

Mandukya Upanishad and Music

L N Jhunjhunwala



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(Continued from September 2006 issue)

I STARTED my article Mandukya Upanishad and Music for September issue with a remark that my recent interest in Mandukya Upanishad looks mystic to me. Mystic is a very complex word. What goes beyond our mental conception is stated as mystic. I analyzed the phenomenon and I find that twenty one events have occurred in a span of 63 years (1943-2006) which are in some way responsible for my interest in Mandukya Upanishad.

1) I took music lessons at Calcutta from Shree H.C. Sen in 1943 as a student of St. Paul's College for one year. 2) Thereafter I left St. Paul's and recontinued my music classes with Tansenji and Maniramji in 1956 again at Calcutta. 3) I happened to attend a marriage in 1959 where Shree Jasraj was also participating. We stayed together and was captivated by the music of Shree Jasraj. 4) Then I joined Birla Sangeet Academy at Calcutta and took lessons from Shree Aminuddin Dagar. 5) I took private sittings with Shree Aminuddin Dagar at his home from 1963-70 till I left for Delhi. 6) I took lessons from Shree Faiyazuddin Dagar at his home in

New Delhi till he passed away around 1990. 7) I listened to the cassettes of Jasraj on Mandukya Upanishad around 1997. 8) Jasraj happened to give a concert in Ramakrishna Mission in 1998. 9) Jasraj gave another concert in Delhi on the demise of Shree Bagrodia in the same year. These are the nine events related to music which were the origin of my interest in Mandukya. Now starts the second portion as to how I got in touch with the publishers of the book on Mandukya Upanishad. Here comes Ramakrishna Mission.

10) We failed to persuade RKM to take the responsibility of running an educational institution in Rajasthan. 11) But RK Mission suggested Shree Eknath Ranade to build an educational complex and I spent three days with him at the Rock Memorial temple at Kanyakumari in 1976. 12) Swami Mumukshanand of RKM performed the Bhumi Puja of the educational complex in the first quarter of 1977. 13) Swami Asaktanand of RKM inaugurated the educational complex in 1978. 14) Shree Raghunandan – s Sadhaka of Vivekanand Kendra dedicated himself to the institution and started writing a book "Wisdom of Vasistha" around 1985. 15) I handed over

the manuscript to Motiram Banarasidas around 1989. 16) The book was published and was ready for release around 2004. 17) I had a meeting with Shree Rashtrapati Kalam for nanotechnology and seized the opportunity to present to him Raghunandan's book. 18) Rashtrapati released the book "Wisdom of Vasistha" and Shree JP Jain was highly pleased at our active interest in the book. 19) India International Centre organised a discussion on Raghunandan's book by Shree L.M. Singhvi, Shree Haksar, Prof. Vibha Chaturvedi and Shree Raghunandan in January 2006. This completes the second portion of the chain containing ten events from ten to nineteen regarding the publication of Wisdom of Vasistha.

Now comes the book Mandukya Upanishad. 20) Motiram Banarasidas presented me the book on Mandukya Upanishad under the title "God speaks to the Faustian man" by Somraj Gupta. Highly impressed with the book I met Shree Somraj Gupta alongwith Shree Jainendra Prakash Jain and had a four hour intimate discussion. 21) I looked for other literature on Mandukya Upanishad and was surprised to find Swami Akhandanandji's book in four volumes of about 2400 pages on Mandukya Upanishad.

A question now starts bothering me. Is it just a chain of coincidences or is it pre-determined? When I started interest in music in 1943 by just seeing a signboard of a music teacher Shri H.C. Sen, while going to St. Pauls College, Mandukya Upanishad was no where. When the educational institute was established at Bhilwara the book Wisdom of Vashistha was no where. But for my interest, in the latest development of Science, I would not seek a meeting with Rashtrapati Kalam for nanotechnology who would agree to release the book. Shree JP Jain would not be motivated to present the book on Mandukya Upanishad by Somraj Gupta, if I would not have exerted to get his book released by Rashtrapati. This is the chain of twenty one events.

The Mandukya Upanishad starts with the Mantras on invocation of peace (shanti mantra). I was on my hydel dam site where 5000 workers were working on the mountains. When we build large hydel dams blasting tunnels to break the mountains, we destroy plantations of hundreds of years. We disturb the eternal peace of the mountains since the beginning of creation. We take pride by saying that we are doing it all for development of our country. But Vedas and Upanishads were written in an era of world history when there was no electricity nor light, nor steam engines for travel, nor telephones for communication. It was then that we conceived the mathematical concept of zero, we conceived large

mathematical numbers of trillions of years with such great perfection for measuring time in Yugas and Kalpas.

Another question then bothers me that how the country which rose so high as to produce writers of Vedas, Upanishads, Mahabharata and Ramayana fell so low? Vedic Aryans never took a world negating view. They were the world's most prosperous community. It was thousands of years before Christ possibly 3000 BC. Decline of Vedic Aryans started possibly because weaker people were exploited. Distortions were brought in the Aryan Culture. It was to rectify these distortions in Aryan culture that Buddha came in 600 BC. His followers made things worse. They distorted Buddhist precepts and gave undue emphasis on the sorrows of the world. Then came Shankaracharya a thousand years later. He did revive the Aryan culture but he also adopted the world negating view of Buddha. He also preached that the world is an illusion. No doubt that the world is an illusion (Maya) as preached by Shankar, but not for us who deal with this illusionary world all the time.

I would not like to believe that the decline of this country started

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with the advent of Buddha and Shankaracharya. I have no right to state this with the small knowledge I have. Their preachings of non-violence were great and are still great. But the results on the ground were disastrous. The Greeks attacked, plundered and massacred the masses ruthlessly. But for a vedic Rishi Chanakya, India would have been lost to Greeks. The rot had gone too deep in India's body. Then came the plunderers from Arabs, they looted the immense wealth of this country and carried all the jewelleries and treasures abroad to their own native lands. Then came the Mughals, who settled here to enjoy the prosperity of this great country. Emperors like Aurangazib gave the worst tortures to the Hindus (the Aryans were called Hindus by the outsiders). Then came French, British & Dutch and all have plundered this land. Even up till 1600 AD, India was the richest country of the world. It is only after the industrial revolution and then advent of Science that we have been left behind in spite of the scientific achievements of Aryabhata and Vedic mathematicians who invented zero which brought a revolution in Mathematics.

India went through the greatest suppression of the Independence movement in 1857 by the British. The younger generation could not tolerate this insult to their motherland. Two young Chapekar brothers (18 years and 20 years old) shot the oppressing British Officers to death in 1897 and were hanged. The third Chapekar brother (22 years old) also was hanged

for killing the British. The three brothers embraced death leaving the mother alone. My homage to this great mother, who never shed a tear and was proud to be the mother of such brave children. Hundreds of patriots joined the revolutionaries and butchers like Col. Dyer killed hundreds of helpless Indians in Jalianwallabagh. The inhuman British instead of feeling repentant imposed Rowlatt Act to humiliate the Indians. The dedicated revolutionaries fought the British in their own ways and accepted hanging. Mahayogi Aurobindo made bombs and his eighteen year old follower Khudiram Bose was hanged. Mahatma Gandhi organised the country to fight the British in non-violent way. The British knew that India could not be subjugated. They divided the Hindus and the Muslims and partitioned a single body into two truncated portions in spite of leaders like Mahatma Gandhi. Crores of Indians were killed in the world's greatest disaster and migrations from one place to the other. Hindus had to leave Pakistan. India gave protection to Muslims and after fifty years we have the same problems. There is terrorism throughout the country. All this, we are told, is organized by camps across the borders in Pakistan.

I feel frustrated when I compare the present plight of India with the glory that India was in the past. But then I draw strength when I read the three predictions of Swami Vivekananda in 1896 (i) India will be free in fifty years from British subjugation (ii) But we must be careful of the Chinese and (iii)

Even with a great decline of the country we produce the greatest people of the century in Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Raman Maharshi, Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba. Can a miracle happen and predictions of Swami Vivekananda and Shree Aurobindo prove correct?

India's future will be even more glorious than the past. The first two predictions have come true - How will the third prediction prove true? The ground situation is so gloomy.

In my student days we were asked to draw the map of India. Till then we used to make a map which would contain Afghanistan, Burma and Ceylon. India continues to shrink. It breaks into Pakistan and Bangladesh. Part of Kashmir is under Pakistan occupation. The situation is uncomfortable on the borders - Nagaland - Arunachal. Tibet has already been taken by China. The train from China comes in Tibet and the demography of Tibet is being changed. Even the terrorists who made an unsuccessful attempt to attack the parliament, are dealt softly. The trial took years and now death penalty has been awarded by the court. But the present and the past State Govt. of Kashmir want this terrorist to be dealt softly otherwise they feel the State would be disturbed. Violent agitations are taking place in Srinagar against the prosecution of the terrorist. We talk of peace. Japan and Germany lost two wars in the twentieth century. They were badly defeated. Japan suffered the first atom bomb attack in 1945 and Germany was in shambles. Germany was defeated in 1919 and was badly humiliated. They could not sit

quiet and reorganized to take revenge and went for another war which also they lost. Within a few years of defeat Japan and Germany became more prosperous than the victorious Britain and France. We continue to

take pride in our non-violence and are satisfied being amongst the last ten countries of the world. Even small countries like Taiwan, Singapore of Asia or Norway/Sweden of Europe are ahead of us economically, educationally and scientifically. We take pride in our statistics and shout that we are prospering and will be amongst the top ten countries soon. Economists prove this by statistics but still a batch of economists also say that 25 crores of people in this country still sleep hungry at night, there is no education worth the name for millions of our young boys and goes.

But this is a country which cannot be understood rationally. Bhishmapitamah was a powerful warrior. He spent his whole life in celibacy. We are rightly very proud of him. He has all the sympathies for the Pandavas and fights for Kaurvas, the enemies of Pandavas. Even with a great decline of the country we produce the greatest people of the century in Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Aurobindo, Raman Maharshi, Mahatma Gandhi and Vinoba.

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Shri Jhunjhunwala is Chairman - Emeritus, LNJ Bhitwara Group.