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# World Philosophy Day: 'There's no one path', says author Amish Tripathi on models of heroism in Indian mythology

Amish Tripathi was among the speakers at a panel discussion on 'Unity through Diversity' organised by New Acropolis, Mumbai to celebrate World Philosophy Day 2024 on Friday.

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Amish Tripathi, Mandakini Trivedi and Yaron Barzilay at a panel discussion on "Unity through Diversity" organised by New Acropolis Mumbai to celebrate World Philosophy Day 2024

"There's no one path," declared author and former diplomat Amish Tripathi, known widely for The Shiva Trilogy and Ram Chandra Series, highlighting the diverse models of heroism found in Indian mythology. "In our traditions, we have multiple gods and archetypes, which work in different times and circumstances," he added.

Tripathi was speaking on the role of mythology during a panel discussion on 'Unity through Diversity' organised by New Acropolis, Mumbai to celebrate World Philosophy Day 2024 on Friday evening. New Acropolis is a school of practical philosophy with over 500 branches in more than 50 countries.

Sharing a personal anecdote about a difficult time in his life when he was losing people close to him, Tripathi explained how he found solace in Buddhist philosophy despite being a practising Hindu. "There was deep unrest, and the philosophy of 'Satyananda Antarata Vidyathe (true happiness lies within)' wasn't helping me. What helped me was the Buddhist teaching that suffering is the reality of life, and I had to accept what was happening," he said, emphasising the importance of staying rooted in one's culture while being open to learning from others.



Panel discussion on "Unity through Diversity" organised by New Acropolis Mumbai to celebrate World Philosophy Day 2024

The nearly three-hour-long discussion, held at the National Gallery of Modern Art, featured five panellists besides Tripathi. They included Lobsang Phuntsok, former monk and founder of Jhamtse Gatsal Children's Community; Mandakini Trivedi, dancer, choreographer and CEO of Shaktiyogaashrama; CEO of Asia Society (India) Inakshi Sobti; and National Director of New Acropolis India (North) Yaron Barzilay.

Mandakini Trivedi, a cultural educator, spoke on how classical Indian dance forms, with their transcendental nature, can provide insights into the theme of unity through diversity.

"Entertainment is an expression of the capitalist world; it numbs the senses and offers an escape. On the other hand, classical Indian dance stems from a transcendental worldview with the purpose of helping us transcend the ego and the personal," she explained.

She highlighted how ancient masters consciously made these art forms universal and non-personal, allowing individuals to connect with stories that take them beyond themselves. "Indian dance is not just a culture but a civilisation," asserted Trivedi, a Sangeet Natak Akademi awardee for her contribution to Mohiniyattam.

Lobsang Phuntsok, whose journey was chronicled in the 2014 film 'Tashi and the Monk', discussed the importance of cultivating compassion. "During one of my visits to Mumbai, I saw a mother sleeping on the road with her child. The next day, the same road was closed for a car show displaying the city's finest cars. Mumbai's poverty problem is not due to a lack of funds but a modern disease called 'Compassion Deficit Disorder.' My mission is to teach compassion and gentleness, which I believe is the biggest contribution I can make," he told the audience, adding that this is what he teaches the students at his school.

Concluding the session, Acropolitian philosopher Yaron Barzilay called for a human renaissance. "Philosophy is not about reviving the past but about aspiring to be the best we can be—in our relationship with ourselves, each other, and nature," he noted. Barzilay emphasised that the word 'universe' itself implies both 'unity' and 'diversity'. "We need to celebrate the diversity but not lose the unity; we cannot make everyone the same, but we can respect diversity and respect the deeper connection we have with one another," he said.

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