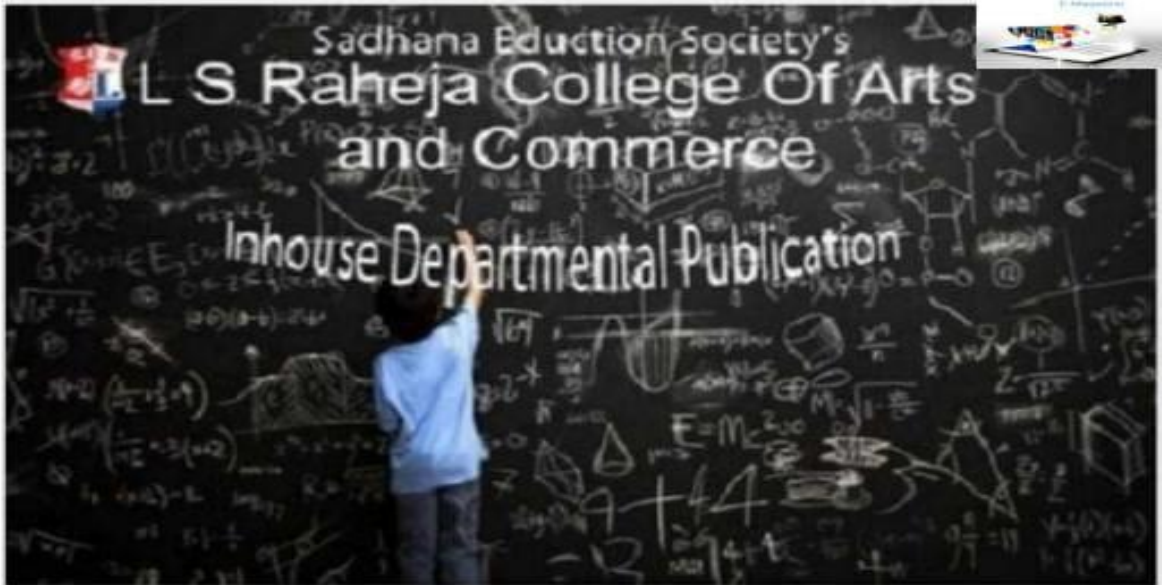




SADHANA EDUCATION SOCIETY'S
L. S. RAHEJA COLLEGE OF ARTS AND COOMERCE
Relief Road, Santacruz (W), Mumbai – 400054

INHOUSE DEPARTMENT PUBLICATION

AUGUST 2021



Sadhana Education Society's
**L S Raheja College Of Arts
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Inhouse Departmental Publication

JIGNYASA



Department of Mathematics and Statistics

Designed by. Jenial Shah

SES'S L. S. RAHEJA COLLEGE OF ARTS AND COMMERCE

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NAME: JIGNYASA

DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS AND STATISTICS

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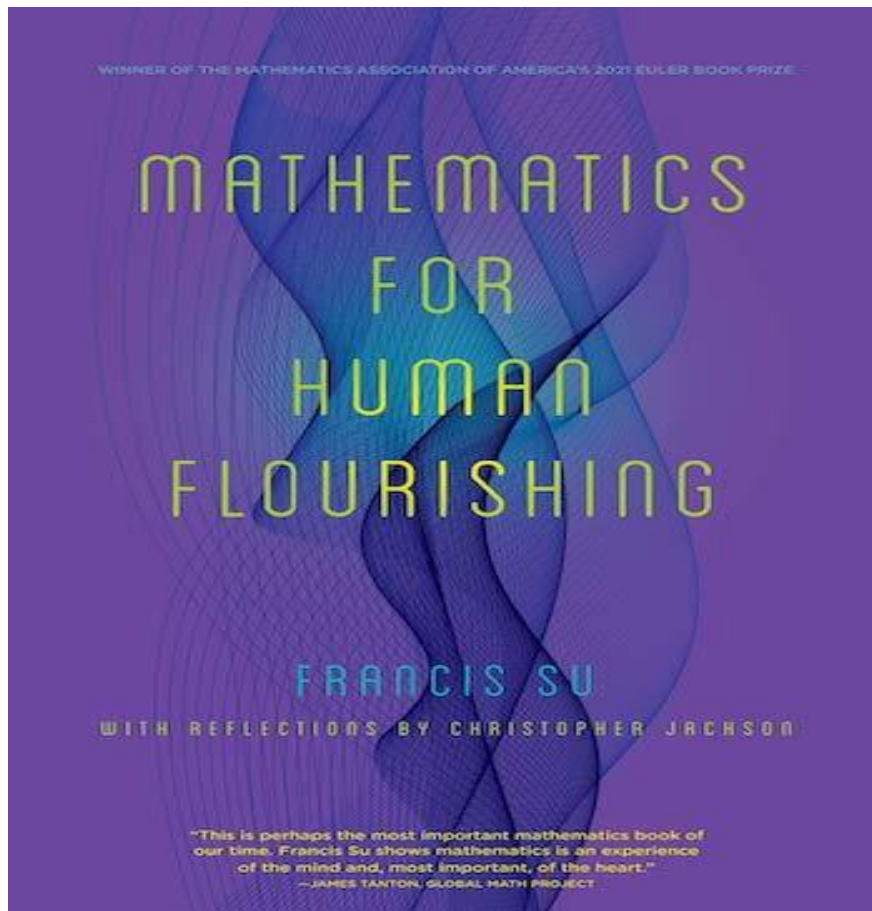
ISSUE NO.2: AUGUST, 2021

CONTRIBUTOR: 1. MR. RAMSAGAR YADAV

BOOK REVIEW:

A PROFOUND MEDITATION - "MATHEMATICS FOR HUMAN FLOURISHING"

MR. RAMSAGAR YADAV, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF MATHEMATICS



When Francis Su finished delivering his retiring address as president of the Mathematical Association of America (MAA), a stirred audience at the January 2017 Joint Mathematics Meetings stood on its feet and gave him a hearty ovation. Some even wept. Farewell speeches are often touching, but most are relegated to oblivion. Word of Su's talk, however, spread like wildfire. Quanta Magazine published an interview with Su the following month and it was reprinted in Wired. As requests for additional discussion came in and enthusiastic letters from mathematically-disenchanted readers arrived, Su expanded his talk into a book named after his address: *Mathematics for Human Flourishing*. Yale University Press published a hardcover edition in 2020, and a paperback version was released earlier this year. Accolades now include the 2021 Euler Prize, which honours a book that contributes positively to the public's view of mathematics. A copy of the text fell into my hands only recently: it demanded to be reviewed.

Critiques of books about mathematics are rare on The Arts Fuse – or in general. This is partly because readers tend to envision mathematics as being no more than a monotonous set of procedures for doing calculations. Indeed, everyman's experience of math conjures up tortuous images of formulas scribbled on blackboards. Some individuals excel at mathematical tasks while others are scarred by their befuddling opaqueness. Su is keenly aware of this powerful

prejudice, and he regrets that “outdated curricula and pedagogies prevent many students from experiencing math as a fascinating area of exploration, culturally relevant and important in all spheres of life.” He is also cognizant of the tragic disconnect between the vocational utility of mathematics and its lackluster resonance: “We all know that there’s math under the hood, but otherwise math seems cold, logical, and lifeless. No wonder we don’t see a personal connection to it.” Part of Su’s goal in this book is to overturn this demeaning public caricature.

Su contends that, at its core, practicing mathematics cultivates virtues, or excellence of character and conduct. Such virtues help people thrive as individuals and members of society. Flourishing, therefore, concerns “a wholeness — of being and doing, of realizing one’s potential and helping others do the same, of acting with honor and treating others with dignity, of living with integrity even in challenging circumstances.” Math contributes to what the ancient Greeks called *eudaimonia* — a well-lived life. From the second chapter onwards, each major section of Su’s book bears a one-word title — “exploration,” “meaning,” “persistence,” “love,” and so forth — referring to a specific human desire that mathematics fulfills. Each of the first twelve chapters also contains a provocative mathematical question for readers to ponder. (Hints as well as solutions are provided at the book’s end.) Su’s conundrums require no formal training, but they challenge lay readers to use mathematical thinking to solve curious problems.

Written with clarity for a broad audience, *Mathematics for Human Flourishing* has two main objectives. The book’s early chapters address the elemental question — “Why do math?” Exploring new problems, making abstractions, and ideating elegant solutions, a mathematician savors the struggle of uncovering complex truths about the world. Such truths, or theorems, are like rungs on a timeless ladder that one can climb, build from, and revisit. By envisioning mathematics as an intense quest, Su underlines what stimulates mathematical investigation — both recreationally and professionally. More powerfully, Su believes that rigorous mathematical thought serves as a rudder that will help steer us through the turbid waters of modern American life. Lamenting the rise of a world overcome by demagoguery and factionalism, Su fears that “[p]eople are endorsing blatant falsehoods that comport with their world view rather than accepting complicated truths. We live in filter bubbles that reflect our own biases back at us.” Incisive mathematical reasoning is one way that we can combat falling victim to inequity and false idols: “But a society that does not encourage critical thinking is easily swayed by propaganda and misinformation from actors who have gained the appearance of authority by other [illegitimate] means.”

The book’s latter half highlights the value of community. For Su, a mathematician’s mission is progressive at its core: a belief in promise over progress, a faith in the grace of humility, in empowering women, in educating non-traditional students, and in providing opportunities for the disadvantaged. A culture that “does not structure its social practices to promote internal goods has no anchors.” And math enhances bonding because it reflects the “love one might have for another human being through and because of mathematics” (*italics author’s emphasis*).

As a refrain, Su quotes the French philosopher Simone Weil (1909-43), sister of the renowned mathematician André Weil (1906-98): “Every being cries out silently to be read differently.” Unable to keep pace with her gifted brother, Simone yearned to be accepted as a mathematician based on her circumstances and background. Likewise, the book concretely explores how

diverse struggles of today's math students can be looked at differently – with humanity and understanding. Vignettes, positive and negative, serve as case studies. We learn of Akemi, a promising student who left her doctoral program in mathematics after being rebuffed by her misogynistic adviser and teaching assistant. There's also Ricardo Gutierrez, a mathematically-able son of working-class immigrants in New York who lacked proper mentorship as a child: after nineteen years of successful employment as an audio engineer, he returned to school at age forty to pursue a mathematics and computer science degree. Josh Wilkerson is a high school math instructor who engages his AP Statistics students in a service project with a homeless ministry in Austin, Texas. His students not only undertake survey research and analyze data, but also read about vagabondage and interview formerly homeless residents. Such accounts contextualize the reach of mathematics, but also remind readers that there's still a ways to go when it comes to enabling teamwork and encouraging inclusivity.

Mathematics for Human Flourishing adroitly bridges two distinct strands of writing about math. One branch critiques math education in primary and secondary schools. Most ironic is Paul Lockhart's *A Mathematician's Lament*, a humorous diatribe in which the research-mathematician-turned-high-school-teacher likens math pedagogy to painting-by-numbers and bungled music training. Creativity is limited and rote exercises are omnipresent, a situation Lockhart compares to "rearranging deck chairs on the Titanic." The ship is sinking for Lockhart, but others are trying to plug leaks. Education specialists and psychologists have come up with a spate of books that vigorously debate today's teaching methods and parenting techniques. There are also serious looks at dependence on a "growth mindset" that is deemed important for quantitative mastery.

The other genre emphasizes the beauty of mathematics and the thinking it demands. Jordan Ellenberg and Steven Strogatz are among its most visible proselytizers. The former's best-known book, *How to Not Be Wrong: The Power of Mathematical Thinking*, shows how mathematical reasoning can help people succeed in everyday life, such as winning at Powerball or improving dating prospects. Strogatz's bestseller texts find ways to enliven math concepts for curious lay audiences, patiently explaining key ideas in algebra, geometry, and calculus. In addition to these mainstream books, both authors publish regularly in journalistic outlets, serving as friendly ambassadors for the realms of mathematical research.



Author Francis Su — for him, mathematics is creative and value-laden, arguing that its pursuit is vital for our growth as human beings.

What makes Su's book so compelling is that it dares to go in a personal direction. Readers may be surprised to find that Su — an endowed professor at Harvey Mudd College and the first of color to preside over the MAA — has had his share of struggles. While a doctoral student at Harvard University, he was told by a math professor that “You don't have what it takes to be a successful mathematician” (*italics author's emphasis*). Unlike others in his graduate cohort, Su arrived at Harvard without prior graduate coursework or an Ivy League baccalaureate degree. Su's own gumption, together with the support of a gracious dissertation adviser (Persi Diaconis), enabled him to graduate.

Racial issues raised additional problems. Growing up as a Chinese American in a modest white and Latino Texas community — at one point learning that he was adopted — Su grappled with his identity: “I was embarrassed to be Asian so I tried to act white even if I didn't look white,” he remarks. In addition, he did not fit into the Chinese community because he neither spoke the language nor acted Chinese. In fact, Su suggests that it was not until later in life he found a home: “The first time I didn't feel like a minority was when I moved to California.” Since his arrival on the West Coast, Su has helped youth of color by guiding undergraduate research for underrepresented minorities in Berkeley's summer Mathematical Sciences Research Institute – Undergraduate Program (MSRI-UP) and reading to African American and Latino children living in impoverished Los Angeles neighborhoods.

The book's most poignant sections concern the author's blossoming friendship with Christopher Jackson, an African American incarcerated for a series of armed robberies he committed at the age of nineteen while addicted to hard drugs. Writing to Su in 2013 from a United States Penitentiary in Pine Knot, Kentucky, Christopher had learned of Harvey Mudd College through books and television. Christopher had a peculiar proclivity for mathematics and longed to obtain a degree by correspondence. Curious to know more (and perhaps propelled by his Christian faith), Su responded, thus setting in motion an inspiring epistolary dialogue. As they follow Christopher's letters – one of which is published at the conclusion of each chapter – readers see him advance from mastering high school topics to learning linear algebra and point-set topology. Su diligently mentors Christopher through every step, posing challenging questions while also asking him to reflect on his mathematical experiences. Christopher eventually becomes a tutor himself, helping twelve fellow inmates obtain GED credentials; he hopes to one day teach mathematics professionally. (The earliest date Christopher can be released from prison is 2033.) In 2018 the two men finally met at a prison facility. Su is giving a portion of the book's royalties to Christopher for his contributions to the text — proof that anyone anywhere can flourish by taking up mathematics.

By portraying mathematics as creative and value-laden, Su powerfully argues that its pursuit is vital for our growth as human beings. Math is an elemental part of a thriving culture because “a society without mathematical affection is like a city without concerts, parks, or museums. To miss out on mathematics is to live without an opportunity to play with beautiful ideas and see the world in a new light.” Of course, idealizing math is not new: it reaches back to venerable traditions in classical and medieval Western education, which insisted that mathematical endeavors were not only about generating knowledge but also building character. Historically, women were restricted from this process, but Su demands that contemporary forays into mathematical thinking be made available to all.

Put bluntly, Mathematics for Human Flourishing is quite possibly the most profound meditation on mathematics I have read. The volume not only invited me to savor my past mathematical experiences, but also challenged me to become a more generous person. I hope the book, now available in paperback, will continue to inspire others with its vibrant and inclusive conception of mathematics.

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3. **<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UitkuhpDUpc>**



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Inhouse Departmental Publication

PSYnalysis



Department Of Psychology

Designed By : Sushant Thakur
[TY.B.Sc.(I.T)]

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EDITOR: Ms. NEHA DALAL

CONTRIBUTOR: 1. MS. PUJA PATWARDHAN
2. MS. CHERISH CARVALHO, TYBA PSYCHOLOGY (2021-2022). ROLL NO- 1903

The Positive and Negative Impacts of Self-Deprecating Humour

It's funny until it isn't

**MS. PUJA PATWARDHAN, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF
PSYCHOLOGY**

MS. CHERISH CARVALHO, TYBA PSYCHOLOGY (2021-2022), ROLL NO- 1903

Introduction

Humour is inarguably one of the best ways to bond with people and have a good time. It has the ability to bring everyone together and lighten the mood. Humour also possesses the special power to help create a good and amiable impression. It isn't unknown that this is also often used as an instrument of impression management.

People want to be liked and accepted. A good sense of humour and relatability goes a long way in this regard. To understand the impact of self-deprecating humour, it is important to know why people feel the need to be accepted and liked and create amicable impressions. The Sociometer theory of Self Esteem, introduced by Mark Leary et al. in 1995 helps us understand this. According to this theory, humans are driven by the need to preserve interpersonal relationships, a factor that was of utmost importance in early days when humans lived, survived and thrived in social groups. Being an outcast came with severe consequences. The theory explains how self-esteem is a meter, in a social capacity, constantly monitoring the environment for cues that exhibit the degree to which we one is valued or devalued by others. A good sense of humour not only creates bonds but also strengthens them, which is then reflected in our self-esteem.

Recent years have seen the growing popularity of 'Self-Deprecating' humour, especially with the younger generations like millennials and Gen Z. Self-Deprecating humour, in essence is pulling one's own leg; making a joke at the expense of one's own self. Comedians, youtubers and social media influencers, all use this as a way to connect with their audience and come across as relatable; to bridge the gap between the two. This type of humour is also extremely common amongst most friend groups. People often engage in it to make light of both; the situation and themselves. However, this requires a balance, as there are pros and cons to it. This article will further discuss the positive and negative impacts of self-deprecating humour on oneself and on others.

Positives of Self-Deprecating Humour

The ability to 'not take yourself too seriously' is one of the best qualities a person can possess. It displays a level of self-awareness and maturity. Having a good sense of humour and being able to poke fun at one's own self can sometimes show a strong sense of comfort and confidence in oneself, enough to be able to make such jokes. People who use self-deprecating humour inadvertently express their imperfections and room to grow and learn.

Furthermore, self-deprecating humour from people in authoritative or influential positions increase fondness towards them through relatability. People like knowing that the ones they look up to have flaws and are at the end of the day, humans.

A study done by Gkorezis et al. in 2016 shows that the use of self-deprecating humour by a leader result in higher perceived effectiveness, i.e. leaders who make light of their shortcomings are considered effective by their followers as they are able to gently laugh at themselves and thereby appear more humble and understanding.

Negatives of Self-Deprecating Humour

Self-deprecating humour and ourselves

There exists a tendency to start believing the words one hears often, regardless of whether there is any truth to it. For example, if someone were to, time and time again, make comments on your appearance, positive or negative, you would, to some extent, take those comments into consideration. The same tends to happen with our own words. Putting yourself down for the amusement of others has the potential to be detrimental to our own mental health as these negative words can sometimes creep into our beliefs and settle there without our realisation. It can further solidify a way of pessimistic thinking and attitudes towards ourselves.

Self-deprecating humour and our environment

Self-deprecating humour also has an effect on the people in our environment. Children and adolescents at an impressionable age, when exposed to this type of humour, are sometimes unable to catch the humour element in it and start accepting it as a normal way of looking at and talking about oneself.

This way of talking and joking also catches on easily. It can be an unhealthy habit to those with an already low sense of self, as they believe their words with more ease than those who have a stronger sense of self.

Putting oneself down as a joke also affects the views others form. A study conducted by Andewag Bas et al. in 2015 shows the negative impacts of self-deprecating humour. Their hypothesis was that the use of self-deprecating humour would strengthen the ethos of the speaker only to a point, after which the use of the humour would harm the speaker's ethos. The results of their study showed that use of self-deprecating humour damaged the audience's view of the speaker's expertise and reliability. It further showed a decrease in the audience's interest in the topic.

The use of self-deprecating humour also runs the risk of creating an awkward or uncomfortable environment, as those listening may not understand or take well to the joke, leaving the one who delivered it feeling worse.

Conclusion

Using self-deprecating humour, like most, if not all things, is about balance. It's about finding that fine line between harmless fun and awkward comments. It's wonderful to be able to poke fun at oneself from time to time, understanding that we all have flaws, wherever we are in life, it's not only what makes us human, but also brings us together. However, it becomes a problem when we can't tell the difference between a joke and the truth, when we make these jokes while we're alone, when we start using them as reflexes and when we start believing them. It's important to remember that in the case of self-deprecating humour, moderation is key.

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Sadhana Education Society's
L.S. Raheja College of Arts & Commerce

Inhouse Departmental Publication

SOCIAL ISSUES



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Designed By : Sushant Thakur
[TY.B.Sc.(I.T)]

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DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

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EDITOR: DR. SAMYA SHINDE

CONTRIBUTOR: DR. SAMYA SHINDE

TARABAI SHINDE'S STRI PURUSH TULANA: A DISCOURSE ON FEMINIST THOUGHT.

DR. SAMYA SHINDE, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY.

Tarabai Shinde, a woman rights activists who spoke against the patriarchy in the Hindu scriptures was born in Berar province of Buldhana. She received no formal education and learnt English, Marathi and Sanskrit at home under the guidance of her father. She was married at a young age but her husband resided in her household as a gharjavai which is unusual in a patriarchal society. She also chose to remain childless in her marriage thus challenging the conventional patriarchal norms. She worked closely with Jyotirao Phule and Savitribai Phule and was the member of the Satyashodhak Samaj.

Tarabai Shinde (1850–1910) was one of the early feminists in India who protested patriarchy and caste in 19th century India. She is known for her published work, *Stri Purush Tulana* ("A Comparison Between Women and Men"), originally published in Marathi in 1882. In 1994, Rosalind O'Hanlon re-translated the essay from Marathi to English and published it with Oxford University Press as *A Comparison Between Women and Men*. The text *Stri Purush Tulana* was originally published in Marathi in 1882 in response to an article that appeared in an orthodox paper - *Pune Vaibhav*. The article was about a young, pregnant widow, Vijayalakshmi, who aborted her unborn child with a criminal case filed against her and awarded the death sentence. A series of vicious articles condemning the act appeared in the media that questioned the widow's 'loose morals'. Tarabai decided to protest against this act through her writings. It is one of the earliest notes of revolt, a defining moment in the paradigm of the feminist rebellion.

The essay received widespread criticism forcing her to the margins. This was the only book she wrote. In the public realm, only Jyotiba Phule voiced his support for Tarabai Shinde and her thoughts lauding her courageous attempt in expressing her unorthodox views. He wrote in support of Tarabai's book in *Satyashodak Samaj's* second issue of its magazine, *Satsaar* recommending the booklet to his colleagues. The work was unknown till 1975 and resurfaced after it was republished by S.G. Malshe in 1975.

Stri Purush Tulana critiques the upper caste patriarchal code of honour and morals inherent in Hindu scriptures. It questions the ideological fabric of the patriarchal society, as 'women everywhere are similarly oppressed'. She through the "*Stri Purush Tulana: A Comparison of Man and Woman*" questioned the standards set for women by the dominant patriarchal society, which were and still are unfair, and are responsible for their marginal and subordinate position in the society.

According to Susie Tharu and K. Lalita, "...*Stri Purush Tulana* is probably the first full-fledged and extant feminist argument after the poetry of the Bhakti Period. But Tarabai's work is also significant because at a time when intellectuals and activists alike were primarily concerned with the hardships of a Hindu widow's life and other easily identifiable atrocities perpetrated on women, Tarabai Shinde, apparently working in isolation, was able to broaden the scope of

analysis to include the ideological fabric of patriarchal society. Women everywhere, she implies, are similarly oppressed."

The noted historian Ramchandra Guha is of the opinion that her writing deserves serious attention as it remains one of the most powerful pieces of social criticism ever written by an Indian.

She questioned the double standards for men and women and advocated women's agency and that women deserve more rights. The *Stri Purush Tulana* dared to ask openly the question: "But do men not suffer from the same flaws that women are supposed to have".

From the introduction of *Stri Purush Tulana*:

"I'm just a poor woman without any real intelligence, who's been kept locked up and confined...But every day now we have to look at some new and more horrible example of men who are really wicked, and their shameless lying tricks. And people go about pinning the blame on women all the time, as if everything bad was their fault. When I saw this, my whole mind began churning and shaking. I lost all my fear, I just couldn't stop myself writing about it in this very biting language." "So, is it true that only women's bodies are home to all the different kinds of recklessness and vice? Or have men got just the same faults as we find in women?"

In a point-by-point note, she sets out the flaws women are said to have and contests them. The sharp wordplay exposes the males in society for their hypocritical norms and double standards and argues for widow remarriage, the abolition of strict behavioural codes for women, and even criticizes the religions (then, Hinduism) restricting women. She criticised the *Shastras* and how their interpretations have been misinterpreted to suit the patriarchal narrative. Giving instances from mythology, 'she illustrated the importance of a woman's role in a man's life as a mother and wife'. 'Tarabai Shinde demonstrated the way in which women were blamed, in mythology and real life, for the mistakes committed by men'. The societal norms with sanction from the scriptures directed that a widow would be deprived of her ornaments, hair and beauty, lead an isolated life after the death of her husband. She would be considered as bringing bad luck and would not be invited for the social functions. However, the same restrictions did not apply to men who could remarry and live his life. She criticised the sexist ways in which men and women are treated differently. She questioned this unequal treatment and challenged the men to undertake the same path as women.

At a time when adultery was considered the biggest sin a woman could commit, she shifts the blame onto the husband for his incapability to keep his wife happy. Further, she argues that women should have the choice in selecting the husbands in order to prevent adultery. She argued for equal punishment for men and women for adultery instead of only penalising women.

She also put the Gods on trial. The book starts with Shinde questioning the Gods. "Let me ask you something, Gods! You are supposed to be omnipotent and freely accessible to all. You are said to be completely impartial. What does that mean? That you have never been known to be partial. But wasn't it you who created both men and women? Then why did you grant happiness only to men and brand women with nothing but agony? Your will was done! But poor women have had to suffer for it down the ages." She fearlessly questioned the deities that were

considered supreme. The text questions the caste system, the denial of education to girls, polygamy and ostracization of widows. Shinde holds that these inequalities are created by society and media and religion acts equally in furthering them.

She advocated the cause of women education believing that education would empower girls, face the circumstances around them and take rational decisions concerning their lives.

Conclusion

At a time when there was no public discussion against the oppressive practices of forced widowhood, marriage, sexual violence within and outside marriage, strict notions of how women should behave, Tarabai Shinde spoke up against these practices. She advocated agency of women when it was unheard of. Writing the book at that time challenging conventional norms of the patriarchal society needed courage and conviction. Her critique of the relation between caste and patriarchy is relevant even till today. In the context of her social environment Tarabai was a courageous and analytical thinker who challenged the prejudices and the orthodox traditions. Even today the text is relevant and a text of reference for feminist scholars and activists in India.

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Sadhana Education Society's
L.S. Raheja College of Arts & Commerce



Inhouse Departmental Publication

RUMINATIONS



Department Of Commerce

Designed By : Sushant Thakur
[TY.B.Sc.(I.T)]

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CONTRIBUTOR:1. Ms. SAJITHA KUMAR

2. DR. PREETI VASWANI

BOOK REVIEW

THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE: Dr STEPHEN R COVEY

**MS. SAJITHA KUMAR, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE**

“Next to physical survival the greatest need of a human being is psychological survival- to be understood, to be affirmed”

During 25 years of his work experience of working with successful individuals in business, Dr Stephen Covey discovered the 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. He wrote the book based on his understanding of several self-help & popular psychology books written over the past 200 years. The book was named the No 1 most influential business book of the 20th century. The 7 habits encompasses timeless principles that can help guide thoughts & actions.

To attain high level of interdependence, you must cultivate each of the following 7 suggested habits:

Habit 1: Be proactive

Habit 2: Begin with the end in Mind

Habit 3: Put first things First

Habit 4: Think Win/Win

Habit 5: Seek to understand first, before making yourself understood

Habit 6: learn to Synergise

Habit 7: Sharpen the saw

Habit 1, 2 & 3 are focused on self-mastery & moving from dependence to independence

Habit 4, 5 & 6 are focused on developing teamwork, collaborations & communication skills

Habit 7 is focused on continuous growth & improvement & embodies all the other habits.

The book states 7 habits that you can adopt which remain effective in whatever task you perform. It quotes several real-life examples of daily life that assures successful life and reassures of the habits to be cultivated by all. The author claims that these principles are self-evident & endure in the most religious, social & ethical systems as they have universal applications. When you value the correct principles, you see reality as it truly is.

My most favourite habit is- Seek to understand, then to be understood.

How often do we actually pay attention to the people around us? How often do we actually listen & understand them? Most of us listen only to reply & not to understand. We end up comparing their problems to ours. This book has simply explained how being empathetic & diligent efforts strengthen relationships. The book definitely has the potential to show some excellent lessons. In order to interpret you interpersonal relations, the author argues that you must endeavour to understand a situation before attempting to make yourself understood. While we spend quite some important years of life in learning to speak & write, a little focus has to be drawn on the ability to develop listening skills. While most people listen with the intent of replying, the proficient listener will listen with the intent to understand. This is known as the skill of empathetic listening.

The 7 habits of highly effective people is irrefutably a Life changing book. The book is not a quick fix to your problems, but it will give you an in-depth solution you might have never thought about. The 7 habits can be implemented by anyone in any walk of Life & will make assured differences. The author shares knowledge & experience in a beautiful way that can enrich & change reader's lives in many ways. Whether you are looking for a relaxing read or an informative & engaging book, the 7 habits of highly effective people is definitely worth the read.

The World of Endless Possibilities

**DR. PREETI VASWANI, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF
COMMERCE**

Amidst constraints, we find possibilities

Amidst possibilities, constraints

We see what we choose

And choose what is comfortable.

Digital possibilities, OTT platforms,

Cricket matches in empty stadiums

And the crowded social media

Are solace to innumerable people

Re-establishing comfort zones –

The rash fearlessness of the invisible monster

Is not cool anymore.

Some others are warring within in discomfort.

The long pause button seems unreasonably long

And there's no more waiting

For old times to return.

The elephant in the room

Can no longer be ignored.

It's huge... and it's there

And there's no turning away

But to acknowledge, and address it.

And, where warriors are fighting the monster without,

Let's deal with the monsters within.



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ELEPHANTA CAVES

Empyrean of the divine

MS. POOJA YADAV, ASSISTANT PROFESSOR, DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY.



India holds a distinct identity in the fields of art. The Indic terrain is home to the world's most exquisite temples, monuments, sculptures and paintings. Many of the functional temples in India are presents of antiquity to the millennial. The divergent theory of the Hindu philosophy expounds the various forms, incarnations and manifestations that the divine hath. The Cave of Shiva at Elephanta is a classic example of how the diverse manifestations of the deity conversate with the devotees in the form of stories. In 1987, the restored Elephanta Caves were designated a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



The Cave is located at Gharapuri island on the west coast of India and is in close proximity to Mumbai. Visitors traverse via boat from Mumbai and then climb a hill either by train or by a long escalier to reach the caves of Elephanta. A large reconstructed stone elephant from Gharapuri that is believed to have inspired the references of Portuguese colonists to the island as a “ ilha do elefante” (the island of the elephant), is found today at the Dr. Bhau Daji Lad.



The Main Entrance to the Caves.

In Hinduism, Paramatma (the supreme force) is transcendental. A profound emphasis is laid on an underlying omnipotent and universal spirit (Brahman) that allows for the existence of a large pantheon of deities. Each deity can, have many embodiments and a range of iconographic representations are employed in Hindu sacred art to tangibly portray the gods in various avatars.

The cave of Shiva at Elephanta has several unique portrayals of Shiva. 1) Shiva as Ardhnarishvara, 2) Shiva as Gangadhara, 3) Shiva as Mahayogi, 4) Shiva as Kalyanasundara, 5) Shiva’s manifestation as Sadashiva, 6) Shiva killing the demon Andhakasur , 7) Shiva as Nataraja in his Lasya avatar, 8) Shiva playing a game of dice with his consort Parvati.

SOUTH	Shiva & Parvati emerge as one, "Andhavarishvara".	Shiva assists in the holy descent of the Ganges.
WEST	Shiva & Parvati marry.	Shiva subdues the demon "Andhakasura".
NORTH	Shiva dancing as "Nataraja".	Shiva as the supreme lord of the yogis.
EAST	Shiva subdues Ravana as the demon king shakes Mount Kailasha.	Shiva & Parvati at home on Mount Kailasha.

In addition to the aforementioned sculptures, another main structure located inside the cave is, "The Linga Shrine" erected right at the centre.

Shiva as Mahayogi



Lord Shiva, among the great deities of Hinduism, most personifies the practice of Yoga. As Yogeshvara, the great lord of Yoga, Adi Natha, Adi Yogi and Mahayogi, he rules over all aspects of Yoga relative to body, mind and consciousness. Shiva, is the "primordial yogi" in this panel. The relief is in a dilapidated condition with most of the arms and legs broken. He is seated in padmasana lost in his meditation. His posture is well formed and suggests that the 6th century artist knew this asana. He sits on a lotus with a stalk shown as if coming out of the earth, his legs are crossed symmetrically. Two Nagas flank the lotus and express their reverence with a namaste posture. The great yogi is being approached by various Vedic and Puranic

devatas and devis, as well as monks and sadhus, yet there is a halo around him that keeps them at bay as if they admire it but do not wish to disturb his meditation.

Shiva as Nataraja



The panel facing the Yogishvara, on the west side of the portico next to the north entrance is Shiva as the Nataraja, "cosmic dancer" and "the lord of dancers". It is also called the Nrittamurti. His body and arms are shown as wildly gyrating in the *lalita mudra*, a symbolism for occupying all of space, soaring energy and full bodied weightlessness. His face here resembles the *Tatpurusha*, or the manifested form of Shiva that preserves and sustains all of creation, all of creative activity. This is an eight-armed depiction of Nataraja. The parts of the panel that have survived suggest that he is holding an axe, a coiled serpent is wrapped around its top. In another he holds a folded cloth, possibly symbolic veil of *maya*. There are fewer devatas, and observers in this panel than others in this cave, Brahma, Vishnu, Lakshmi, Saraswati and Parvati are visible and have a facial expression of being spellbound. Also present are his sons leaping Ganesha and Kartikeya holding Shiva's staff, as well as an ascetic and a rishi, thus weaving the family life and the ascetic monastic life, the secular and the spiritual tied in through metaphorical symbolism of dance within the same panel.

Shiva as Gangadhara



This sculpture depicts the descent of the Ganges to the world. According to Hindu Mythology, the Ganga river flowing from the Himalayan glacier is believed to have a divine origin. A sage named "Bhagiratha" opted the path of severe austerity and meditated for aeons to garner the

attention of Bramha. Paying heed to his devotee , Lord Bramha acceded to Bhagiratha's demand of honouring "Dhartilok" with the advent of the holy Ganga. The issue however was the force with which the Ganges would launch herself on land. Ganga, herein portrayed as a female deity requested the devotee to approach Shiva for assistance. Being the benevolent deity that he is, Shiva came to the rescue and concurred to let Ganga reside in his matted hair (jattas) and let open one of his locks in order to allow her to swiftly flow through its narrow opening. Having eye witnessed the whole incident, Parvati grew envious of the female deity since Shiva's acquiescence would result in Ganga being his perpetual companion. Look closely and you will witness Parvati swaying away in displeasure.

Shiva impales the demon Andhakasur



The panel in the northwest side of the cave, on the wall near west entrance and the Linga shrine , is an uncommon sculpture about the Andhakasura-vadha legend. It shows Bhairava, or Virabhadra, a ferocious form of Shiva killing the demon Andhaka (literally, "blind, darkness"). Though a relief, it is carved to give it a three dimensional form, as if the ferocious Shiva is coming out of the rocks and impaling Andhaka with his trident.



Bhairava's headgear has a ruff on the back, a skull, and a cobra over the forehead, and the crescent high on the right. His facial expression is of anger, the conviction of something he must do, and one in the middle of the action. The legs and five of the eight arms are broken, attributed to Portuguese vandalism. The smaller broken image Andhaka is seen below Bhairava's image. A hand holds a bowl to collect the blood dripping from the slain Andhaka, which Shaiva legend states was necessary because the dripping blood had the power to become new demons if they got nourished by the ground.

Shiva as Kalyansundara



The niche image carved on the southwest wall, near the Linga shrine is the wedding of Shiva and Parvati. Shiva is also referred to as Kalyanasundara in Hindu texts. Parvati is seen standing to Shiva's right, the customary place for a Hindu bride at the wedding. The bride is placed on the right when the solemn vows of marriage have not been taken, and upon completion she is made to stand on the left which would then symbolize consummation of the marriage and the bride would be called वामांगी. The carvings are substantially damaged, but the ruined remains of the sculpture have been significant to scholarly studies of Hindu literature. In many surviving versions of the Puranas, the wedding takes place in King Parvata's palace. However, in this Elephanta Cave panel, the narrative shows some earlier version. Here King Parvata standing behind Parvati gives away the bride to Shiva while Brahma is the priest in the grotto relief.



Gods, goddesses and celestial apsaras are cheering witness to the wedding. Vishnu is witness to the marriage, standing tall behind the sitting Brahma on the right side of the panel. Just above the main images rishi (sages) and a few characters hanging from the ceiling are seen blessing the wedding. The groom Shiva is shown calm and young, while Parvati is depicted as shy and emotional. Her head is tilted towards him and her eyelids joyfully lowered, while his hand (now broken) is holding hers. Their dress reflect the Hindu customs. He wears the sacred thread across his chest, she the customary jewelry सोलह श्रृंगार. The other characters shown in the wedding carry items or are shown holding items that typically grace a Hindu wedding. Chandra (moon god), for example, holds a traditionally decorated water vessel (kalash). Brahma, the priest, is squatting on the floor to the right tending the yajna fire (agni mandapa).

Shiva and Parvati seated on Mount Kailash and Shiva subdues Ravana



The carvings at the east entrance are battered and blurry. One in the southeast corner of the mandapa depicts Shiva and Parvati in Mount Kailash in the Himalayas, and the shows the Umamaheshvara story. The scene includes rocky terrain and clouds layered horizontally. On top of the rock sit the four-armed Shiva and Parvati by his side. Nandi stands below her, while celestial apsaras float on the clouds above. There are traces of a crown and a disc behind Shiva, but it is all damaged. The scene is crowded with accessory figures, which may be because the eastern entrance was meant to have a devotional focus.



The panel facing the Mount Kailash panel towards the northeast corner depicts demon king Ravana trying to lift Kailash and bother Shiva, a legend called Ravananugraha. The scene above is of Mount Kailash, where Shiva and Parvati are seated. Shiva is recognizable with a crown, and other characters are badly damaged. A portion of ascetic skeletal devotee Bhringi relief survives and he is seated near Shiva's feet. Near Shiva an outline of what may have been Ganesha and Kartikeya are visible. Below the mountain surface is shown, the demon-king Ravana is seen with a few arms, trying to unsuccessfully shake Shiva and Parvati in Mount Kailash. The rest of the details are blurry and speculative.

Shiva as Ardhnarishvara



The Ardhanarishvara carving represents the ancient Hindu concept of essential interdependence of the feminine and the masculine aspects in the universe, for its creation, its sustenance and its destruction. It is represented as half woman shown as half of Parvati in this Elephanta panel on the right side, with breast, waist, feminine hair and items such as a mirror in the upper hand. The second half-man side is Shiva with male characteristics and items iconographically his symbol. In Shaivism, the concept pictorially symbolizes the transcendence of all duality including gender, with the spiritual lacking any distinctions, where energy and power (Shakti, Parvati) is unified and is inseparable with the soul and awareness (Brahman, Shiva). In the panel, the relief shows a headdress (double-folded) with two pleats draped towards the female head (Parvati) and the right side (Shiva) depicting curled hair and a crescent. The female figure has all the ornamentation (broad armlets and long bracelets, a large ring in the ear, jewelled rings on the fingers) but the right male figure has drooping hair, armlets and wristlets. One of his hands rests on Nandi bull's left horn, Shiva's mount, which is fairly well preserved. The pair of hands at the back is also bejewelled; the right hand of the male side holds a serpent, while the left hand of the female side holds a mirror. The front left hand is broken, while a large part of the lower half of the panel was damaged at some point. Around the Ardhanarishwara are three layers of symbolic characters. The lowest or at the same level as the viewer are human figures oriented reverentially towards the androgyne image. Above them are gods and goddesses such as Brahma, Vishnu, Indra and others who are seated on their vahanas. Above them are flying apsaras approaching the fused divinity with garlands, music, and celebratory offerings.

Shiva as Sadashiv



The Trimurti is considered a masterpiece and the most important sculpture in the caves. It is carved in relief on the south wall of the cave facing the north entrance, along the north–south axis. It is also known as Sadashiva and Maheshmurti. The image, 6 m (20 ft) in height, depicts a three-headed Shiva, representing Panchamukha Shiva.



The three heads represent three essential aspects of Shiva: creation, protection, and destruction. As per another version, the three heads symbolize compassion and wisdom. The right half-face (west face) shows him holding a lotus bud, depicting the promise of life and creativity. This face is symbolism for Brahma, the creator or Uma or Vamadeva, the feminine side of Shiva and creator. The left half-face (east face) is that of a moustached young man. This is Shiva as the terrifying Aghora or Bhairava, the chaos creator and destroyer. This is also known as Rudra-Shiva, the Destroyer. The central face, benign and meditative Tatpurusha, resembles the preserver Vishnu. This is the Shiva form as the "master of positive and negative principles of existence and preserver of their harmony". The three-headed Shiva are his creator, preserver and destroyer aspects in Shaivism. They are equivalently symbolism for Shiva, Vishnu, and Brahma, they being equivalent of the three aspects found in Shaivism.

Another amazing fact about the Sadashiva sculpture is that , it's the only one sculpture that has remained undestroyed on the site. The visitors are always amazed by its grandeur but the one

thing that's baffling and leaves everyone perplexed is its condition that is very different from the rest of its contemporaries. Grapevine has it, that the moment Portuguese arrived at the spot, they started target shooting the idols, since it is against the principle beliefs of Christianity and the Hindu faith was just looked down upon as a pagan faith which had to confront the wrath of the believers. It, the Trimurti had already been covered and guarded with a stone slab before their arrival and that it was discovered much later by the indigenous people of the Gharapuri island.



The Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation Symbol.

The Omnipresent Shivalinga Shrine.



The central shrine of the Great Cave temple is a free-standing square stone cella, with entrances on each of its sides. Each door is flanked by two dvarapalas (gate guardians), for a total of eight around the shrine. The height of the eight dvarapalas is about 4.6 m (15 ft). All are in a damaged condition except those at the southern door to the shrine. The Shaiva guardians carry weapons and flank the doors. Six steps lead to the inside of the cella from the floor level. In the centre is the mulavighraha Linga, is set on a raised platform above the floor of the shrine. It is the abstract unmanifest symbol of Shiva in union with the Yoni, and the symbol of Parvati together symbolising the creative source and the regenerative nature of existence. The temple and all the pillars are laid out to lead the pilgrim's view towards it, the cella is visible from any point inside the cave and its most significant progression.

The Dwarpalakas in their constant state of being



Dwarapalakas are the two guardian deities or the gatekeepers of the temple entrances or the Dwaras. The name Dwarapalakas is a combination of two words Dwaram and Palakas. In which Dwaram stands for door or entrance and the Palakas for guardians.

The Shivling embedded in the Yoni erected right at the sanctum sanctorum (Garbhagriha) of the Caves.



Garbhagriha

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