

UNRAVELING MYSTERIES OF LIFE **MODERN SCIENCE AND ANCIENT WISDOM**

Gauri Shankar Gupta, Star Publications Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, First Edition, 2012, pp.445+xix(HB), Rs. 650/-.

It was a matter of great pleasure to meet His Excellency Shri Gauri Shankar Gupta some time back in Hungary in 2013 where he is serving as the Ambassador of India in Hungary. The discussion regarding the book, and his deep insights really prompted us to write a book review of his latest work which is a combination of logic and reasoning of modern science and ancient wisdom in unraveling the mysteries of life. He has strongly recommend to listen to his lectures on this theme on YouTubes to have deeper understanding.

The advancement in science and technology has helped in making our life more comfortable. Innovation and technology have become the hallmarks of modern society. But with these unprecedented technological advances, witnessed during the last two centuries, there is a growing tendency to discard our ancestors and their life style as primitive and unscientific by the modern generation.

This book attempts to address some fundamental questions through comparative study of the discoveries of modern science and the wisdom of ancient writings left behind by our ancestors. It basically deals with how the life unfolds over a period of time. The author encourages us to get back to our roots, and to the knowledge of our ancestors, and to think over the serious problems of today i.e. the economic crisis, poverty, health problems, and damage to the eco- system.

The book provides some solutions also, which are based upon modern science and the ancient wisdom. It offers new methods of understanding as who we are, on the basis of deep acquaintance with sources of traditional wisdom, both Eastern and Western. The author gives us hope for the better future also by giving references from various ancient Vedic books.

This book has been divided into two parts. The first part deals with the issues at Macro level. These include chapters on the origin of the universe, the power of the empty space, cosmic order or the functioning of the universe, cosmic energy, the idea of development or what constitutes development, and human health, and medical sciences.

The second part of this book explains the various issues with regard to the constitution of a human being, human behavior, human desires, the purpose of life, and human happiness.

Part 1 – Chapter 1: “Origin of the Universe” explains that Universe is a source and theatre of all existence: conscious and non conscious. The chapter analyses the most widely accepted explanations offered by modern scientific theories to the questions based on the Copernicans Principles, Big Bang theory, Edwin Hubble’s Law, and Quantum Physics.

Chapter 2: “Power of Empty Space” has been devoted to understand the power and utility of this empty looking space surrounding us. It expounds as to how this space is the most intelligent, and the most essential element of the creation constituting the holding place for all physical and non-physical existence, their movement and functioning.

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Chapter 3 & 4: Cosmic Order and Cosmic Energy: These chapters have focused on the functioning of the universe and its energy. It states that despite considerable advances in modern science, cosmic behavior continues to remain the greater mystery of all times. The origin and functioning of cosmic energy as explained by the modern science and available in the ancient Vedic writings constitute the core of the chapter cosmic energy.

Chapter 5: Idea of development tries to explain the concept of development and our existence. An overview of Human Development Index computed by UNDP, excessive exploitation of natural resources, and their impact on eco system, and sustainable development have also been covered in this chapter

Chapter 6: Human Health and Medical Science explains that it is not possible to cure the body with the help of modern drugs and herbal medications without attempting to cure the mind.

Part II – Chapter 1: Who am I?: To know oneself is the beginning of intelligence. Our body is the most precious asset blessed by the God. If we are unable to understand our own selves then how can we understand the world around us? The author has tried to analyze the human constitution, inter-se relationship of these constituents and their functioning. The chapter also touches on the role of pranic energy, and the different states of human body.

Chapter 2: Mind and Intellect: Seeds of all creations are first sown in the human mind. This chapter analyses the functioning of human mind and intellect, their powers and limitations with their role vis- a- vis human functioning and behavior.

Chapter 3: Concept of Dharma: There are some behavioral issues associated with us. What is right and what is wrong? What is ethical and what is unethical? What are we supposed to do in specific given situations? What should we refrain from doing? Are there some moral absolutes? These issues constitute the core of this chapter. The author has tried to examine the above mentioned issues in the context of ancient Indian writings on the concept of Dharma.

Chapter 4: Law of Karma: This chapter tries to analyse the law of action and reaction, i.e. law of Karma, its operation, and complexities associated with this vicious circle. The author has made an attempt to prove his point by taking some specific examples from our daily lives.

Chapter 5: Science of Maya: In this chapter, the author has examined the ancient Indian concept of Maya to explain the nature, and functioning of the world. An effort has been made to find out that how the human creativity is driven by the engine of Maya.

Chapter 6: Path of Happiness: This chapter explores whether the happiness can be achieved by following the path laid down by the modern science, and the contemporary life style. The author has tried to correlate the concept by giving some suggestions offered by our ancestors.

This is a wonderful book written in a very simple language and lucid style. It takes the reader to a very high platform of thought and provokes a sense of continuous reading due to its flow and contents. The author presents the world's most profound knowledge in a simple and understandable language in a sensible way with examples that every person can understand. He has not made any attempt to convince the readers but has just kept on explaining his view points in a precise manner.

The author of this book Mr. Gauri Shankar Gupta is a true man of the world. He has not only the wide knowledge of modern scientific and intellectual developments but is also acquainted with the wisdom of the past. The importance of this book has been explained by Mr. Peter Muller by confessing that, "This book will not be kept on my bookshelf but remain on my table, and I'm going to read it for the rest of my life. I'm going to learn from it, and will mediate on issues covered in it." Hence a must read book.

– G.S. Popli & Ajay Kr. Singh