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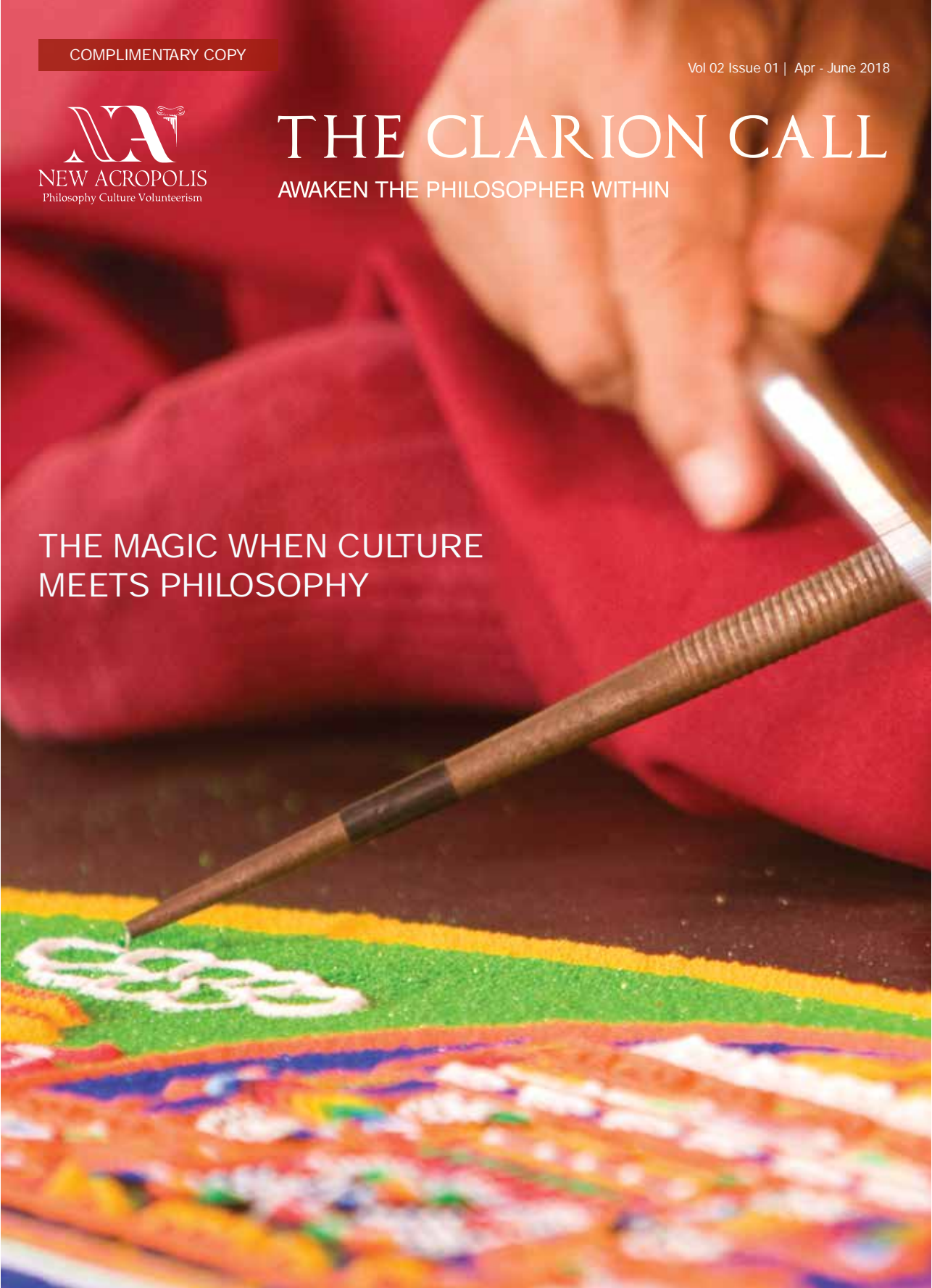
Vol 02 Issue 01 | Apr - June 2018



# THE CLARION CALL

AWAKEN THE PHILOSOPHER WITHIN

THE MAGIC WHEN CULTURE  
MEETS PHILOSOPHY





New Acropolis is an international non-profit organization with a presence in over 60 countries. At its core it is a school for practical philosophy in the Classical style, run by volunteers. Worldwide we have close to 40,000 volunteers, all of who are dedicated to bringing philosophy closer to the society for all people regardless any differences of social, religious, gender or political background.

We came into being 60 years ago, with the aim of bringing universal philosophy and wisdom to life in the hearts of the cities worldwide. Our focus is on philosophy - not just in the sense of the quest for knowledge and ideas, but on how we can use it so it will turn into Experience and Wisdom, thus widening our perspective over life and helping us evolve individually and collectively. We focus on philosophy as a way of life – as practical philosophy.

For more please visit our website [www.acropolis.org.in](http://www.acropolis.org.in)

## The Clarion Call

Vol 02 Issue 01 | Apr - Jun 2018

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### On the cover

Image credits: Shutterstock

The creation of a Mandala is much more than its perfection in the visual realm. It is a painstaking process that takes time and effort.

The monks who prepare it pray over it once it is complete and then destroy it to emphasize that everything in this world is transient and is merely a reflection of something higher.

# Editor's Note

Dear Reader,

We are approaching the middle of the year, and the chill of winter seems to be a distant memory as Spring and then Summer take hold. The shifting season brings with it a whole host of other changes - some apparent like the change in weather, and others more subtle. Traditionally, spring and summer are meant to be times of outward expression, of exuberance and colour.

Extending this idea to the human level, a key aspect of the outward expression of any society is experienced through its culture. From the norms directing day-to-day lives of the people to the celebrations and practices, culture finds its expression in myriad forms, at multiple levels. Beyond these forms, at the heart of it, Culture is an expression of what society and its people value the most. From this perspective, Culture has a strong link to Philosophy, which seeks to connect to Meaning, to the values that can elevate us, and to offer a practical expression for these values that find place in the depths of the human heart.

When we are able to be conscious of this connection between Culture and Philosophy, and find ways to give it space in our lives, we open doors to a more meaningful life, one beyond the mundane and we give ourselves the chance to experience what it means to be truly alive. It is this magic that we explore in this edition of The Clarion Call - *The Magic when Culture meets Philosophy*.

Happy Reading!

**Anand Baskaran**  
Editor - The Clarion Call



# The Magic when Culture meets Philosophy



INTERVIEW WITH  
NIRIT KREMER

The Clarion Call met with Nirit Kremer, a member-volunteer and teacher at New Acropolis for over 16 years. Currently, Nirit is a senior teacher and Co-Director of New Acropolis in South India. Edited excerpts from the interview follow.

## **The Clarion Call:**

Nirit, firstly thank you very much for this opportunity to interview you for the Clarion Call. Having lived, studied and taught both abroad as well as for a good number of years here in India, you have had the chance to interact with people from different cultures. Is there any significant difference you find in the approach or sensibilities to philosophy or philosophical thought?

### **Nirit:**

I think it is an interesting question. First of all, I feel we always have the tendency to try and identify differences so that we can feel safe about things. This is one of the experiences that I had when I moved to India 9 years ago. In order to try and understand my new reality I had to frame it and define it - to be able to say "This is different from what I know, or this is similar to what I know"

I think in the first year my mind was occupied with that, until I became conscious of what I was doing, and that it was a tendency to let go of.

The beauty in philosophy is that it touches the core questions of life, the greatest enigmas that people all over the world relate to: about life and death, about meaning, about the cosmos and its mysteries. And about happiness.

This is not different. At the core, I believe that people all over the world would like to be happy; they ask themselves exactly these questions, and they find similar experiences of life. They just work with different tools, so the forms are different - like the gestures that people use, the ceremonies or the aspects they emphasise. Even the streets might look different between one place or culture and another.

Thus, the approach might be different but at the core of it, the philosophical thought is similar and this can connect us. For instance, whenever I travel, I like to look at the children's books locally, because I find that in every country the general drawings for children have some special characteristics of the culture. So there may be different artists with great cultural differences between them, but you will still find something that connects the illustrations of a culture.

### **The Clarion Call:**

It's beautiful, what you've just shared. You mentioned how you initially went through the process of seeing the differences, looking for them and comparing, and then you moved towards seeing this unity. We are

living today in an increasingly divisive world where the differences that are present are sometimes stretched to the extreme. They become the centre of what people are looking at. Unfortunately, sometimes they get highlighted very violently. What do you think can be done to mitigate the problem of such division?

### **Nirit:**

I believe the solution lies in education.

When we say 'education', our mind immediately goes to the education of youngsters. We tend to think about our systems of education and what the teachers should do, what they should teach, etc.

The way that I see it, however, it is the education of ourselves, as adults too. It is said that consciousness is like fire and there is no other way to light consciousness but from one candle to another. A candle has to touch the flame of another in order to be lit.

It is much easier to think in terms of masses, especially in today's global world - to try and educate using a form that caters to the masses. But real education requires time and investment at an individual level. It is a lot of hard work. It starts with ourselves.

When we say so, some might say "But how can we reach everyone?" There is no other way. You have to start with yourself, do the hard work and then become a good example to touch others that they may then work on themselves.

### **The Clarion Call:**

Many sense that the world today is breaking, and people recognize the need for a change. While this recognition of a need for change is present, it also seems that a generation of youngsters globally is tired and cynical towards all that they hear and see failing. They want to know "What's in it for me?" At the same time there are others who are idealistic and have hope, but are discouraged by the sheer scale of it. How can we make an impact and defeat



a problem as big as this? Do you think philosophy or culture can offer any inspiration to how we can work with this?

**Nirit:**

I do feel that philosophy is a path to address this problem. Since the meaning of philosophy is the love of wisdom, it means this is an active path towards wisdom. Love is always active. So when we love wisdom, we strive towards it and then we find practical ways to do this.

I know that it might sound a bit abstract, but when you describe various people that we meet today, like some who say "what's in it for me?" and some who would like to create a change but are at a loss as to how they can do it - all people are wise and they do sense the natural need to bring harmony and happiness. Happiness comes from harmony. Happiness comes from the good. It does not come from a materialistic source.

This need to bring change, therefore, signals to us that there is still something we need to do as people. But, like my answer to the previous question, you have to light a candle and it requires a lot of investment at an individual level. It is of people working on their own consciousness, to be less critical, less prejudiced, less negative about themselves and about other people. But it is not enough to do just this inner work.

The other aspect is to complement this inner work

with working with the community. Social work. By this, I do not mean volunteering in a project (which is of course very important), but social work also means to be generous towards our family, and towards our friends. It is to learn how to communicate better and listen to our loved ones. This is the social work that we have to do so that we can stretch our consciousness and then the candle does not remain confined to us. We will learn how to work together and strengthen each other. This brings hope.

In my personal experience, being a part of a group that strives towards a higher goal beyond just the doing strengthens me. It gives me hope. We need to nourish this.

Society is like soil, and it is up to us how we nourish this soil. If we say that we don't have anything to do, if we feel hopeless or helpless in front of the challenges we have today, it means that we nourish the soil with helplessness and a lack of hope - and this will grow to become the result. But if we manage to sow other seeds of fraternity and hope with hard work, this is what it will become. Without action, it's like letting the soil just be without nourishment and that is a pity. Any moment we waste, other influences affect this soil, because things happen all the time. Therefore, it's important not just to identify what is good but to do good.

**The Clarion Call:**

You mentioned philosophy and volunteering as its essence. We see that New Acropolis has 3 pillars

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of philosophy, culture and volunteerism. Can you tell us how these pillars are manifested in what New Acropolis does?

**Nirit:**

New Acropolis was established to promote fraternity between people regardless of any differences between them. The pillars represent the ripples of the essence of what we want to bring. I would say that philosophy, or the love of wisdom, is at the core. This is the aspect that works with the ideals, that connects us irrespective of any differences. So, anyone from any background, religion, gender, culture or sect can share similar ideals even though they define themselves in contrasting ways. This is how philosophy comes alive.

As an analogy, Wisdom is like a mountain that everyone wants to reach the top of, but we have different paths to get there. One might say "I can see the path from here and it is green." And another one might stand on the other side of the mountain and say that he can see a path that is red. This can lead to arguments and differences. It is important to remember that the destination is one, regardless of the path one takes.

**Philosophy is a path that we build towards wisdom.** There are common principles that we carry as human beings, but at the same time each one of us must forge his/her own path and my specific path might be different from yours. There is no reason to compare or expect it to be the same. Whenever I create a path, it helps others see that it is possible, and they can take a similar route for a while until they can create their own path. It's always helpful. This is the core of philosophy.

And then, there are the two other aspects of Culture and Volunteerism.

**Culture is a very interesting tool to nourish philosophy.** I can think of 2 aspects to this - Comparative study and Local exploration.

Comparative study is an approach we take at New Acropolis. The beauty is to try and look at how the human being in different cultures relates to reality, today and in ancient times. For example: what was the culture of the people in South America, which was a result of how they tried to understand the mysteries of life, and of their specific reality. Similarly, we can look at the wisdom of ancient India and try to uncover what we can see through this lens. Or we can look at Europe or Australia - and culture then becomes a tool for us to gain a 360-degree view of reality. It helps us look at wisdom and nature through the eyes of different cultures, and this comparative study helps us gain a wider view not limited only to our culture/religion, but which has its own place in the larger scheme of things. This helps create tolerance and a deeper understanding of fraternity.

The second aspect is that of local exploration. For example: I find that the culture in India is so rich and ancient. All over the world, unfortunately, we are losing the connection to forms of culture such as theatre, dance, rituals, language, etc. India has such a vast number of languages, as is the case with many other countries. In Europe too, there are many languages, but one can see the specific forms of language that are changing gradually because of the new global reality. I believe it is also important to preserve the culture not in order to separate, but to protect this beautiful legacy that can teach us a lot and can teach many others too.

**Volunteerism is the natural act that follows being with the philosophical process and working with wisdom.** In an age when people have unfortunately forgotten the meaning of fraternity and living together, and we see increasing wars and conflict, volunteerism is a great tool to bring back harmony.

When one works with philosophy, he/she learns to give and not just gain. I feel it is much more natural when volunteering to not want to receive something



in return. It feels simple to just give. If you want to change or do something, just give and don't think about what you stand to gain.

**The Clarion Call:**

We know you as a lover of music, and of classical music specifically . You are also a teacher of philosophy at New Acropolis. Do you see a connection between these two aspects?

**Nirit:**

I always try and look for connections. I feel one can connect any two things. Whatever we do in life can touch other aspects of life. Like philosophy - if practiced with the right direction and the right meaning, it can influence other aspects of our life.

At the core of it, I see the practice of music as the practice of harmony. It is a practice.

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PHILOSOPHY IS THE SAME: IT IS A PRACTICE OF HARMONY.  
IT IS STRIVING TOWARDS WISDOM AND BEING ABLE TO SEE  
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## SO I BELIEVE THAT ANYTHING THAT WE PRACTICE, IF WE CAN SEE THE ART, THE BEAUTY, THE GOOD AND THE JUST WITHIN, WE CAN BRING HARMONY EVEN TO THE MOST MUNDANE WORK.

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If you play or listen to music, for a moment you manage to fully experience this harmony which is a sum of many different elements. How the composer put the notes together, how the person who is playing the piece can give depth to it. There is magic that happens sometimes through music that can help us go beyond the mundane.

Philosophy is the same: it is a practice of harmony. It is striving towards wisdom and being able to see how you can work with all the elements of life and put them together in harmony. It helps to hear the music, see the direction and go beyond the particles.

There is another aspect to this. I am learning the piano as a hobby and just completed a session with my teacher. One of the things she conveyed is how to give depth to a piece that you play. I could play a piece very accurately based on the notes and rhythm, but it may lack depth and be monotonous. If I play the same piece by paying attention to the small details, it will sound completely different. Think about a good orator, who would start on a low note perhaps and then raise his voice to emphasise something he wants to point to; he may go faster over words that are not as important and stress upon those that he wants to emphasise.

It is the same with music. We must be able to see the climax of a sentence or a piece, and then work with it to create the right emphasis. Here my teacher told me about a concept called Rubato that Chopin, the famous composer, is often mentioned in the context of. It basically means the freedom of time. So, if you are playing a piece, you may stick to the overall framework, but you will still have a lot of freedom and make it your own. You may go slow in some places and fast in others. You may emphasise some parts and make them more dramatic. This is the freedom of interpretation.

This is something that I see as a similarity. This freedom of time is what we need to have in our life. That we can give meaning to our life. That each moment is not like the other. Even though the clock will keep ticking, we need to know how to give the right meaning to each moment.

So I believe that anything that we practice, not just music, if we can see the art, the beauty, the good and the just within, we can bring harmony even to the most mundane work.

### **The Clarion Call:**

Thank you, Nirit. It has been a real pleasure conversing with you.



# Encounter at the Museum

BY PIERRE POULAIN

I captured this scene at the British Museum, in London. Two women were resting for a moment during their visit of the Egyptian section, facing four statues of Sekhmet, one of the most known Egyptian Goddess.

The two women didn't move, they contemplated the statues in silence. And of course, the statues didn't move either.

It seems as if delegations of two different cultures met and were waiting for each side to make a move, in hope of engaging in an expected but quite improbable dialogue.

From a rational aspect, the difference of essence between human beings and statues is so obvious that it should be a fantasy to expect any exchange between both groups.

But we can also consider that the statues, as pieces of Art, emanate something universal and not limited to the specific culture to which they belong. A piece of Art is always a temporal manifestation – in a specific cultural environment – of the archetypal BEAUTY.

Beauty belongs to Humanity, not to any particular civilization. Truth, Good, and Just. are also a-temporal and universal values that will not be affected by distances in Time and Space. Thus, through Art, we can imagine a possible subtle dialogue that may occur between an ancient Egyptian Goddess and two human beings from the 21st century.

It also means that if the many components of Humanity share the same universal values, there will always be a hope for establishing a real dialogue between people from different cultures, traditions or religions.

Paradoxically, it seems easier to build a link through centuries and space than between people sharing the same epoch and the same space. But "easy" was never a purpose in life, and our drive should be to do the Just, the Good and to approach the Truth. The need for this can be triggered and awakened by contemplation on Beauty. This is the power of Art.

*Encounter at the Museum is part of the "Photosophia" Exhibition by Pierre Poulain, philosopher and renowned international photographer.*



# Do we need Tradition?

BY GILAD SOMMER

The word 'tradition' comes from the Latin '*trans*' + '*dare*' meaning 'to deliver' or 'give across'. It refers to the transmission of experience which lies at the base of every established civilization.

Today, however, tradition has become a synonym of something which is old-fashioned and obsolete, nothing more than an interesting relic of the past to be put in a museum. Nevertheless, tradition is a living and versatile force, which is not only needed, but is essential to the development and sustainability of human civilization.

Why is tradition important? Let us look at some examples. Parenthood, for example, is not a novelty.

Thousands of generations of human parents have raised children on this planet, and yet today, every parent is required to reinvent the wheel.

Opinions on education differ from one person to another, and every few years there is a new book or method in fashion that claims to know the right formula for raising a healthy, successful and happy child. But beneath all these words, in the end, nobody knows anything for certain.

Thus, every parent tries to work with some common sense, and in general follow some learned opinion he identifies with, or just does what everyone else does.

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## TRADITION IS LIKE THE LAYERS OF THE PYRAMID OF HUMAN CIVILIZATION, BUILT BY THE BRICKS OF EXPERIENCE.

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Trial-and-error is the new style of parenthood. But what happened to the experience of thousands of generations of parents?

Societies have come and gone, civilizations peaked and sunk under the waves of time. And yet, every politician today tries to build a society from scratch with new reforms and revolutions that will last exactly until the next politician will come with his own reforms.

Progress and change are the new leadership style, as the societies of the past are often portrayed as conservative, primitive, autocratic and ignorant. And yet, these are the civilizations that left us the Pyramids and Stonehenge, Plato's Republic and the Roman code of law, and even the words we use.

Where is the experience of the thousands of leaders, politicians and wise-men who led our human societies since the dawn of humanity?

Every artist today feels the need to reinvent the laws and meaning of art. Originality and innovation have become the new art style. And what do we have to show for it? Painted urinals, twisted metal objects, unidentified mechanical noises.

And yet, people are still in awe of Michaelangelo's David, the Pharaon statues of Luxor and the Greek Parthenon, hundreds and thousands of years after their creation. Where will Duchamp's toilets or Jackson Pollock's so-called masterpieces be in a few hundreds of years from now?

Where then is the experience of the thousands of artists and geniuses who have transmitted the archetype of beauty for generations and generations?

When one travels from one place to the other, it is very useful to have a map charted by past individuals who have already crossed the same route.

This does not mean that the people of the past knew everything, and that we should stick to old forms, regardless of their usefulness or relevance. But we should also not throw away everything the past holds in store, for the sake of doing it our way. Those who are adventurous will always find uncharted paths to discover.

Life is about balance. Neither innovation at all costs nor conservation at all costs is beneficial. With intelligent discernment we can extract the useful and the wise from the past, and make it a part of our present and future, because what is wise is always wise.

Tradition is like the layers of the pyramid of human civilization, built by the bricks of experience; it would be smart to use it as a base for the new layers our generation is tasked to build.

Otherwise, we not only belittle the efforts made by those who came before us, but we will also not leave anything worthwhile to those who will come after us.



# Celebrating the seasons

BY SUREKHA DEEPAK

## Spring is here

The air is balmy - having lost its nip, tender new leaves sprout out changing the hue of the trees. Blooms of bright yellow, blue, bright red and lavender fill the air with delicate fragrance. Joyous birds announce the arrival of spring, as a reaffirmation of the power of life in all its glory, a rebirth of the earth. All around, the world seems to be waking up, responding to the warmth of the sun. Spring comes every year keeping with the cycles of nature, and brings with it renewal, the vibrancy of new life, hope and fresh beginnings. Keats in his poem Seasons, refers to the four seasons and calls spring 'lusty'; a time when man, "Takes in all beauty with an easy span."

The spring equinox announces the beginning of the change of season. It is the day on which the earth's axis is straight and day and night are equal. Then the northern hemisphere begins to tilt towards the sun, moving towards longer days.

Many of us are caught up our daily routines and do not take the time to connect with this change, and it is easier to miss the change here in South India, where it is not as dramatic as some colder parts of the world that experience snow and more extreme weather.

Traditionally, as a culture, we have acknowledged and celebrated the changes in nature - for instance, Holi is celebrated in some parts of the country to announce the arrival of the season of colours. In other parts of the country, this is a time to relate to the new cycle, as a reflection of how ancient civilizations worked closely with nature and often established cultural practices that helped reinforce this connection.

NATURE WITHOUT CULTURE, CANNOT CREATE A CIVILIZATION. CULTURE WITHOUT NATURE, WOULD BUILD A CIVILIZATION THAT DOESN'T CONSIDER HUMANITY. NATURE AND CULTURE SHOULD WORK TOGETHER, EACH ONE SHOULD SUPPORT AND COMPLEMENT THE OTHER. BOTH SHOULD PROMOTE HUMAN EVOLUTION WHICH IS THE EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

-- PIERRE POULAIN

## Myths connected to changing seasons

Cultural practices, and often those connected to religion, help give us a day and a form of celebrating our connection to nature. A popular myth from ancient Greek culture is that of Demeter and Persephone. The myth emphasises our connection with nature. It reminds us of times when we were more in tune to nature and life and all human activity was in tune with the cycles of nature.

Demeter was the Goddess of harvest, of fertility and life on the surface of the earth. She had a daughter, Persephone. One day while Persephone was gathering flowers, Hades, god of the underworld, kidnapped her.

Demeter was stricken with grief, and the earth reflected her grief. As a result there were no new crops, and plants withered and died. A terrible famine gripped the earth. However, Persephone had eaten some pomegranate seeds in the underworld. Having eaten from the land of the dead she could not return to her mother.

**The great God Zeus** intervened and commanded Hades to release Persephone. Finally the lord of

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## NATURE AND CULTURE SHOULD WORK TOGETHER, EACH ONE SHOULD SUPPORT AND COMPLEMENT THE OTHER. BOTH SHOULD PROMOTE HUMAN EVOLUTION: THE EVOLUTION OF CONSCIOUSNESS.

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the underworld Hades, agreed to let her go if she returned to him for a part of each year. So Persephone marries Hades and lives with him for a part of the year, when it is winter. And when it is time for her to visit her mother, Demeter brings everything to life again, in spring to welcome her daughter and it is the start of a new cycle of life on earth.

Inspired by nature and culture, spring can indeed be the time for new beginnings for us too. It is a time of rebirth, of letting go of the old. We can draw from inspiration from the symbol of the phoenix. The Phoenix is able to let go of everything, even its body. It burns, and from its own ashes each time, a young, new breathtaking young phoenix rises. It is believed to be a symbol connected to the sun in ancient Egypt, where they thought the sun died each night and was reborn each morning. It does require a lot of courage to prepare for a new beginning. To let go of the old and that which does not serve a purpose, and not doubt yourself in the process, to create yourself anew .

### Spring celebrations around us

This cycle of life and welcoming new life can be seen in cultural and religious practices across the world. Be it Passover, Easter or Sakura – the cherry blossom festival in Japan, the list goes on.

In India too we have various festivals that remind us that it is a time for a new start, for the cycle to start again. Gudi padva, Navreh, or Udgadi as it is called in South India. Udgadi marks the beginning of the Vasanta (spring) and is a celebration

acknowledging nature and the start of the new cycle. The next nine days are Vasanta Navaratri ending with Rama Navami. The myth tells us that Lord Brahma started creation on this day – and the new year is celebrated to mark the start of something new. It is a day that also connects to the lunar calendar which marks the first day of the waxing moon after the first new moon post the spring equinox.

There are some practices associated with this celebration. One is the eating of 'Bevu Bella'. Some of the ingredients that go into it are neem flowers, jaggery, tamarind and raw mango - the different tastes signify the different kinds of experiences that will come our way in the year ahead, and to experience all of them - bitter or sweet - with equanimity, dignity and grace.

### Why do we need to celebrate spring?

Marking the change of season offers us a break from the monotony and the routine of daily life to connect to nature, learning from it, and giving ourselves a chance to be inspired by Nature.

The many celebrations and festivals connected to Spring, and to seasons in general, serve as reminders to go beyond the 'personal' and connect to something more. We may choose to connect with the sacred, as these occasions remind us.

We can use this time to become like the mythical phoenix – flaming in all its glory as it dies to rise again above the old, the mundane. To overcome the basic, and transcend to be born again; to let the new cycle begin with renewed energy, vitality and life.



# Maypole Dancing

By PINAR AKHAN

Come May in the United Kingdom, there will be celebrations across small villages in Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire, Worcestershire and many other places around England, with folk dances, local food, communities coming together, marking the time of spring being established and moving into summer.

Most of the May Day celebrations in England have their roots in Celtic traditions.

Maypole dancing is one of the May Day celebrations which is still performed not only in England but also in Germany, Austria, Spain, Scandinavian countries,

the United States and perhaps in other places that we may not know of. These celebrations are usually performed in the spring, but might also be performed at other times with some modifications.

Traditionally, the preparations start with finding a tall wooden pole which is erected as a maypole. In some cases the maypole is a permanent feature that is only utilised during the festival, in other cases it is erected specifically for the purpose before being taken down again. Then the pole is decorated with garlands of flowers and leaves.

These are known as ribbon-less maypoles and dancers simply circle the maypole in time with the music which is often provided by pipe and tabor, fiddle and any other instruments that can be found.

Later, ribbons are attached to the top of the maypole and dancers wind in different directions around the maypole, each holding a ribbon to create a complex pattern of colours.

These dances were said to be performed to ensure fertility as part of the spring rituals. They are also part of the celebration of the fact that the darkness of the winter is gone and the warm, strong light of the Sun is back, so the fertility of the land can continue.

On a non-material level it is a celebration of rebirth. The colourful ribbons represent the higher spirit, the dance that takes place to create the complex pattern of colours. Retracing the steps back to unravel the ribbons is considered to be the journey of life.

In some traditions the top of the maypole might be decorated with a red cloth, an egg or could take a form of a cross. Dancers run and climb up to the top to get the treasure. This climbing is also seen in shamanism in Slavonic countries, representing an ascent to heaven or to reach the end of the spiritual path.

Another meaning of the maypole is the term used to refer to the centre, the pillar of the world: Axis Mundi, the world axis. Axis Mundi is considered as a bridge between heaven, sky or the celestial planes and the earth.

It has been used by many traditions and sometimes took the form of a mountain, a plant or a human figure. The maypole mostly took the form of a Tree of Life which connects heaven and earth and brings life on earth.

According to Mircea Eliade "every Microcosm, every inhabited region, has a Centre; that is to say, a place that is sacred above all"

Axis Mundi is the spot one occupies that stands at "the centre of the world".

Whether it is the celebration of the spring, fertility, vegetation, rebirth or a ritual of one's spiritual journey, a connection between heaven and earth, traditions can give us a hint to help us understand life better, whether on an individual or a cosmic level.

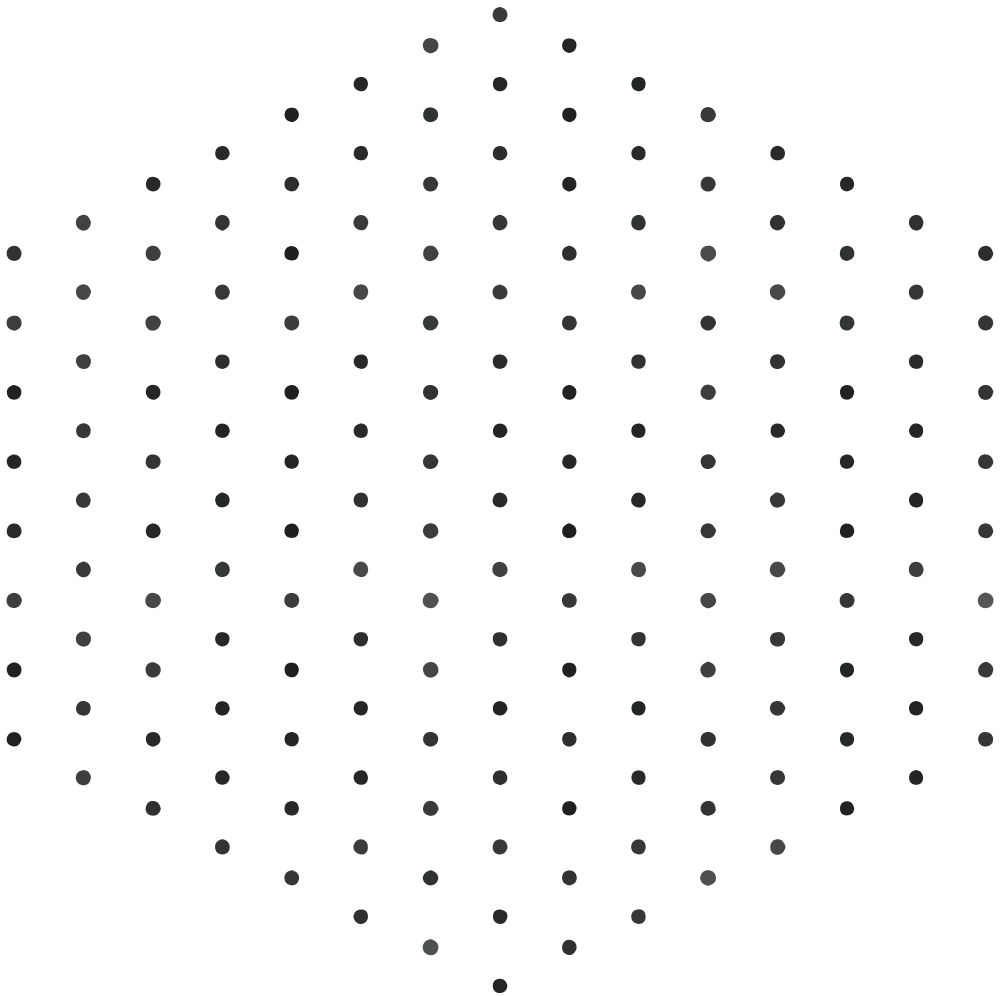
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MAYPOLE DANCING IS ONE OF  
THE MAY DAY CELEBRATIONS  
WHICH IS STILL PERFORMED NOT  
ONLY IN ENGLAND BUT ALSO  
IN GERMANY, AUSTRIA, SPAIN,  
SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES,  
THE UNITED STATES AND  
PERHAPS IN OTHER PLACES  
THAT WE MAY NOT KNOW OF.

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# Rangoli Activity

CONNECTING THE DOTS





## Meaning of Rangoli

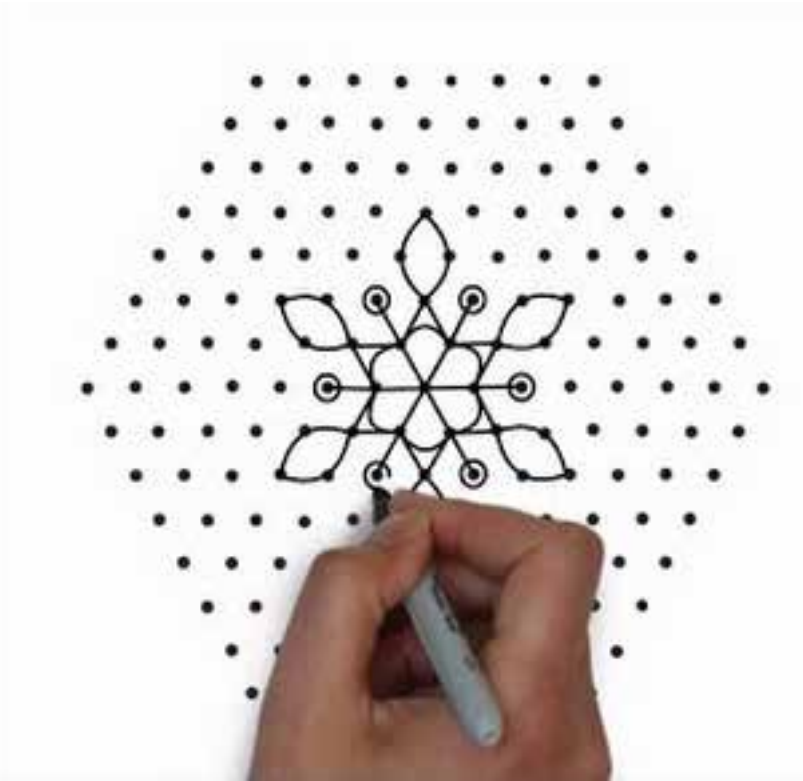
'Rangoli' is a Sanskrit word, signifying a creative expression of art by means of colors. According to traditional Hindu scriptures, it is believed that rangolis are a science of creating energy through the use of design, symbols, lines and colors. In fact, experts take example of Leonardo da Vinci's symbolism and the science behind it to make people understand the design and mechanism of rangoli making. Like the symbolism explained in Dan Brown's novels, back home, we have rangoli and its symbolism that can mean more than meets the eye. The pools of energy created by specific patterns of rangoli motivate and channelize positive energy in people.

## Deeper essence

The transient nature of patterns like this which are cleaned the next day giving way to a new one also teach us about the temporal nature of the material world. Spirit is always higher than matter.

## How to make a pattern

Use your imagination to connect dots on all sides in similar ways and let a form emerge naturally. You can then colour this in with shades you choose. Have fun!



# ABOUT NEW ACROPOLIS

## INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION

New Acropolis is an international non-profit organization – with a presence in over 60 countries.

At its core it is a school for practical philosophy in the Classical style run by volunteers. Worldwide we have close to 40,000 volunteers. All our volunteers are dedicated to bringing philosophy closer to the society for all people regardless any differences of social, religious, gender or political background.

We came into being with the aim of bringing universal philosophy and wisdom to life in the hearts of the cities worldwide. Our focus is on philosophy - not just in the sense of the quest for knowledge, and ideas, but on how we can use it so it will turn into Experience and Wisdom, thus widening our perspective of life and helping us evolve individually and collectively. We focus on philosophy as a way of life – as practical philosophy.

## PHILOSOPHY

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





## CULTURE

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



## VOLUNTEERING

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

## Recent Events

at New Acropolis,  
Bangalore

A glimpse into a few  
activities at  
New Acropolis,  
Bangalore, over the  
past 3 months

## PHILOSOPHY



### Public Talk - Journeys Beyond Death

Open House in the form of an interactive Socratic dialogue following a lecture on the same topic



### Public Talk - Wisdom of the Garden

A Lecture and activity on the lessons of life one can learn from gardening and working with plants and nature





## CULTURE



### New Acropolis turns 9 in Bangalore!

A morning of activities in Cubbon Park with member volunteers, family and friends on the occasion of the 9th anniversary of New Acropolis in South India



## VOLUNTEERING



### Ecology Project

Member volunteers and students of the Living Philosophy course convert used plastic bottles to planters for an upcycled garden



### Painting the Tree of Life

Volunteers of New Acropolis take up a creative volunteering activity of painting an interpretation of the symbolic Tree of Life





## APRIL



### 14 Week Course

### Living Philosophy

**Free Trial class:** Apr 4 & Apr 11 (Wed)

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm

**Batch starts:** Apr 18, 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm (Wed)

**Venue:** New Acropolis

A 14-week Foundation course in Practical Philosophy.

For details, please visit [www.acropolis.org.in](http://www.acropolis.org.in)



Lecture and Open House | Free Admission

### The Art of Concentration

**Date:** Apr 7, Saturday | **Time:** 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

**Venue:** New Acropolis

What is the important role of concentration according to Tibetan Buddhism, and what can we learn from this special drawing that can enable us to live a more fulfilling life in today's world?



Lecture and Open House | Free Admission

### Tick Tock: The wisdom of working with time

**Date:** Apr 28, Saturday | **Time:** 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

**Venue:** New Acropolis

Beyond the quest for efficiency and time management lie more profound ways to understand the nature and laws of time, which we can access through wisdom from ancient cultures. This talk explores some simple but profound ideas about time and how we can work with it practically.

## MAY



Lecture and Open House | Free Admission

### An approach to Life : The right effort in pursuit of ethical victory

**Date:** May 19, Saturday | **Time:** 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

**Venue:** New Acropolis

In this modern age, we lead lives of constant engagement and intense activity, yet without satisfaction. Our actions are towards being mere survivors of life's challenges. By developing the right approach to life, the pursuit of ethical victory leads to unraveling of the path, overcoming of challenges, and onward to lasting success and joy.

JUNE



Lecture and Open House | Free Admission

## Lessons and inspiration from Leonardo da Vinci

**Date:** June 2, Saturday | **Time:** 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

**Venue:** New Acropolis

Who was Leonardo da Vinci? An artist, an architect, a scientist, an engineer and an inventor. The Renaissance genius who brought together the aesthetic sense of the artist and the brilliant mind of the scientist. Leonardo shows us – in an age of increasing specialization – that the human mind is able to cover almost all areas of knowledge ... if only one dares. This talk explores keys to how we could develop this approach in our lives today by delving into his life and work, and understanding his achievements, inspirations and influences.



Lecture and Open House | Free Admission

## The Path from Conflict to Resolution

**Date:** June 16, Saturday | **Time:** 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

**Venue:** New Acropolis

We see conflict all around us, at the personal level, in relationships and between groups of people - there is little need to give examples of it. While it is difficult to escape from it altogether, we can draw inspiration from philosophy and the wisdom of ancient cultures on the causes of conflict, as well as the path to move towards resolution, enabling us to lead happier and more harmonious lives.



Lecture and Open House | Free Admission

## Conquering Fear

**Date:** June 30, Saturday | **Time:** 6:30 pm - 8:30 pm

**Venue:** New Acropolis

We all experience fear. It holds us back and prevents us from living life to the fullest. When we should speak up we remain silent; when we need to act, we freeze. Learning to work well with the potentially debilitating emotion of fear allows us to lead freer and fuller lives. Join us for this talk as we explore tools from ancient wisdom that can help us understand and conquer fear



14 Week Course

## Living Philosophy

**Free Trial class:** Jun 26 & Jul 3 (Tuesdays)

7:30 pm - 8:30 pm

**Batch starts:** Jul 10, 7:30 pm - 9:30 pm (Tuesdays)

**Venue:** New Acropolis

A 14-week Foundation course in Practical Philosophy.

For details, please visit [www.acropolis.org.in](http://www.acropolis.org.in)

# My Journey

Members of New Acropolis share their experience...



"While I have been on a philosophical journey before, the philosophical journey at New Acropolis is highly structured, regular and you get to explore together with the fraternity of like-minded individuals.

The teachings in the Living Philosophy course offer a non-prejudiced philosophical journey, and provides philosophical vantage points from various ancient civilizations.

Philosophy provides you with various tools to help you know yourself better, your place in society, evolution & the cosmos. It also provides you with various keys to work with your consciousness, and to help you take the path towards your higher self.

The emphasis on philosophy at New Acropolis, and in the Living Philosophy course, is on taking practical action via various activities, which helps you experience true wisdom."

~ **Suresh Krishnan**

"I joined Living Philosophy as I was seeking answers that went beyond any particular religion or faith- for the Truth that brought unity rather than separation. This course seemed like the perfect way to know and understand the philosophy of the various wisdom traditions by getting to the essence.

I am happy to say that it has been a wonderful and transformative experience. I loved the way the concepts were presented and the myths were explored so that we could discover its deeper meaning and significance. My awareness has grown and I have begun to apply these lessons to my life using the tools that are taught. I am grateful for the depth of knowledge and commitment of the teachers, and the interaction with the community who live philosophy and inspire by example. It is truly a way of life."

~ **Belinda Rego**



# LIVING PHILOSOPHY

To Awaken. To Transform. To Evolve.



## Foundation to Practical Philosophy at New Acropolis International Organization (IONA) – India

Is philosophy restricted to books and concepts or is it possible to live the wisdom of the ancient masters in our everyday life?

Living Philosophy is the foundation of a journey to discover and experience the deeper esoteric concepts of self, nature and humanity. Philosophy as a way of life begins foremost with an inward journey and when practiced, it finds its true essence of transformation of the self and that of the world around us.

Highlights of some of the themes that will be covered in the 14-week course:



### Know Thyself

Different levels of human consciousness with perspectives from the east and the west. What is transient and what is eternal?



### The Wisdom of Ancient India

Learn the story of Arjuna, the warrior. The Bhagavad Gita describes the battles of life and tools to help us win this battle. Universal laws of Dharma, Karma and the discernment to identify and implement the Right action.



### Life and Teachings of the Buddha

Explore the life of the Buddha and his teaching through the Dhammapada. This gives us practical advice on how to overcome pain and suffering and live a noble life.



### The Artist, The In Love And The Philosopher

Who are you? Discover the wisdom of the ancient Romans through the Stoic philosophers. Epictetus, Seneca and Marcus Aurelius teach us simple and practical philosophy, of working with virtues as a path to progress.



### Tools For Life From The Ancient World

Explore the wisdom of the ancient Egyptians, the idea of justice. From ancient China comes Confucius' expounding the importance of an ethical social order.



### Ethical Leadership

What is the identity of a philosopher, the true leader and a politician. The metaphor of Plato's Allegory of the Cave, the grand illusion and how we can free ourselves from it.

For details of the upcoming batch of **Living Philosophy** refer to back cover.



# LIVING PHILOSOPHY

NA  
PHILOSOPHY · CULTURE · VOLUNTEERING  
NEW ACROPOLIS

To Discover. To Awaken. To Transform

A Practical Philosophy Course



**Course Starts : July 10, 2018, 7:30 PM - 9:30 PM,**  
**(Tuesdays)** Course fee applicable

**Free Intro Sessions: June 26 and July 03, 7:30 pm to 8:30 pm**

To register please visit [www.acropolis.org.in/living-philosophy](http://www.acropolis.org.in/living-philosophy)

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