

# PEHEL

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NEWSLETTER of

Department of Philosophy

Mata Sundri College for Women

## Principal's message

I am happy to note that the Department of Philosophy has come out with yet another edition of the Departmental newsletter. As was expected, the contents are the handiwork of students of the Department. The short articles in the newsletter reflect the students' endeavor to understand their discipline from a holistic and applicational perspective. This needs to be commended and iterated by students of other departments.

Dr Kwarjit Kaur

## SOME PHILOSOPHICAL QUESTIONS

- **WHY ARE WE HERE?**
- **WHO CREATED US?**
- **DOES GOD EXIST?**
- **IS THERE AN AFTERLIFE?**
- **WHAT IS BEAUTY?**
- **HOW CAN WE REALLY KNOW SOMETHING?**
- **WHAT IS MORALLY 'RIGHT'?**

## PARADIGM SHIFTS IN COSMOLOGY

Chitrita

Whenever we look up into the night sky, we are mesmerized by the vastness of space. We begin to wonder how our earth came into existence? How the whole universe came into existence? What lies beyond our Earth? No doubt these questions have entered man's mind, since we acquired the ability to think. Perhaps that is why almost all schools of philosophy try to answer such questions. And it's not just philosophy but even science that tries to find definite answers to such questions by scientific methods.

Moving beyond mythology, early Greek philosophers tried to answer the question of creation with a single first principle, which was responsible for the existence of all matter. For Thales, the renowned philosopher who is fabled to have fallen into a well while gazing at the stars above, it was water. For Anaximenes- air, for Anaximander – the boundless matter. For Heraclitus it was the ever changing fire while for the Pythagoreans it was the abstract 'numbers'. Moving a little ahead, Leucippus and Democritus propounded the atomistic theory, according to which the basic unit of everything were a large number of atoms which combined to form compounds. The most significant contribution from this time period is the theory given by Aristotle that Earth was the centre of the cosmos and all other heavenly bodies revolve around it. This theory of Aristotle remained widely popular and authoritative until Copernicus and his successors.

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## IS FORGERY A FORM OF ART???

Rajni Bora

"Wolfgang Beltracchi, the 'forger of the century' created chaos in the art market with his fake paintings hundreds of which are still circulating." Recently I studied what is art and work of art, so I generally started googling about some of the famous art work from there I found about Wolfgang Beltracchi. Over a period of three-and-a half decades, Beltracchi has produced 300 paintings in the style of great masters, such as Picasso, Monet, etc. After being arrested he claimed that his work is an art and certain critics also claim that his work is art. A question arises in my mind- Is forgery a form of art?

To answer this question we have to understand the meaning of art and work of art as well. Aristotle suggested that there should be three criteria for something to be called a work of art. A work of art must be "good", as in exhibiting skill and successfully accomplishing what the artist set out to do, it must "beautiful", meaning aesthetically pleasing or morally elevating, and it must be interesting - which concerns the idea behind the work's content and what thoughts and emotions it provokes.

Forgery can fulfill the first criteria of skills, both the original artist and the forger needs the technical skills. One may also argue that the forger needs more technical skills than the original artist as he has to convince everyone that it the original one.

But a forger and the forgery fail to fulfill in the second criteria of Aristotle. Forgeries are ultimately deceitful. Forgeries are the misrepresentation of achievement because they are posturing as the work of someone else's when that is not the case. While forgeries may initially provide joy to those who believe they are original, but once the person comes to know that it is just a forgery the emotion are just reversed. For a forger like Beltracchi, a forgery is an art. They can forge a painting and make a



I never decided to become an art forger. I was aware of my talent at an early age, and I used it foolishly. This developed over the years. In my heart, I don't see myself as a criminal.

— Wolfgang Beltracchi —

lot of people happy by fooling them into thinking that the artwork in front of them is the original one and for them it is an act of happiness. Some thinkers may also argue that since it is providing happiness to a large number of people hence it is justified. But if killing someone is also providing happiness to a large number of people then it is also to be justified and many further more such things should be justified. I think forgery is not justified in any case as the heart is veiled by deceit. Hence, it fails even the third criteria of Aristotle because the idea behind the work's content does not belong to the forger.

One may not claim forgery as an art. It is true that the technical skills of the artist and the forger are the same but a work of art is much more than the technical skills, it is about the idea and the emotions attached to that piece of work which we cannot see in the forgery.

## ART & SOUL

Diksha Singh

Art is anything that fills you with awe. Something that not only appeals to your outer senses but also feels connected in a way with the inner you. Art is more of an emotional concept as it is something that appeals to your most delicate emotions. That is what artists are all about, they paint out a picture or pen down a poem which has hundreds of emotions hidden behind it. That's why the two words, art and creativity, have always been linked concepts. As to create art one has to be quite imaginative and creative. Then only it is possible to bring out all those emotions of wonder and contentment on the face of an observer. This is the most fascinating thing about art that it gives you a pathway to showcase the world what lies within your heart. Art helps you in

bringing out all those thoughts you have always wanted to convey to others but have never been able to. It offers hundreds of possibilities. Art is anything that helps you connect the dots to a peaceful life, anything that links you with your soul.

### कला

हर रूप में, हर रंग में,  
बरंग भी, बेरूप भी।  
वो भाव है, और आईना भी,  
पर एक सा दिखलाए ना भी।

भिन्न है, सामान्य है।  
सोच है जो मान्य है।  
सूत्र है यथार्थ का वो कल्पना से,  
आकार है, स्वप्न का वो वन्दना से।  
कला है कि, हाँ कला ही है,  
जो एक को दूसरे से बांधे है।

मेधा आनंद झा



### "Magic flower" fresco

A flower carved in marble at the Amer Palace, Jaipur is a special attraction. What makes it special is the way it has been carved. On looking closely one can find the designs of a fish tail, a lotus, a hooded cobra, an elephant trunk, a lion's tail, a cob of corn and a scorpion within it from different angles.



## SELF RELIANCE

Chinmayee Sinha

In this world so harsh and people so selfish, every individual must understand that being strong is not an option, it's a necessity. We often tend to depend on others for a number of things, be it emotional support, physical support, financial support, or any sort of dependence. To some extent this dependence is good and results in better bonding with each other. Interdependence is de-facto a basic value that nature teaches us. However, Mother Nature also tries to instill the value of self-reliance in us. *Prima facie* the reader may form a view that the writer is contradicting herself, but it is not so. The point is that, it is not always the right decision to trust every other person. A person who is feeble at heart is often misled and easily becomes the victim of betrayal. This scenario can be observed not only among friends but in families too.

In modern times, it is very important to be self-reliant. No matter how bad the current situation is, you have the power to change it. The only thing one has to do is believe in oneself. Nothing is impossible. One should be courageous enough to face the world with confidence and optimism. It is amazing to see how incredible human beings are.

We can create change in ways no other living being can. We can choose our own paths and do what we aspire to do. Though there are times when people meet with some terrible accident, yet one should not lose hope. There are various issues in which women are not treated equally or are not able to enjoy the rights that they deserve. But with sheer willpower and tolerance, this equality can also be achieved. All that is to be done is to have faith and patience.

There are various ways in which people can help themselves become independent and strong. One way is not to make an issue about the problems that they are facing. The problems that people face are not the actual problem. Their personal reaction to those problems is the actual problem. Win it in order to have a happy life. Another way through which a person can overcome his problem is through spiritual well being. Meditation is one major way through which peace of mind can be restored. Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you cannot practice any other virtue consistently. In the words of Bob Marley, "Emancipate yourselves from mental slavery. None but ourselves can free our minds."

### OUR DESIRES

Our desires are like the infinite sea  
Which has no end.  
Our desires change like the ocean waves  
Sometimes they're aggressive  
And sometimes silent.  
But it is our 'mind'  
That can figure out  
What we really are  
That is, our soul.  
Everything is within us  
We just need to explore the treasure  
And enjoy its riches!

Ruchi

## नया नज़रिया

पैरों से जो बेड़ियाँ हटाई है मैंने,  
ख्यालों से कैसे हटाउंगी ?  
मन के किवाड़जो खोल भी लिए ,  
तो नए सच को कैसे अच्नाउन्गी,  
मेरी नियति तो मानो तय कर दी  
गयी हो  
ऐसे मैं अपनी मौजूदगी कैसे  
जताउंगी ?

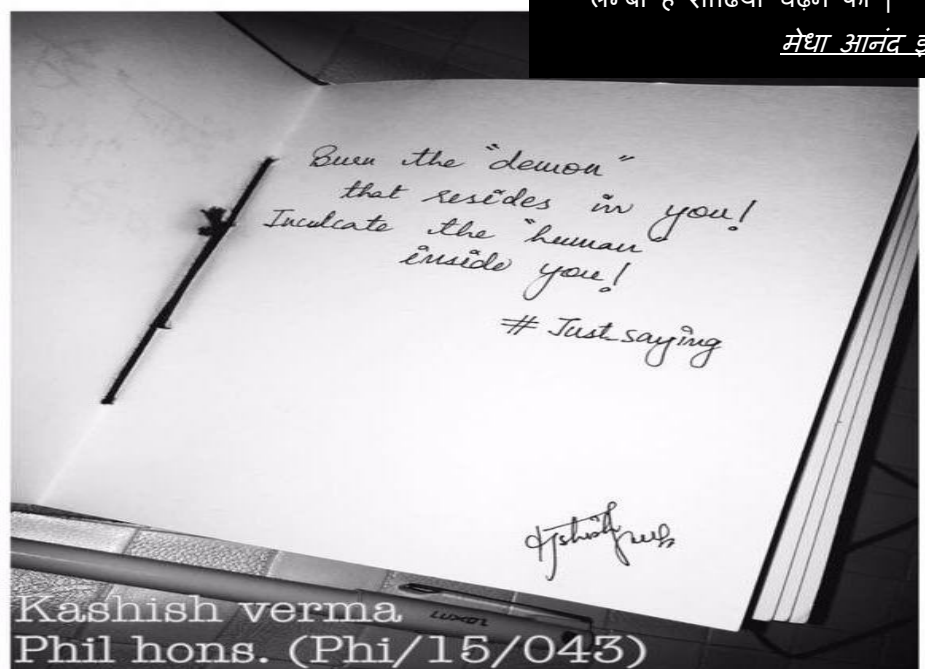
ना जाने कबसे सोयी थी मैं,  
भेड़चाल की नींद में ।  
सालों से यूँ खोयी थी मैं ,  
पूर्वधारणा की भीड़ में ।

मेरा होना माना खास नहीं ,  
पर अब हूँ मैं भी आम नहीं।  
इस चादर को यूँ ओढ़े रहना ,  
है अब मुझको रास नहीं।

अब जो मैंने आँखें खोली दिखा बहुत  
कुछ नया नया ।  
पहला सा लगता मुझको सब कुछ  
और पहली सी खुद को मैं ।

मैंने बस एक कोशिश की है ,  
नया नजरिया पढ़ने की।  
जाना मुझको दूर बहुत है  
लम्बी है सीढियां चढ़ने की ।

मेधा आनंद झा



## Women in Greek Mythology

*Radhika Tiwari*

The role of women in society has always been a hot topic among masses. Interestingly, most of these discussions are held by men who seriously feel that it is their moral obligation to guide the opposite sex. And these patriarchal obligations have revealed a lot about the importance of women in the historic and pre-historic era. Such as in ancient Greek world, the fairer sex had few rights in comparison to male citizens. Unable to vote, own land, or inherit, a woman's place was in the home and purpose in life was the rearing of children. This, though, is a general description, and when considering the role of women in ancient Greece one should remember that information regarding specific city-states is often lacking, and is almost always from male authors, and only in Athens can their status and role be described in any great detail. Nor are we sure of the practical and everyday application of the rules and laws that have survived from antiquity. We do know that the Spartan women were treated somewhat differently than in other states. For example, they had to do physical training like men, were permitted to own land, and could drink wine.

Considering their limited role in actual society there is a surprisingly strong cast of female characters in Greek religion and mythology. Athena, the goddess of wisdom and



patron of Athens stands out as a powerful figure blessed with intelligence, courage and honor. Again common to most ancient cultures where agriculture was crucial to the community, female fertility goddesses were extremely important and particularly venerated—Demeter and Persephone being the most revered among the Greeks.

As in other ancient male-dominated literature, women are often cast as troublemakers, from jealous Hera to Aphrodite employing her charms to make men lose their wits. Mythical literature is abound with female characters trying their best to derail the plans of male heroes, from the supreme witch Medea to the deadly if lovely, Sirens. They can also be represented as ruled only by wild passion and ecstatic emotion such as the Maenads. In contrast, the ideal chaste woman loyal to her absent husband is epitomized by Penelope in Homer's *Odyssey*. The Muses are another positive representation, celebrated not only for their physical beauty but also their wide-ranging skills in the arts. Whether these fictional characters had any bearing on the role of women in real life is an open question, as is the more intriguing one of what did Greek women themselves think of such male-created role-models? Perhaps we will never know.

## Ancient Greek Philosophers

Philosophy is the love of knowledge, as they say  
Everything comes out of it; there's no other way  
Metaphysics, Epistemology, Logic and Ethics  
are its main branches along with Aesthetics  
Now don't confuse Metaphysics with Physics  
It's the study of reality concerned with Gods & spirits  
Epistemology is the process of knowing the truth  
Whereas, Logic is a philosopher's favorite tool  
Ethics teaches us our moral duty  
While, Aesthetics is the study of art & beauty  
Well this is just the beginning; it's got no end  
So wrap your heads around the theories and prepare for the bends

It all began in early Greece  
Where refuting God, stood Thales  
Water was his everything  
Well it is even now for every being  
Next came his student Anaximander  
"The world is made of the 'Boundless' matter  
Anaximenes calls earth a mere  
flat disk floating upon the air  
For the Pythagoreans, everything in this world  
could be explained with numbers  
Fire is the first principle said Heraclitus  
And "everything is in a state of constant flux"  
To refute him came Parmenides  
"There's only being; there's no becoming"  
Anaxagoras brings in the concept of mind  
"Everything exists in everything all the time"  
The Atomists shine forth a bright new light  
Introducing atoms of different shapes and size  
Then the Sophists steal the spotlight  
Refuting knowledge; whatever you think is right.  
Then came the age of the three great sages  
Who'd be remembered for ages & ages  
The first of the three was Socrates  
There was no other man as wise as he  
He started the dialectical method of enquiry  
And even propounded the JTB theory  
His pupil Plato founded the Academy  
And declared the world of ideas as the supreme reality  
Plato's student Aristotle was a polymath  
He was interested in everything from Politics to Math  
Well this was just a glimpse of the ancient Greek theories  
Probably next time we'll cover the other stories  
Philosophy is the love of knowledge, as they say  
Everything comes out of it; there's no other way  
It's the essence of life which you can't escape  
So don't even try because you can't pretend  
It's the art of asking questions and answering them  
You can't Google everything, sometimes you gotta introspect.  
*Chitrita*

## An interpretation of Plato's Allegory of the Cave



*-Jyoti Malik*



## "The Cosmos is all that is or was or ever will be"

*continued from page 1*

If we try to sneak a peek into the Indian philosophical schools, we find cosmology mostly mixed up with mythology and theology. However, a somewhat similar atomistic theory is found in the Vaisheshika School which proposes that all material objects of the world are composed of the smallest, indivisible, eternal particles called 'paramaanu' (atom). These atoms are said to be of four kinds- of earth, water, fire and air.

Almost 2000 years after Aristotle, Copernicus formulated a theory of the universe which placed Sun at the centre of the universe and the other heavenly bodies revolving around it. His theory although slow to catch on, was sensational and inspired further significant works like Kepler's laws of planetary motion which further led to Isaac Newton's theory of universal gravitation. Later in 1609 Galileo Galilei was one of the first astronomer to approve Copernicus's theory on the basis of his astronomical observations.

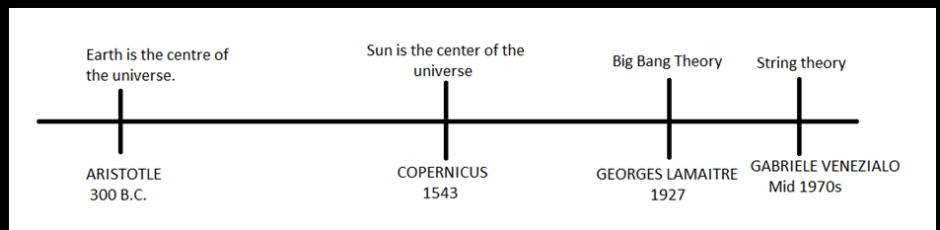
In 1917, with the publication of Einstein theory of general relativity, the modern scientific era of cosmology began. On the basis on Einstein's theory, physicists began theorizing a new cosmological model which is now better known as the Big Bang theory as proposed by Georges Lemaître in 1927. According to it, the whole universe expanded from a primal high density, high temperature singularity. More evidences have come up which have made this theory so strong that it is now the most widely accepted theory. One such evidence has been the discovery of cosmic microwave background radiation, which the theory had predicted to be released at the time of the Big Bang. The other significant evidence has been the observation that space continues to expand as our nearby galaxies continue to move away from us, this is better known as cosmic inflation. More research continues to be done upon this theory till date.

Another relatively new cosmological theory is the M-theory or the string theory which tries to reconcile Einstein's theory of relativity with Quantum physics, trying to explain the origin of the four fundamental forces- gravity, electromagnetism, strong nuclear force and weak nuclear force and thereby trying to explain the origin of Big Bang itself. The key theorist behind this theory is considered to be Gabriele Veneziano. Its basic import is that all objects in the world consist of vibrating filaments, i.e. strings, of energy. It assumes certain special mind-boggling features like the existence of several other dimensions which exist in tiny spaces. This theory further leads to the idea of multiverses or parallel universes, the imaginative execution of which can be found in the movie Interstellar.

Fascinated by all these different theories, my mind came up with its own cosmological theory, which can be understood from an analogy. If we zoom inside our body we find many tiny, microbes living their own relative existence in their own universe, possibly unaware of our existence. However if we zoom out of the earth, even out of the observable universe and try to conceive of this idea- what if we, our whole universe is also just a tiny speck inside someone's body, the existence of whom is beyond our scientific explanations? And such a series of beings inside other beings going on till infinity?

Of course it's just an imaginative idea in my head but I was able to find few more similar fascinating ideas on the internet, as well as a lot of criticism since this hypothesis obviously can't be proved by scientific inquiry. Anyhow, what's the harm in thinking new ideas and edifying ourselves!!!

What matters is trying to understand the cosmos as the famous astronomer Carl Sagan said "The Cosmos is all that is or was or ever will be."



## 'Vision'- somewhere between Perception and Inference

Vaishali Vats

'Vision'- this word alone holds the power to change this world. A vision which is bounded not only by knowledge but pertains to wisdom also. A vision which is not merely an idea without potential but one which has the power to actualize and when one is willing to discover that vision which lies somewhere between perception and inference, the role of philosophy gains its stand.

I am not trying to define perception and inference, rather I am trying to describe how the horizon of one's knowledge and the way of looking at this world changes for those who have an inclination towards philosophy and further by using perception and inference, my motive here is to present a worldview from the viewpoint of a philosophy student.

Perception and inference both are somehow interlinked in our process of gaining a vision of this world. What we perceive

through our senses and further what we infer from it leads to how we react in different situations and how our moral values are shaped. They are important for one to live a life of certainty and stability in terms of basic things. It is because this that we have a stable pattern of actions and reactions in several situations. As in the case of seeing a snake in a rope, here one's reaction is dependent upon the vision generated from his inference based upon his perception. It is the same process in the case of inferring the existence of fire from the perception of smoke. This is how our actions are formed.

Our moral values and our ethical viewpoints are developed in the way we infer what we perceive. Why different people have different viewpoints and take different stands in the same situation? The answer may lie somewhere between the journey from perception to inference. It is very crucial to understand this process

in real terms as there is no single theory which explains this with better certainty. But what we all can understand is that the difference which is created in the perspective of how one perceives this world is because of the way they infer the phenomenon of this world. Either one perceives the glass as half full or half empty depends on their vision which is formed from what one perceives and further infers from it.

Why different societies and cultures have certain similarities and certain differences? And why different group of people hold different opinions about the same thing? Such questions can perhaps be answered by understanding the way they perceive and what they infer from that situation. So for understanding the 'vision' of any individual, we need to understand the philosophy working behind it in its true nature, which is not only limited to knowledge but which pertains to wisdom as well.



Jyoti Malik

**To gain in-depth information about the theistic perspective of ISKCON believers I went to in-**

**terview Shree Charu Maharaja of Ghaziabad ISKCON who is a former student of Zoology honors from Delhi University and one of his disciple.**

**What is religion according to you?**

Religion is knowing your duty as written in Bhagavad Gita which is to satisfy God, yourself and the world as a whole. It is written in the Shastras and we follow it.

**Why are you religious? Is it because of your own belief system or because of your family influence?**

It was my choice, I came in contact with ISKCON society when I was in school and then I started reading books to understand its philosophy and doing that I came to know about my goal in life. And now here I am.

**Have you ever experienced something mystical when you have felt God's presence?**

We feel Krishna's consciousness every second, every moment and for us the highest mystical experience is to gain control over our senses, mind and body which is a hard thing to do.

## FAITH: THE PRE-REQUISITE

**If a person is morally good but he is not religious, is he living a wrong life?**

First, what is the problem in loving him? Secondly, if a person is good but not religious then he'll not be able to continue his goodness because he doesn't have the blessings of God.

**Why is there so much suffering?**

The problem with people is that they actually don't realize that there is suffering. They say that there is suffering but they proclaim that they are pretty happy, they are not suffering. This suffering we speak of is because of karma theory. A person who is suffering, is suffering because of his wrong deeds in the present or his past life.

**But why does God punish us for bad karma, can't he do miracles?**

We are living beings not matter, God has given us independence, we are responsible for our actions. Why will he do miracles with us? Krishna has given us free will and we should love him out of ourselves not by mystical force.

**How can a non-believer become a believer? Religious, non religious**

Firstly, a person should ask about the process of becoming a believer only when he has faith in the almighty.

**How can a non-believer start having faith in God?**

By understanding that there are no sound reason whatsoever for not believing in God. For example, there are so many things in our lives which are not in our control like age, no matter what we do, we cannot stop ageing. So we say that there must be a controller and that controller is God.

**In our world we see that everything has a cause, then how can we say that God doesn't have any cause? How can we regard him as the first cause?**

If there wouldn't have been a first cause then the universe would have never come into existence. Therefore, there must be an independent entity. For example, you

GEORGE GA

“Man's faith in a power b  
he seeks to satisfy emotio  
bility of life, and which h  
of worship and

have been created by your mother, your, you have been created by your mother, your mother by her mother and so on. There must have been a first father and mother who decided to create otherwise you wouldn't be existing right now. It is described in Vedanta Sutra as well- the one who has created this world is only him, that is God.

## Theists winning the race

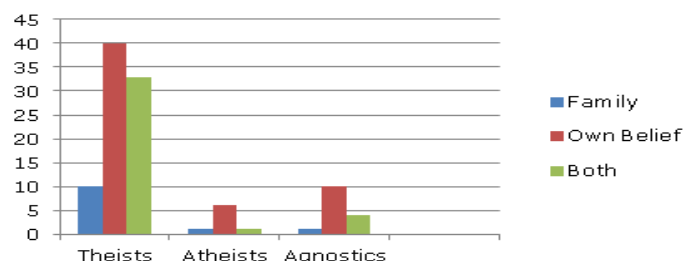
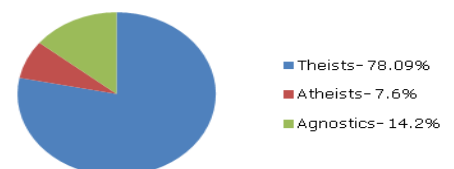
Galloway's definition of religion is considered the best among the rest as it acknowledges all the different aspects of religion i.e. conative, cognitive and emotive. It takes into account the aspect of **faith** in the Divine power, at the same time acknowledging that Divine power. It includes the emotional needs of man to gain stability in life. And it also includes the physical acts of worship and service.

There are 4200 religion in the world and the first religion is considered to be- Sanatam Dharma. According to a study conducted by Gallup International in 2012, almost half the survey group (52%) declared themselves to be religious, 23% as non-religious, 13% were convinced atheists, and another 12% had other beliefs. Another interesting fact is that 90% of professional philosophers are atheists.

- Chitrita, Chuiyanim, Jyoti, Rajni

A survey was conducted in Mata Sundri college on 105 people and it was found that 78.09 % were theists.

Religious Beliefs in a population of 105 people



## Review on "God: The Failed Hypothesis" by Victor J. Stenger

Jaskiran Kaur

Science can never have an opinion about the existence or non-existence of God who keeps himself hidden and doesn't interfere with the world. Thus, many scientists take the position that questions about God are beyond scientific inquiry. In this book, Victor starts from an interesting observation: no religious person actually believes in a God who keeps himself hidden and doesn't interfere with the world. Quite the contrary, most believe that he has a strong and direct influence on what happens

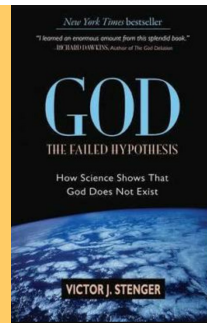
in the world and that it's possible to communicate with him on a daily basis. Once his characteristics have been decided upon, he can be studied scientifically through his works, if any. And if there is no evidence of such works, then the God most religious people believe in has been disproved.

I, myself, approach the topic of 'evidence of God' from another angle. I find the whole hypothesis so preposterous, that I can't see why we should take it seriously at all. Gods are fictional characters, consisting of words on paper, and a heavy burden of

proof rests with anyone who suggests that they might exist. If some people are uncritical enough to actually believe in gods, then I'm afraid rational argument is unlikely to convince most of them otherwise.

ALLOWAY

beyond himself whereby  
onal needs and gain sta-  
ne expresses in the acts  
and service."



But let us follow Victor's exercise in scientific logic. His message is that God is not just an unnecessary hypothesis: it's a falsified one. The book is structured around a list of commonly envisioned divine characteristics that are empirically testable. Victor reports on how they have been tested, one by one, and so strips the deity of its identity one chapter at a time until nothing remains but the hidden, non-interfering God that nobody actually believes in. This is done in the following manner:

1. No God designed the world in all its complex structure. Everything whose origins have been understood so far has arisen by simple natural processes.
2. No God has given us immortal souls. Everything suggests that our minds are entirely reducible to simple material components.
3. No God has made any miraculous inventions in human history. All such accounts are critically spurious.
4. No God created the universe by supernatural means. Everything we see is compatible with the known laws of physics.
5. No God fine-tuned the parameters of the universe to make it congenial to humans. Innumerable other configurations would have moved too, and besides, only an infinitesimal part of one vast universe is inhabitable or even accessible to us.
6. No God has communicated with humans through revelations. Such visions never contain any testable data about the real world that wasn't already present in the head of the visionary.
7. No God has given morality. We negotiate on morality among ourselves, and regardless of one's faith or unfaith we tend to agree remarkably well about what behavior is good or bad.
8. No omniscient, omnibenevolent, omnipotent God exists, as there is evil and suffering in the world that such a being would have never allowed.

I quite liked the book, particularly Victor's insistence that science cannot be allowed to avoid having an opinion on factual issues when statements based in religion are made about them. I wonder what impact the book can ever have on the beliefs of religious people. To conclude, I agree with Victor's words to the core.

## Religion: A Student Perspective

Diksha Singh

Religion for me is the essence of humanity. It is a set of beliefs I live by. Rather than showering a deity with milk, I interpret religion as a spiritual means of connecting with his conscience. Religion for me is more like a code of ethics, how a person impels himself towards the right direction. Though considering that there is a superpower watching us and in a secret way guiding us to a prosperous life also seems a fine approach to me as it provides people with a sense of hope. After all if we have hope, anything is possible. There is a quotation by T.S. Eliot i.e. "Light, the visible reminder of invisible light". I interpret it as - although we can't perceive or see light in a physical form, but it exists, and more than that it is so prominent that it is visually recognizable. Everything we see is basically a reflection of light. We are able to see because light is there. Similarly, every living creature or any other thing in the universe is a reflection of God himself. Universe itself is a reminder of God. I do believe that there must be some ultimate reality. At the origin of everything, when we go to the first thing, whether it is God or anything else, you cannot explain it unless you experience it. Then you have to go back to religion to provide a basis to your belief system. According to Blaise Pascal, we know that there is an "infinite", and are ignorant of its nature. It is true there is infinity in numbers, but we do not know what it is. Similarly, we may well know that there is a God, without knowing what He is. We know the existence and nature of finite, because we are also finite and have extension. We know the existence of infinite, but do not know its nature as it has extension like us but do not have limits.

But we may neither know extension, nor the nature of God as he has neither extension nor limits. But by faith, we know his existence without knowing his nature. I have faith that there is some powerful entity that has created the Universe. Universe is so vast and someone must have created it. So I should try hard to get subsumed in that.

It is true that religious exclusivity is practiced by some people. Many think that only their religion is correct and superior than others. But this view is incorrect in my opinion. As John Locke said "God is like an elephant surrounded by blind people". One man touches its tail and says "the elephant is like a rope". Another touches the trunk and says, "No it is like a snake". Another touches the elephant's side and says, "It is like a wall". Just as the blind men experienced the same elephant in different ways, religions experience 'The Ultimate Reality' in different ways.

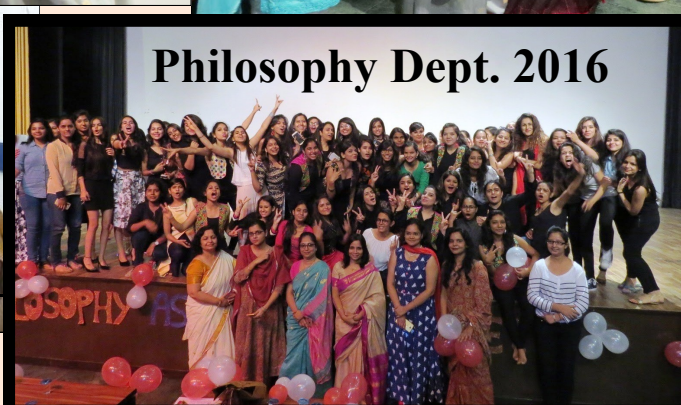
How we experience 'The Ultimate Reality' depends on our culture and education and modes of thought. According to me every religion has the capacity to show us the right path. But you yourself have to try hard to reach that goal. You could belong to any religion. The most important thing is to grasp, what these religious doctrines are actually talking about. One must read and understand the religious text carefully as "Religion without knowledge becomes a problem". Even if a person do not believe in any organized religion, but one can always have faith and that is more important. Whenever one prays, one should put his entire energy to make the connection with the 'Ultimate Being' stronger.



## Lecture on Gandhian Philosophy by Mrs. Suman Khanna



Lecture on "Concept of Naam with reference to Sikh religious thought" by Dr. Satnam Kaur



Mime act 3rd year



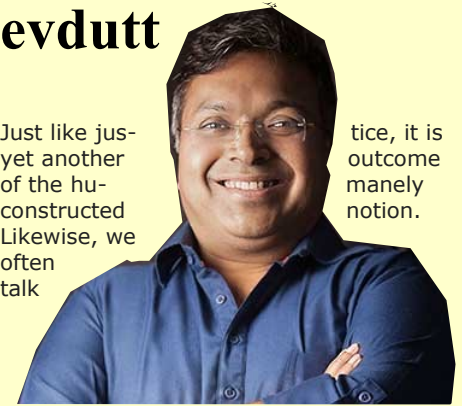
## Philosophy Association Meet 2016



## No society can exist without myths: Devdutt

**Devdutt Pattanaik** is a mythologist, author, speaker and illustrator. He writes on the relevance of mythology in modern times, especially in areas of management, governance and leadership. Trained in medicine, he worked for 15 years in the healthcare and pharma industries before he devoted himself to his passion full time. He is the author of 30 books and 600 columns, with a number of bestsellers such as **My Gita**, **Jaya, Sita**, **Business Sutra** and the **7 Secret Series**. He was a speaker at **TEDIndia 2009** and spoke on Myths that Mystify, East versus West. His TV shows such as **Business Sutra** on CNBC-TV18 and **Devlok** on Epic TV are quite famous among the masses. Along with that, he also consults organisations on culture, diversity and leadership and also consults various television channels and filmmakers on mythological storytelling.

Just like just yet another of the hu-constructed Likewise, we often talk



tice, it is outcome manely notion.

*Radhika Tiwari*

*Jaipur Lit Fest 2017*

**Mythology refers to the collected myths of a number of people. It is such a vast and hyperbolic concept. What made you so passionate about it?**

Mythology never fascinated me in childhood. In fact, I was in my early 20s when I discovered my love for everything mythic. I enjoyed going back to those eras and found it very organic. Though I had never thought about it, at that time, it was just a medium to escape reality and find comfort. Just as people nowadays have Harry Potter, I had my mythological tales with me.

**As a mythologist, what is there on your reading list?**

I only read encyclopaedias. I don't enjoy fiction or non-fiction much. But if I ever have to read some other genre then they also need to be in the encyclopaedic form.

**Mythological concept differs from nation to nation. So, what is that makes the Indian mythology differ-**

**ent from that of any other ancient mythology, say, Greek or Abrahamic?**

The basic difference is that Greek and other Abrahamic mythology do not hold the notion of rebirth and therefore they have this very sense of urgency and achievement. They earnestly believe in the 'Day of Judgement'. Whereas in Hindu mythology, nobody is going to judge you. Whatever you do in one life you will have to repay its debt in another life. So, when you are continuously paying debts of your past karmas there is no need for a judge.

**But our pragmatic side does not allow us to confirm our beliefs in any superficial tale without solid evidences. So, what is the need for mythology? Why do we need mythology in our lives?**

See, justice is a mythological concept. There is no such thing as justice in nature. Again, there is nothing like justice, but we imagine this idea of justice. And on the basis of those abstract ideas, we create several other moral and ethical rules & regulations.

Another such instance is of property. Even property is not a natural concept.

about freedom struggle of colonial India but what freedom really is? Freedom from whom? It is just because we have assumed it to be our land. This is certainly not the reality. From the philosophical point of view who decides the ownership of the land? Apart from these examples, heaven, hell, equality all are nothing but mythic ideas. We just don't call them that and that is exactly what mythology talks about. Hence, no society can truly exist without mythology. It is a disregarded yet an integral part of our civilisation which gives sense and shape to human life.

**Lastly, of all the mythological books that you have written which one is your favourite and why? Also, what is new in the store for your readers?**

Just as every author likes all of his works, similarly, I love all of my books but my last project turns out to be more exciting than the previous ones. If books were to be called children then apparently I have got 30 children. It is quite difficult to go for any one of them.

As for my future projects, they include a book on Abrahamic Mythology and a TV show on Hanuman. I am looking forward to them.

## BLISS!!!!

*Faiza Raghib*

'BLISS', it is that word or we can say that kind of feeling which just can't be explained in words. For everyone, bliss is a different, unique feeling. It's like trying to explain the sky to a blind person; it is a physical, real thing that reigns over our everyday lives, but seems almost too immense of an entity to condense into a few words. So when it comes to explain bliss to somebody it's just next to impossible.

When people think of happiness they only think of personal accounts of everyday happiness but bliss is actually felt when there is no 'I' in it and also there is a total connectedness. It is only when all the 'I' separation melts away that we can experience bliss. Bliss is inner peace that we gain by anything which soothes our mind. It does not depend on our age, gender, physical or mental disabilities. It is the thing that calms our mind perfectly.

Bliss is the eternal, forever unchanging reality that permeates the universe. Everything we do like- earn money, go on vacation, pursue a hobby, are the things that we do to feel happy but the fact is that all these things intersect at bliss only.

It is not that bliss is felt only in one particular religion; it does not depend on religion at all.

Bliss is like white light. Just as pure light is the totality of all colours, bliss is the sum total of all positive qualities. When seen through the prism of spiritual awareness, the subcomponents of bliss are joy, unconditional love, inner peace, power, connectedness, awe, and wisdom. Bliss is the peeling away of darkness.

You might find your bliss while meditating. You might feel it at your child's birth. You might feel blissful when you are in a place of stunning natural beauty. Everybody has their own kind of bliss that they feel. So bliss is the ultimate feeling of happiness that comes when we stop thinking about 'me' factor and get totally connected to a particular thing.

## आवाज़

बन गए इन्सान जिंदा लाश अब,  
मर गई है सोच थमे सवाल अब।  
द्रोही हो, असभ्य हो, तुम तो हमसे भिन्न हो,  
समाज में नहीं जगह जब तक प्रश्न चिह्न हो।।

नहीं होते इन्सान पैदा, वो बनाते हैं तुम्हें,  
देश क्या है धर्म क्या है, वो सिखाते हैं तुम्हें।  
आत्मा का क्या पता सोच उनकी देन है,  
तुम सवाल मत करो जीवन भी उनकी देन है।।

संसार बना के क्या करोगे?  
ये दुनिया एक मशीन है।  
सवाल करके क्या करोगे?  
इन्सान उसका अंग है।।

पर ज़िद है कुछ की वो भी पीछे न हटेंगे,  
जां भी ले लो तो भी प्रश्न वो करेंगे।  
कितनी लगाओ पाबंदियां ये सोच सदा आज़ाद है,  
तब तक ही हो इन्सान तुम जब तक बुलंद आवाज़ है।।

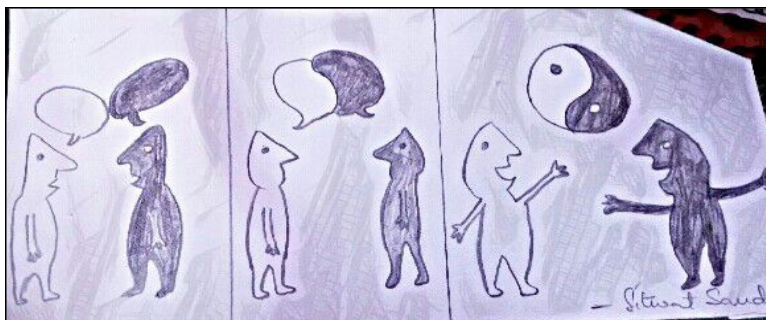
*वरेनी अवस्थी*

## Experience of Studying Philosophy

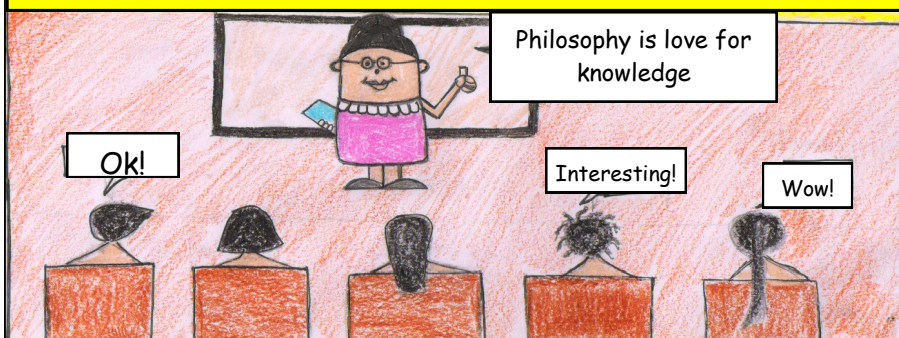
Smriti Sharma

"TRUE WISDOM COMES TO EACH OF US WHEN WE REALIZE HOW LITTLE WE UNDERSTAND ABOUT LIFE, OURSELVES, AND THE WORLD AROUND US.."

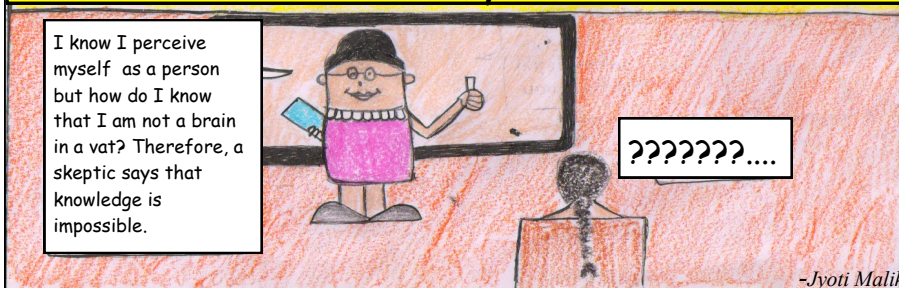
This is what I have learned from studying Philosophy. A Philosophy is perfect by itself because you can learn critical thinking skills and also reflect on big question in life, in ethics, religion, aesthetic and other significant subjects. I hadn't really planned to take philosophy but anyway this is what I got. After taking one class in the subject, I was fascinated by the scope and depth of the topics. Philosophy has helped me in many ways. It has granted me the ability to see things from many different perspectives, helping me to engage in conversation on a wide range of topics. By studying Philosophy, I continually discovered new ways of seeing the world around me and finding richness in everyday experience. I have learned to assess ideas and push them to their limits, learned to think within the parameters of a thinker, writings and beyond. Everything I have learnt as a student of philosophy is applicable in daily life. I am quite satisfied with my choice to become a Philosophy student. It has challenged me to do some of my best work in my scholastic career, as it has made me wrestle with some of the greatest thinkers in the history of the world. It has shaped me into a completely different person. Along the way I have developed complex skills in analysis, interpretation, reflection and communication. It has also helped me to become a deeper thinker and a more open-minded individual.



### When my teacher introduced Philosophy in 1st year



### In 3rd year



## The Constant

Are you scared?  
Because I am.  
But then I think,

Why fear something that you cannot see, that you do not hear,  
That which has never been known and yet seems to exude  
fear.

It will chase you to the deepest depth, they say;  
To the highest height,  
To the farthest place, and to the loneliest isle,  
And then of course, to the very own confines of your room.

It cannot be escaped, no one has.  
It is like a shadow;  
One moment in front of you, the next behind you;  
At times to your left or may be to your right,  
But never really lets you out of its sight.

So why try to escape the inevitable?  
The one thing that will be.  
Family will leave, friends will, love most cherished will,  
But it would still be by your side.  
At your beck and call and sometimes taking by surprise!

And that's why it deserves more, I believe,  
More than just fear, hatred, contempt and isolation,  
We need to be surrounded by it and surround it,  
Swim those murky waters and drown in it,  
And embrace that dearly beloved companion called Death.

-Vareni Awasthi

## Word Search

In the following grid, find the hidden words which are positioned in all directions i.e. front ways, backwards, horizontally, vertically, diagonally, but are always in one straight line.

M	A	P	R	A	G	M	A	T	I	C	E
H	A	I	D	E	I	S	M	E	M	I	T
E	E	B	O	C	H	O	W	N	E	M	H
G	S	R	G	A	A	C	I	A	C	E	I
E	T	A	M	J	K	R	S	R	N	T	C
L	H	H	A	E	A	A	D	I	E	A	S
L	E	M	T	B	N	T	O	S	R	P	A
H	T	A	I	U	T	E	M	T	E	H	T
J	I	N	C	A	D	S	U	O	F	Y	A
A	C	O	T	A	L	P	S	T	N	S	Y
E	S	X	K	C	I	G	O	L	I	I	N
K	N	O	W	L	E	D	G	E	L	C	U
H	H	E	R	A	C	L	I	T	U	S	S

Hidden Words-

Aesthetics  
Aristotle  
Brahman  
Deism  
Ethics  
Hegel  
Heraclitus  
Hermeneutics  
Inference  
Knowledge  
Logic  
Metaphysics  
Plato  
Pragmatic  
Socrates  
Sunyata  
Wisdom

## Time

I saw time working in his workshop  
He seemed quite busy so I didn't disturb him.  
Every wall in his mansion in bold letters read-  
"Never pause  
Never wait  
Never stop"

-CA