

Spiritual Nature of Discovery

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Last month was 125th birth anniversary of famous Indian mathematician Ramanujan. He was a spiritual mathematician and always said that all his equations and mathematical insights express the thought of God and considered them as a gift from Goddess Namagiri.¹ Hardcore mathematicians scoffed at his metaphysical pronouncements and yet he pioneered number theory and laid its foundation through his theorems which are still being proved and deciphered after 100 years by some of the top mathematicians of the world.

Similarly the great discoveries of Newton, Einstein, Tesla (the giants of humanity) have all bordered on the metaphysical. Half of Newton's life was devoted to understanding the scientific principles behind God and he devoted a substantial part of his life in writing about them. Einstein also wrote songs about God, which he used to sing to himself.² Besides, he was a strong believer in the relationship between science and spirituality. He wrote, "I maintain that the cosmic religious feeling is the strongest and noblest motive for scientific research".³

Tesla - one of the greatest inventors of last century seemed to periodically pluck his inventions from thin air. He always said that most of his ideas came in a flash and the whole machines and their detailed working were "shown" to him.⁴ Similar was the case of Barbara McClintock who had a metaphysical experience and "saw" the phenomenon of jumping genes which later on won her the Nobel Prize in Medicine in 1983.⁵ However she was ridiculed for almost 20 years because such metaphysical insights are not considered a part of mainstream science.

It seems that all the great discoveries, inventions and creative outputs like composition of classical music by Bach, Beethoven etc. have been the result of mystical experience. Though most people consider this as a product of a prepared mind, yet ideas which are revolutionary, change the course of mankind's history or

bring in quantum jump in our understanding are a product of a nimble brain which somehow plucks the knowledge like magic from knowledge space, especially when no physical proof exists. Sometimes it appears that Gods smile on a chosen few who are blessed with a great idea whether in the realm of philosophy, science, mathematics or music. An element of spiritual connection seems to exist when a great thought or discovery takes place.

Patanjali the great Indian sage has spoken about this connection when he says that any knowledge of the Universe can be obtained by *Sanyam* on it.⁶ *Sanyam* is a combination of concentration, contemplation and samadhi on any idea. All great discoverers like Einstein, Newton, Tesla, Darwin etc. were endowed with tremendous power of concentration. This together with prepared mind helped them in the discoveries.

The practice of *Sanyam* also points to the fact that those not blessed with nimble brain can produce a powerful prepared mind by sheer hard work.

An interesting facet of discovery process is that most of these great discoverers were self-taught. Their genius flowered at an early age by a single event either by being exposed to a book (in the case of Ramanujan or Enrico Fermi⁸) or to a compass (in the case of Einstein). Such innocuous events triggered in their minds, as if by magic, a tremendous hunger for knowledge.

Also all these great thinkers talked about oneness of everything. Half of his life Einstein struggled to develop a theory of everything in which he wanted to connect every aspect of universe. Similarly Ramanujan, Tesla, McClintock etc. all talked about oneness of life and they all wanted to see the inter connections in everything surrounding us.

With deep thought or *Sanyam* on a particular thing for a long time the brain can become very sensitive and a powerful receiver of knowledge. Such a sensitive brain can identify itself with any idea or object in the world and gets a feeling of oneness of the Universe. Once Shri Ramakrishna, while in a heightened state of awareness, saw

a person walking on the grass and felt as if that person was walking on his chest! He had identified himself with the grass as if it was an extension of him.

Nevertheless, it is the human mind which is the receiver of the idea or knowledge, and there is a curiosity to know what is the mechanism by which it happens.

Knowledge is of two types – internal and external. The internal knowledge is the outcome of memory and information stored in the brain and its churning and processing by *Sanyam*. External knowledge is gained when the deep thought interacts with the object of perception. This interaction takes place when the prepared mind produces a thought whose template starts actively matching with the object of perception and with *Sanyam* on it the thought template eventually matches the object in a lock and key type interaction leading to its complete knowledge.

The knowledge about the Universal Consciousness or God or what is the structure of Universe already exists in knowledge space (KS)⁷ and is accessed whenever the earth passes through this space in its long journey around the Milky Way. Hence it is time-dependent and not person-dependent. Even if there were somebody else other than Newton or Einstein they would have received the knowledge provided they had a prepared mind. It is also the reason why quite a number of people with prepared mind get similar ideas simultaneously and independently. The renaissance period in Europe and spiritual awakening in India in late 1800s are some of the examples when a large number of enlightened souls pushed the frontiers of knowledge.

As the earth passes through the KS it somehow attracts great thought which comes in a human form! This may be the easiest and energywise most efficient way for knowledge seeding of earth.

Thus Christ, Buddha, Ramakrishna, Einstein, Newton, Ramanujan and many more like them were all great spiritual beings who came on this planet earth to increase the knowledge of mankind.

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