



The Science of Leonardo: Inside the Mind of the Great Genius of the Renaissance

Fritjof Capra

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Leonardo da Vinci's pioneering scientific work was virtually unknown during his lifetime. Now acclaimed scientist and bestselling author Fritjof Capra reveals that Leonardo was in many ways the unacknowledged "father of modern science." Drawing on an examination of over 6,000 pages of Leonardo's surviving notebooks, Capra explains that Leonardo approached scientific knowledge with the eyes of an artist. Through his studies of living and nonliving forms, from architecture and human anatomy to the turbulence of water and the growth patterns of grasses, he pioneered the empirical, systematic approach to the observation of nature—what is now known as the scientific method.

Leonardo's scientific explorations were extraordinarily wide-ranging. He studied the flight patterns of birds to create some of the first human flying machines. Using his understanding of weights and levers and trajectories and forces, he designed military weapons and defenses, and was in fact regarded as one of the foremost military engineers of his era. He studied optics, the nature of light, and the workings of the human heart and circulatory system. Because of his vast knowledge of hydraulics, he was hired to create designs for rebuilding the infrastructure of Milan and the plain of Lombardy, employing the very principles still used by city planners today. He was a mechanical genius, and yet his worldview was not mechanistic but organic and ecological. This is why, in Capra's view, Leonardo's science—centuries ahead of his time in a host of fields—is eminently relevant to our time.

Enhanced with fifty beautiful sepia-toned illustrations, *The Science of Leonardo* is a fresh and important portrait of a colossal figure in the world of science and the arts.

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