worked with the



Sonam Wangchuk

Government to build teacher capacity and revise textbooks to align to the culture, climate, geography and language of the Ladakhis. Sonam quickly realized, however, that change at the policy level lay in the sustained support and participation of the people. He stressed the need to make people take ownership of the schools as a priority. "In a democracy, when peoples' priorities change, is when the system changes."

Three H's of SECMOL: Bright Head Skilled Hands Kind Heart

Speaking of his vision, Sonam jokes, SECMOL "is very different in that the qualification [for admission] is that you have to have failed...and then we try to make leaders out of them. Failures to Leaders." Sonam goes on to explain, "I see two important roles of education in a society. The first, a very basic one, is to help people fend for themselves, obtain basic necessities of life...and then to reach higher potentials within and actualize your own potentials...but I'm sad to say that today we are not even fulfilling the first one." Instead of focusing on the 3 R's of education (reading, writing, arithmetic), Sonam introduces the 3 H's SECMOL chooses as areas of development for their students. The first focus area is a bright Head, which is where the modern education systems usually end. The second, skilled Hands, because education needs to be hands-on and practical. The third, a kind Heart, because ultimately this is what makes us human.

Eventually, Sonam was able to apply his engineering expertise within his dream of reviving the Ladakhi education system. "In minus

twenty [degrees], buildings are minus ten...things were freezing inside the classroom...[Children] can't even bend their fingers, how could they be expressing what they hardly learnt?" he laments.

So he designed school buildings, made of earth, and heated by the use of passive solar power. His philosophy behind maintaining a fourteen-degree classroom atmosphere during winter was particularly inspiring. "Fourteen [degrees] is not at...global comfort levels, but we don't believe in that. We believe in the middle path. We don't want our houses to be sub zero like most of the village houses are, but then we don't also want them to be plus twenty-two and twenty-four [degrees] inside, like the Americans would have, for which they burn all the fuel that is for generations, in this one generation...you can achieve dignified comfort without costing the Earth," he affirms, "We don't mind putting on a pull over or a jacket [inside]!"

Sonam's innovations are characterized by his ability to use the laws of nature as an inherent part of his design. As someone who evidently shares a very deep connection with nature, his ability to use technology in harmony with his surroundings is a rare gift in today's age. He chooses to use "passive" solutions, which are simple and highly cost effective. Instead of relying on expensive solar panels and other heavy equipment, for example, common sense solutions like orienting homes to face the south (in the Northern hemisphere), and using appropriate raw materials, are simple solutions that enable maximum sunlight exposure in winter, minimum exposure in summer, and allow energy to be stored effectively.

"I'm very concerned at this stage about what is becoming of our earth and our cities," he shares





Yaron Barzilay, Sonam Wangchuk, Dilip Jain, Ubai Husein

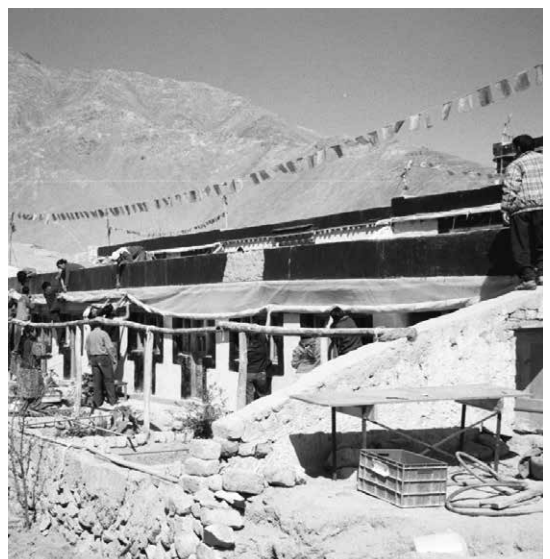
with seriousness. Put off by the Mumbai traffic he continues, "It was an ordeal getting here this evening through nerve wracking two hours of driving." He calculated, "In an active life of say 50 years...you're spending 6 years in the traffic! What life is that?"

Sonam sheds light on the change of mindset so necessary in our times: "We, in India, we talk a lot of Ahimsa...but I feel the definition of Himsa has changed during these 2,000 years," he explains. "Today Himsa is not happening by letting a fly die or killing a goat...today the biggest Himsa is not even happening with guns and knives. It's happening with our lifestyles. We talk of killing one or two animals, our life in the 21st century is making species after species wipe out of this earth. That's Mahahimsa!"

At the close of the evening, when asked about how he overcame obstacles, Sonam replies with the simplicity yet perceptiveness we had grown accustomed to: "Whenever a door closes, there are several that open...but you have to have the balance of mind to look for those." He goes on to say, "I've always been very grateful for my problems...each time they opened even bigger opportunities." He continues, "What is life without

problems? It is like cricket without wickets or volleyball without a net...these are what makes the game interesting!" ★★★

I've always been very grateful for my problems...each time they opened even bigger opportunities.



HOW TO SOLVE THE ECONOMIC CRISIS: INITIATIVES INSPIRED BY THE TEACHINGS OF PLATO AND CONFUCIUS

BY JAMES H LEE



The modern liberal economic system has proven incapable of solving the economic and financial crises in the world, using traditional solutions. Initiatives undertaken by brave men and women whose creativity and determination inspired by timeless teachings of Plato and Confucius are showing the way.

The term "State" initiated by the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 (1) refers to a geographical area where people are governed by sovereign law. A state in the philosophical sense is a state of consciousness. Whenever a state in the geographical sense has succeeded in developing a timeless and spiritual awareness, civilizations have lasted thousands of years (e.g. Egypt, India and China). Today, almost all states are secular and it is the Pax Americana (2), which sets the World's rules of the game.

The world today is experiencing an unprecedented economic and financial crisis, where solution cannot be found in standard fiscal stimulus or monetary policy, but which need a complete change of the level of consciousness. A restoration of moral values is needed to escape the current realm of greed, selfishness and material interest.

The End of History or the return of cyclical history?

The fall of the Berlin Wall in November 1989 marked a turning point in modern history. It was the final victory of democratic capitalism and the refusal of Communistic atheism. A new era of peace, similar to the Pax Romana (3), seemed at hand (4). The nineteen years that followed saw the rise of ultra-liberal capitalism with unprecedented prosperity based on a rapid expansion of the financial system, deregulation of markets and an unprecedented explosion of inequalities.

On Monday, September 15, 2008, to everyone's amazement, the old and prestigious investment bank Lehman Brothers (5) went bankrupt. It was the largest bankruptcy in the history of the United States, creating a shock wave that drove the world economy into the worst economic crisis since 1929. Global stock markets collapsed, under a "tsunami" of panic selling. The global financial system was paralyzed by fear, as all bank assets became suspicious; the global economy teetered on the edge of an abyss. However, the central bank technocrats and the International

Monetary Fund (IMF) had learned the lessons of 1929. In fact, they acted quickly, by flooding financial markets with unprecedented credit and put in place a safety net by guaranteeing bank deposits, and acting as "lenders of last resort". They thus avoided disaster, by buying time for politicians to implement intelligent and necessary reforms.

Alas, over the past five years, the European economies have been incapable of responding; resulting in rising debt and unemployment; and social instability. Worse, vital reforms for the future remain blocked due to fierce political divisions and powerful lobbies. As predicted by Plato and Alexis de Tocqueville (6), the flaw of democratic systems (7) is its inability to act for the collective good.



Europe in stalemate

In Europe, the self-healing process has been painfully slow. In fact, economic stability is maintained uniquely through the generosity of

the European Central Bank (ECB) and, ironically, it is the only organization capable of acting in a dysfunctional political system (8). In truth, European democracies are following the path of

A restoration of moral values is needed to escape the current realm of greed, selfishness and material interest.

Third World decadence, in which the only solution is the printing press to create money, in the hope that politicians will find intelligent solutions (9). But wise solutions are rarely implemented in the face of powerful lobbies and man's egoism. Europe is trapped in a vicious circle. Thus, the "end of history" according to linear view of Hegel and Fukuyama (10) has been refuted by China's take-off (11), coinciding with a declining America and a comatose Europe. Thus a radical change of logic is needed to resolve this systemic crisis: by switching from the exclusive "or" to the inclusive "and" advocated by Plato and Confucius.

The crucial question is how to get out of this long crisis. To quote Jorge Santayana, American writer and philosopher (1863-1952), "those who do not learn history are doomed to repeat it."

What lessons can be learned from this crisis

(1) The Treaty of Westphalia concluded the Thirty Years War and Eighty Years War on October 24, 1648, and put in place a permanent system of international sovereignty.

(2) "Pax Americana" refers to American hegemony in the world and the relative period of peace between the West and other major powers since the end of World War II. The United States thus plays the role of the world's policeman.

(3) "Pax Romana" refers to the period of peace (first and second century A.D.) enjoyed by the Roman Empire in its governed regions.

(4) See "The End of History and the Last Man", Francis Fukuyama in The National Interest, 1989.

(5) A global investment bank offering diversified financial services.

(6) Alexis-Charles -Henri Clérel, Viscount de Tocqueville (1805-1859),

philosopher and politician, French historian and author of "Democracy in America, Volume 1 and 2 , 1999, paperback editions.

(7) The systemic weaknesses of democracies are described in Plato's Republic and Democracy in America by Alexis de Tocqueville.

(8) In democracies that work reasonably well, there are two or three key positions that are not elected by popular vote (the President of the Central Bank, the head of the Supreme Court and the Head of Armed Forces).

(9) Contemporary democracies face a profound dilemma: the lack of convergence towards a common goal. See Olivier Williamson, "The New Institutional Economics, Taking Stock and Looking Ahead", Journal of Economic Literature, 2000.

(10) This concept or idea appeared first in "The Phenomenology of

Those who do not learn history are doomed to repeat it.

compared to 1929? The American economist Paul Robin Krugman (Nobel Prize in 2008) provides the economic consensus on this topic: the financial system is useful, but is too fragile (including Iceland, Ireland, Cyprus, Spain, USA...) when its critical final goal (financing long-term investments) is circumvented by speculation and short-term profit motives. Governments have enormous powers to avoid financial disasters. But, in the face of lobbies and political divisions, democracies typically fail to enact vital reforms to ensure a sound financial system (12) with equitable growth, except in extreme cases of deep crisis.

This summary is correct, but all the wise solutions (including Paul Robin Krugman's) to drastically reduce the size and to supervise banks and the stock exchange better are based on the "politically correct" assumption that capitalism is the best system possible! Of course it is always possible to save "Private Ryan" (13) by renovating the capitalist system through adjustments to regulations and governance. However, we believe that liberal capitalism is in a terminal phase. Moreover, it was the surge of delirious greed

and speculation that plunged the world into this deep crisis. Hence, as the problem is systemic, all sustainable solutions will imperatively require a return to the moral values proposed by Plato and Confucius twenty-five centuries ago.



Building a new world?

For over sixty years, Education and Justice (values evoked by Plato and Confucius) have been included in all the programmes proposed by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and democracies. Hence, what can we offer that is new? In truth, even if we follow the wise and politically correct recommendations of democracies, these efforts are doomed to failure! Why: because the proposed reforms are still based on the model of Western materialistic values that led the world into a dead end of waste and conspicuous consumption. The fundamental

Spirit" by Hegel, which presented every moment as part of a predetermined historical process; but whose terminal point is unknown.

(11) The system of "Chinese state capitalism" has become a rival to liberal capitalism in the Third world. It allows smart long-term choices -- for the benefit of all -- despite significant gaps in political freedoms and civil rights. In Europe, real structural reforms are taken only in extreme cases of deep crises.

(12) The fundamental problem is that banks are too important to allow bankruptcy. Thus, following the collapse of a speculative bubble, a private debt problem was transformed into public debt. In the world of ultra-liberal finance, profits are privatized, but losses are nationalized! (13) "Saving Private Ryan" is an American war film directed by Steven Spielberg, released in 1998. It portrays the rescue of a U.S. soldier in

French territory, in the throes of war between French and allied forces against German forces.

(14) In India, private companies or NGOs must provide transportation and electricity for their businesses and often infrastructure and security as well.

(15) Financial assets or personal wealth, serving to guarantee repayment of a loan in the event that the beneficiary of the loan cannot meet his repayment obligations.

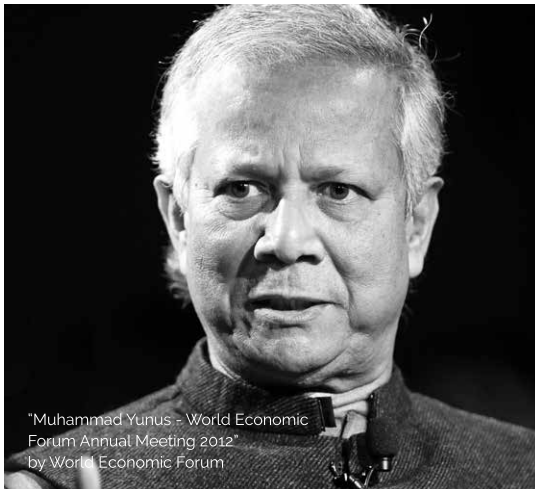
(16) Literally, "Village Bank" (Grameen means "self-help") specializing in micro-credits. Officially founded in 1976 by Muhammad Yunus in Bangladesh. It has nearly 1,400 branches and serves more than 50,000 villages. Since its inception, it has disbursed \$ 4.69 billion in loans with a repayment rate of nearly 99%.

Even if we follow the wise and politically correct recommendations of democracies, these efforts are doomed to failure! Why: because the proposed reforms are still based on the model of Western materialistic values that led the world into a dead end of waste and conspicuous consumption.



problem is that despite the progress of science, the state of man's consciousness has changed very little to include a global perspective. Thus, as governments are powerless to produce the "public" or "metaphysical" goods necessary, it is up to non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and individuals to act in their place (14)! But isn't this proposal pure utopia?

Faced with this crisis, several contemporary figures provide interesting experiments that have changed the fate of millions of human beings by their determination and dream of a New World. Here are their examples.



"Muhammad Yunus - World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2012"
by World Economic Forum

A portrait of Mohammad Yunus' project of civilisation

Mohammad Yunus is a Bangladeshi economist and entrepreneur; awarded the Nobel Peace Prize 2006, for his outstanding pragmatic

solutions to help the poor. On a visit to the village of Jobra (near Chittagong University where he taught) he met a group of forty-two women who made bamboo stools. Because they lacked capital to buy the materials, local merchants lent them just enough to buy raw materials; but in exchange, they were obliged to sell their production at a fixed price, just above the price of these materials. Mohammad Yunus was surprised to discover that the total financial

The fundamental problem is that despite the progress of science, the state of man's consciousness has changed very little to include a global perspective.

needs of these women, to develop their business independently, was only \$27; but the usurers imposed an effective interest rate of 1000% per year! Thus, he lent these women his own funds, without interest or collateral (15), allowing them to sell their stools at better prices and to break the vicious cycle of debt that enslaved them. Rich from this experience, Mohammad Yunus founded the Grameen Bank in 1976 (16) to provide micro-finance to the poor. Today there are more

(17) Women are responsible for the education of children and are generally more reliable than men in the use of family funds.

(18) The best known rules are to promote the four principles of the Grameen Bank in all circumstances of life: Discipline, Unity, Courage and Labour, to bring prosperity to the family, repair homes, grow vegetables, eat them and sell the surplus, birth control, minimize expenses, take care of health and hygiene, educate children, keep the environment clean, consume clean drinking water or boil water, help others, practise justice, restore order, invest to create higher income, participate in social and collective actions...

(19) Quote from the film "Here to Stay" by Olivier Bourgeois and Pierre Barouquier 2009.

(20) American businessman and philanthropic investor; one of the

richest men in the world.

(21) The life expectancy of men/women in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1950 was 37.5 years for men and 40.6 years for women; in 2011 it was 47 years for men and 51 for women. In France the comparable figures in 1950 were 63.4 years for men and 69.2 years for women; and in 2011 and 78.2 years for men and 84.8 years for women.

(22) In America, AIDS treatments cost \$11 000 to \$13 000 per year. Despite a discount of about 90%, drugs are still too expensive for poor countries with a gross domestic product (GDP) in \$1000 to \$2000 per person.

(23) The rationale for these priorities is that it is profitability and not humanitarianism that motivates the pharmaceutical industry. Ironically, in 19th century England, pharmaceutical companies were charities!

than ten thousand similar institutions in eighty-five countries with one hundred and ninety million customers that have enabled millions of to escape poverty. But behind these impressive numbers, there is a philosophy of helping the poor to stand up on their own feet! This project is thus a realization of the vision of Plato and Confucius, based on individual responsibility, honesty, social solidarity and human dignity. This banking system is thus based on the principle of: "act for those who act" evoked by Ptah Hotep, Vizier of Ancient Egypt, circa 2400 B.C.

All sustainable solutions will imperatively require a return to the moral values proposed by Plato and Confucius twenty-five centuries ago.

For conventional banks, the first rule is that you lend only to people who do not need money! Thus, the concept of micro-finance was a true revolution, as it made small loans to the poor without collateral at a reasonable interest rate. What is surprising is that almost all clients of microfinance are women (97 %) and loans are granted to groups of five who guarantee repayment (17). A new loan is possible, but only after the repayment of the first (with the possibility of extending the loan). In fact 96.7% of the

(24) The list of donations is long: \$ 200 million in 2003 for research on malaria, \$750 million in 2005 for Vaccines and Immunizations, \$ 250 million to the World Health Organization (WHO), \$300 million for malaria...

(25) The deep controversy over patents and access rights of Third World countries to Third generation AIDS drugs, was partially resolved in the last "Treaty of Intellectual Property Rights. This compromise allows poor countries to use less expensive generic products in conditions of exceptional urgency.

loans are repaid, which shows the honesty and reliability of poor borrowers. Another innovation is that the client must have a savings account and make a minimum (even very small) deposit each month. They must also sign a charter similar to that of a religious primary school (18) based on moral behaviour! Thus, the Grameen Bank is truly a project of civilization!



Maathai and Obama in Nairobi By Fredrick Onyango

Planting Trees with Wangari Muta Maathai

"It is the people who must save the environment. It is the people who must change the mentality of their leaders. We cannot be intimidated. We must defend what we believe in and cannot allow ourselves to be intimidated", said Wangari Muta Maathai (1940-2011), nicknamed "The Green Woman" (19), the first African woman (Kenyan) to win the Nobel Peace Prize in 2004. Sixth child of a poor peasant family, she became a professor of biology and anatomy of Veterinarian Medicine. She was also an activist for women's and human rights and an ardent environmentalist. As Kenya, and all of the sub-Sahara, is threatened by a chronic lack of water and erosion of topsoil, she

launched the project "The Green belt movement" by planting seven trees for Earth Day. Its goal was simple: plant trees to save Kenya and the world. When the media came to interview her, she explained the purpose of the project and then said, "That's enough now, everyone with me into the fields!" It is with this vision of human solidarity and militancy that she managed to plant thirty million trees in Kenya for the public good: a wonderful inspirational example for all the world's idealists.



Bill & Melinda Gates by Kjetil Ree

Bill and Melinda Gates

The father of Bill Gates, William Henry Gates III, founded the Gates Foundation. Bill Gates is the founder of Microsoft. With his wife Melinda form one of the richest couples in the world; as well as bequeathing almost all their wealth to this charity (\$36 billion), followed by Warren Buffet (20) who bequeathed the same amount in 2006. The Gates had a huge fortune but were outraged by the injustices in the world -- especially the huge disparity between life expectancy in rich, as opposed to poor countries (21).

In fact, three diseases in the Third world, kill 5.4 million people a year: malaria kills one million; TB 1.9 million, mostly in Africa and AIDS a further 2.5 million; 1.8 million in sub-Saharan Africa. These

diseases are controllable through research and development. But Gates discovered that almost all of the research budgets of the big pharmaceutical companies are targeted and cancer, obesity and hair loss! As regards AIDS, treatments exist but they

Anything is possible if you dare to dream of a new and better world. Hence, it is not necessary to be a billionaire, but only a citizen with a conscience, to act in the world.

are impossibly expensive for the Third world (22). Clearly, pharmaceutical companies are not motivated to invest in research on tropical diseases or helping victims of AIDS in the Third World! (23). Faced with this impasse, since 1994, the Gates Foundation has donated \$ 9.6 billion and vaccinated 55 million children in the Third world! (24). Finally, pharmaceutical companies very embarrassed by bad publicity, have eased access rights to medicines in the Third world (25). And the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom, equally embarrassed by these humanitarian gestures, have also increased their own contributions to the World Health Organization (WHO)

Thus, the examples cited above demonstrate that anything is possible if you dare to dream of a new and better world. Hence, it is not necessary to be a billionaire, but only a citizen with a conscience, to act in the world. ★★★

AN OPERA IN STONE: HAMPI

BY MANJULA NANAVATI



The urge to travel is as old as time itself. But the most captivating destinations are those that nudge you to journey within. Hampi's serene spirituality and stark beauty awakens a sense of magic, awe and respect for our human legacy.

LIBRETTO

Hampi's history melds so seamlessly into legend that it is difficult to establish where one ends and the other begins. This tiny hamlet lay nestled within the area known as Kishkinda which, according to the Hindu epic Ramayana, was the realm of the Monkey Gods. Following Ravan's abduction of Sita, Ram and Lakshman arrived here, and were met by Hanuman and Sugriva. The cave where Sugriva hid the jewels that Sita dropped from Ravan's flying chariot, the grotto that Ram and Lakshman took shelter in before raiding Lanka, and the birthplace of Hanuman, have over the centuries become sacred places of pilgrimage for devotees.

Left to obscurity, the city survived, under layers of sand and vegetation until centuries later it was discovered and excavated in 19th century.

Between the 13th and 16th Century while the Kingdom of Vijayanagar gradually expanded, Hampi grew into a teeming metropolis, spread over 650 sq.kms, protected by the Tungabhadra River in the north and hills on every other side. Its population of over 500,000 had access to legendary bazaars, brimming with precious stones, textiles, and food, fuelled by merchants from exotic lands. Domingo Paes, a Portuguese traveller who visited Vijayanagar around 1520, wrote that Hampi was 'as large as Rome and very beautiful to the sight'. And about its market place he claimed 'this is the best provided city in the world'.

Of all of Hampi's beautifully carved temples, the Vithala Temple stands supreme. Dedicated to Vishnu, this is the largest, and most extravagantly ornate.

In 1565 the Northern Sultans joined forces to ransack and destroy the empire. Left to obscurity, the city survived, under layers of sand and vegetation until centuries later it was discovered and excavated in 19th century.

Today, Hampi's magnificent ruins consisting of over 500 monuments include, temple complexes, mini cities, palaces, statues, and shrines, have been declared a World Heritage Site and stand tribute to the architectural artistry and splendor of the Krishna Deva Raya Empire.

PRELUDIO

Neither spectacular photographs, nor the paeans of friends who have visited, prepare you for the spell-binding moment when you turn the corner, and suddenly, the entire city of Hampi lies below you, its stone ruins rising majestically from behind a river glinting lazily in the early morning sunlight.

We walk down to the riverbank and wait in silent anticipation as the boat fills, and begins to glide across the river. We stare mesmerized, as the ruins loom larger, stately and forlorn.

OVERTURE

We reach the opposite bank and climb up the steps into Hampi. A short rickshaw ride takes us straight to the archaeological wonder that is the Sacred Centre, a stunning collection of over 20 temples and shrines laid out across the hills.

I am grateful to be wearing sneakers as we trek up the hill, clamber over boulders and turn to see the spectacular vista before us. An overwhelming sense of serenity falls over me as I stare silently at the architectural poems carved into stone stretching out before me. I marvel at a culture that centuries ago, held spirituality as so vital to life, that a sacred centre lay at the heart of the city, and reverence was so natural and pervasive that meditation shrines & caves were dotted encouragingly everywhere.

INTERLUDIO

Through the numerous stone columns that make up the Hampi Bazaar, and the intriguingly named Street of Courtesans, we trek past water canals, over pebbled pathways, and stop at many temples, statues & monuments where history is palpable.

SERENATA ADAGIO

Of all of Hampi's beautifully carved temples, the Vithala Temple stands



supreme. Dedicated to Vishnu, this is the largest, and most extravagantly ornate. The magnificent stone chariot that has become Hampi's most recognizable icon stands at the entrance. The Hall of Musical Pillars is acknowledged for the artistic delicacy of the hundreds of vertical, hollow stone pillars that were once used to play music during pageants and festivals. Giant Yalis (the mythical lion-headed horse or Leogryph), elephants, horses, floral motifs & Gods are carved into every inch of stone that make up this architecturally breath taking monument.

Getting There

Hampi is in Karnataka and the nearest airport is in Hubli, a 3 hour drive away.

Accommodation

There are many hotels, lodges & guest houses to suit every budget, but service staff everywhere, though well meaning, are clueless. Plenty of eateries dot the area; Germans, Israelis and other foreign nationals have opened restaurants, bakeries and snack bars. Alcohol is difficult to find, especially on the Hampi side of the river.

Money

There are no ATMs in Hampi and credit cards are not accepted. Carry cash for all your needs.

Sight Seeing

To properly see Hampi would take many days, but 2 is the very minimum. You can walk, take a bicycle or a rickshaw to see the sights, but a guide is a must. Be careful, everyone will try to overcharge you.

Essentials

Sunscreen, hats, water bottles, walking shoes. A strong bladder is a plus, as toilets in Hampi are few & far between.

Post Script

Notwithstanding the lack of infrastructure Hampi is a must see; for its stunning architecture, its sublime artistry, its historical authenticity & for its overwhelming spirituality.

ARIA CANTABILE

Already subdued in the face of splendor we walk towards the Royal Centre and enter the Zenana Enclosure. The Lotus Mahal with its elegant archways, the Water Pavilion, the Queens Baths, all surrounded by lush gardens pay tribute to a lavish royal lifestyle. But the Hazara Ram Temple (The Thousand Ramas) once again takes our breath away. Although the private place of worship for the Royal Family, it is smaller than many of Hampi's other temples, but its walls and pillars are exquisitely carved with the stories of the Ramayana. We are lucky to arrive with no-one else in sight. On the cool, smooth, stone floor, a gentle breeze blowing through the temple columns, a thousand exalted Ramas surrounding us, we sit quietly meditating in the lyrical silence.

FINALE

Walking back to the river we climb gingerly into a coracle and float gently downstream. On each side rise the gigantic black boulders typical of Hampi's landscape. We glide lazily past caves for meditation, shrines to acknowledge divinities, enveloped in tranquility. High above us is a lofty temple built where Hanuman was born. Clouds expand across the sky, ripples on the water expand in ever widening circles, and my heart expands as I look at the horizon, to see the earth and the sky joined together in the distance, as hands join in prayer. ★★★

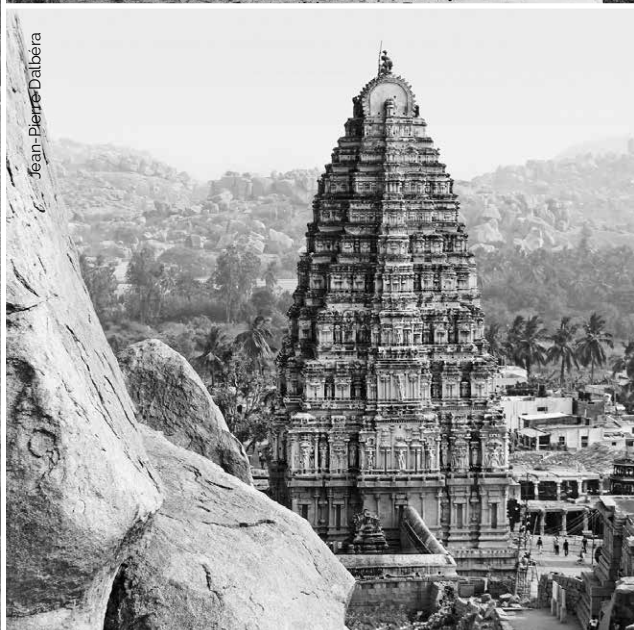




Vinoth Chandar



Vinoth Chandar



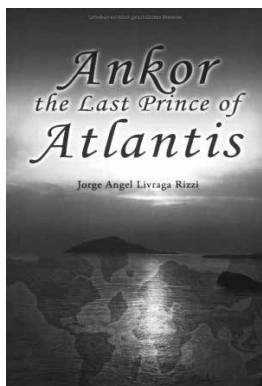
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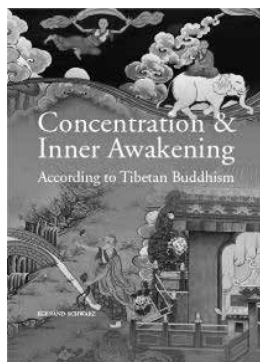
Nearly 12,000 years ago, so Plato and other traditions say, a single island was all that remained of the once vast continent of Atlantis.

Although few modern historians believe that any forms of civilization existed in such far-off times, universal traditions speak of "floods" which destroyed large areas of land inhabited by people as technologically developed as ourselves and in some cases, more endowed with wisdom.

Written in the form of a novel, this book charts the final years of the realm of "Poseidonis", as some writers have referred to it. Ankor, the orphaned son of the last initiate-king of Atlantis, is educated by wise priests who prepare him for his terrifying "initiations" into "Mysteries".

This book is far more than a novel. It provides a vivid insight into the world of a forgotten mystery tradition - forgotten today, but perhaps, who knows? - familiar to the soul of the reader...

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**CONCENTRATION
AND INNER
AWAKENING**
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Plagued by a perpetual state of confusion caused by the unending triggers of the material realm, the human psyche is unable to filter through the distractions, in order to focus on identifying the eternal truth of the Self. As a result, rarely is a human being able to truly sense his sva-dharma, and tread The Path through life, towards achieving a personal destiny. This inescapable duty and responsibility, however, can only be accomplished by the elimination of constant mental confusion, and the development of self-control by way of fine-tuning the delicate Art of Concentration.

In his book, Fernand Schwarz, explores the practice of concentration through an in-depth analysis of Lama Blo-bzang Don-yod's illustrations. Through Buddhist Symbolism, these works present the journey towards an enlightened consciousness, delineating the hurdles that need to be overcome with the help of simple physical and mental exercises. Come explore with us, this fascinating book, and the age-old secrets still alive today in the traditions of Tibetan Buddhism.

MANAGING THAT RAGE

BY KURUSH DORDI

How often have we wished that we had behaved differently in times when our rage gets the better of us. How often do we wish that those sharp words uttered like arrows shot blindly and with ignorance could be pulled back into our quivers. In one way or another we have all experienced Anger. It is only in hindsight that we wish that we had acted differently. We hope in those times we had the calm demeanour of the Zen monk who knows how to act with serenity and composure to whatever life throws at him. However by then, the damage caused by the manifestation of that Anger has already been done. While very often we think Anger only affects the recipient, the truth is it does harm both ways. Modern scientists have even linked psychosomatic diseases to Anger; like blood pressure irregularity, digestion problems, and asthma. More often than not chronic anger destroys the very fabric of our social lives causing rifts, misunderstanding and the destruction of the sacred gift human beings have the privilege of, the gift of love.

Anger manifests in many ways and many wise men have prescribed ways to manage anger. And who better could we learn from, than the wise sayings of The Buddha. The Dhammapada, a collection of teachings of the Buddha, offers a glimpse into the importance of developing a way to manage Anger. Here are a few tips from extracts from The Dhammapada (Chapter 17).

I call him a charioteer who holds back the arisen anger as though (holding back) a swerving chariot. Others are only holders of reins. (Ch.17, St.222)

Overcome the angry by non-anger; overcome the wicked with good. Overcome the miserly by giving, the teller of lies with truth. (Ch.17, St. 223)

Speak the truth; do not get angry; give your mite to those who ask (for alms). On these three grounds one goes into the presence of the gods. (Ch.17, St. 224)

Those silent sages who are harmless (ahimsakas) and always (self) controlled go to the Immoveable Abode, whither having gone they do not grieve. (Ch.17, St. 225)

They come to the end of (their) defilements (asavas), those who keep awake, who study day and night, (and) who are intent on Nirvana. (Ch.17, St. 226)

Be on your guard against bodily agitation; be controlled in body. Giving up bodily misconduct, live well behaved as regards the body. (Ch.17, St. 231)

Be on your guard against verbal agitation; be controlled in speech. Giving up verbal misconduct, live well behaved as regards speech. (Ch.17, St. 232)

Be on your guard against mental agitation; be controlled in mind. Giving up mental misconduct, live well behaved as regards the mind. (Ch.17, St. 233)

The wise are controlled in bodily action, controlled in speech and controlled in thought. They are truly well-controlled. (Ch.17, St. 234)

FOR YOUR PERSONAL REFLECTION:

1. What triggers my anger? Is it a result of something external, or does anger lie within me, looking for opportunities to creep onto the surface?
2. When I get angry, what aspect of myself do I lose control over?
3. What do I wish to remember the next time something triggers anger?
4. Is it possible to get 'angry' with compassion?

SCHEDULE OF PUBLIC EVENTS



FESTIVAL OF LIGHT

Lecture

Saturday, 11th October 2014

6:00PM (2hrs), FREE ADMISSION

@ New Acropolis Mumbai

As the year closes in to the winter months in the northern hemisphere, cultures around the world celebrate festivals related to light: Christmas, Hanukah, Diwali. Beyond the festivities, however, lies a symbolic celebration of the victory of Light, represented by a flame, over Darkness; a battle represented in mythologies the world over. Join us as we explore the symbolism of this battle and look for clues on our role, as the Winter Solstice approaches.



JOURNEY BEYOND DEATH

Lecture

Saturday, 1st November 2014

6:00PM (2hrs), FREE ADMISSION

@ New Acropolis Mumbai

Is Death the end of it all? When investigating ancient traditions, it is remarkable that such a vast majority suggest, with elaborate detail, the continuing journey of the spirit after Death. They considered Life and Death as two phases along a single path of spiritual evolution.

Did the ancients know some secret about Death that we have lost? Could we improve the quality of our own lives by unraveling the understanding of their own?



LIVING PHILOSOPHY: DISCOVER, AWAKEN, TRANSFORM

Introductory Course

FREE Introductory Session

Tuesday, 4th November 2014

7:30pm (2hrs), @ New Acropolis Mumbai

Course Starts

Tuesday, 11th November 2014

7:30pm (2hrs), @ New Acropolis Mumbai

PRE-REGISTRATION REQUIRED

This course establishes the foundation of every aspiring Philosopher. The curriculum comprises of traditional knowledge, presented as a comparative study of Classical Philosophies, and helps each student to develop a sensitive ability to internalize the fundamental Laws that govern Nature, and Humanity. The course material serves as an introduction to ancient cultures and investigates the origins of humanity – a time when the Invisible World was respected, drawing a sense of wonder and esoteric mysticism. New Acropolis strives to preserve this universal heritage, by offering it as an integral part of its scholastic development. **Course Duration - 15 Sessions. Tuesdays, 7:30pm - 9:30pm. FEES APPLY.**

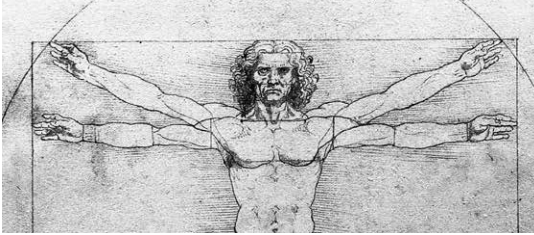
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RENAISSANCE: HERE & NOW

Lecture

Saturday, 15th November 2014

6:00PM (2hrs), FREE ADMISSION

@ New Acropolis Mumbai

Through history, we observe cycles of human civilizations that blossom in a series of Golden Ages, separated by periods called the Middle Ages. What makes an Age, such as the Renaissance, 'Golden'? What are the characteristics of such an Age? What control do we have as individuals, and as a society, to give impetus to a Golden Age, to give birth to a Renaissance in our own times?



THE SEARCH FOR MEANING

Lecture

Saturday, 6th December 2014

6:00PM (2hrs), FREE ADMISSION

@ New Acropolis Mumbai

The thought that life is governed by chance, and consists of coincidences and confrontations beyond human control, may intuitively seem shallow. We

are surrounded by patterns, and cycles, that are too precise to be accidental. A cosmic intelligence, a deliberate design, and an evolutionary direction is evident; understanding its nature might be the key to give meaning to our actions and our choices. This presentation will investigate the age-old search for meaning that has driven humankind since antiquity.



COURAGE TO LEAD

Lecture

Saturday, 20th December 2014

6:00PM (2hrs), FREE ADMISSION

@ New Acropolis Mumbai

New leadership is needed for new times, but it will not come from finding new and more wily ways to manipulate the external world. It will come as we who lead find the courage to take an inward journey toward both our shadow and our light, a journey that, faithfully pursued, will take us beyond ourselves to become healers of a wounded world." - Parker J. Palmer
Leadership is beyond a technique or style. It comes from within, and requires courage and wisdom. A leader leads by example in every aspect of life, often without ever choosing to lead.

BOOK REVIEW

BY MANJULA NANAVATI

BOOK

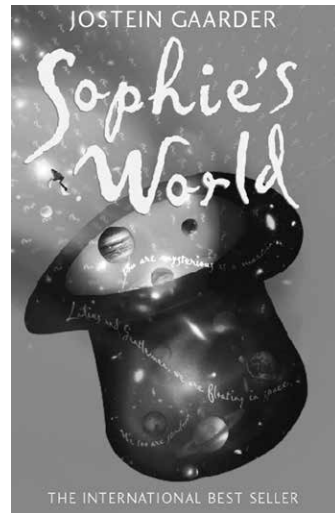
SOPHIE'S WORLD

BY JOSTEIN GAARDER

In Sophie's World Gaarder manages to skillfully weave together so many disparate genres that this successively dense, quirky, perplexing and illuminating novel defies even the most basic genre labeling. A comprehensive outline of Western philosophical thought that covers 2000 years from Socrates through Marx, Darwin, Freud and Sartre should deem it serious, scholarly and unequivocally non-fiction. Yet it is also a wondrous fictional fantasy about a 15-year-old girl Sophie Amundsen and her search for eternal and universal truths that takes the form of a well-crafted mystery.

About midway through the book it begins to dawn on Sophie and her philosophy instructor Alberto that they are imaginary characters in a novel being read by another 15-year-old girl Hilde. Their reality is actually an author's fantasy! As they hatch an audacious plan to assert control of their thoughts and actions, Sophie wrestles with questions of the meta physical nature of existence, and the illusion of free will.

The book is elegantly and cleverly structured as a set of matryoshka nesting dolls that constantly remind us that we are studying philosophy while reading a book about a girl (Hilde) who is studying philosophy and reading a book about a girl (Sophie) who is reading and studying... with the implication that this could continue ad infinitum. The parallel personal stories of the girls' growth are artfully correlated with alternating chapter summaries of the growth of philosophy,



and it is here that the book leaps into brilliance. Gaarder's précis that cover all the great ideas of philosophical thought are lucid and insightful as he translates complex abstractions into concepts easily accessible by anyone.

Gaarder uses every means at his disposal - plot, theme, structure, symbolism and in fact the very medium of the book, to imply that we must question what we read, how we think, why we act, and the purpose of our lives.

As the only creatures capable of rational, moral & philosophical reflection, Gaarder urges us to never stop asking questions, and while we may never have precise answers, the very act of asking, searching and introspecting, is what defines our humanity. ★★★

Jostein Gaarder taught Philosophy to High School Children in Bergen, Norway for 11 years, before he became an award-winning novelist. Sophie's World was his first book to be translated into English and became a runaway best seller in Europe. It has been translated into 53 languages since.



LIVING PHILOSOPHY

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Investigate the Ancient Indian understanding of Man
7 Fold Constitution of Man
The Ethical Life of a Disciple
Themes from Ancient Indian Tradition

THE GREAT UNIVERSAL WAR

Animal Self vs. Human Self
The Internal Battle of Kurukshetra
Svadharmā and Karma Yoga
Themes from The Bhagavad Gita

BUDDHA AND THE PATH TO LIBERATION

Lessons from the Life of The Buddha
Process of Self-Transformation
The Middle Path, 4 Noble Truths
Themes from The Dhammapada

HEARING THE VOICE OF THE SILENCE

Symbolism of Tibetan Vajrayana Tradition
H.P. Blavatsky and the origins of a mystical manual
for disciples
Recognizing the Mayavic nature of the World
Themes from The Voice of the Silence

PRACTICAL PRINCIPLES FROM THE ANCIENT WORLD

Making your Actions meaningful and sacred
Justice, Ancient Egypt
Harmony, Confucius
Path of Happiness, Aristotle

THE ARTIST, THE LOVER, THE PHILOSOPHER – WHO ARE YOU?

Macro-bios: The Living Universe
True Freedom, Stoic Principles
3 Paths to expressing Unity, Plotinus
Neo-Platonism

INTRODUCTION TO SOCIO-POLITICS

The role and importance of Society
The Maieutic Approach, Socrates
Education and Justice in Society, Plato
The Metaphysical Disaster

THE ALLEGORY OF THE CAVE

The last School of Mystery, Pythagoras
Allegory of the Cave, Plato
The Political & Philosophical Ideal
Founding Principles of New Acropolis

TYPES OF GOVERNANCE

4 Types of Man
Models of Governance, Plato
The Triumphs and Challenges of Democracy
Organizational structure of Traditional Society

PATH TO MYSTERY

Roles in Ancient Society:
Children, Adolescence, Elders
Traditional Education and Tribal Initiation
Mystical and Magical Initiation

WHEN MYTH AND HISTORY MEET

Reliability of History
Myths: Truths hidden in Mythology
Chronological Time, Sacred Time, Mythical Time
How Myth drives History

CYCLES WITHIN HISTORY

Natural Law of Cycles
Cycles of Time: Hindu Yugas, Great Year of Plato
Challenges and Opportunities of our times

ESOTERIC HISTORY OF MAN

7 Kingdoms of Life
Manas & the Evolution of Human Consciousness
The Discipular Path: Devotion, Investigation, Service

SUMMARY

So, where do we go from here?

PRACTICAL EXERCISES

.....
**Students earn diplomas certifying completion of the
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.....

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See page 31 for detailed Course Syllabus

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COURSE STARTS : Tuesday, 11th Nov 7:30pm

Living an Ethical Life, Practicing Wisdom
Ancient Indian understanding of Man
Discovering Human Purpose
Hearing the Voice of the Silence (Tibet)
Harmony (Confucius), Justice (Egypt)
Nurturing the Soul through Right Education
Evolution of Consciousness
The Way of Happiness (Aristotle)
Types of Governance
Pythagoras, Socrates, Plato
Extracting Truth: Myth vs History
Opportunities of our Times