

Review of

Ancient Hindu Science – Its Transmission and Impact on World Cultures **By Alok Kumar**

Concise yet Comprehensive, Well Researched History of the Origins of Science

Dr. Alok Kumar has produced a well researched masterpiece; a product of extensive research peering into the original documents from historical sources around the world (India, Arabia, Europe and China). He cites from the most ancient Hindu texts: Rigveda and Brāhmanas (2000 BCE or earlier), Upanishads, Sulbasutra, Vaishesika sutra, Susruta-Samhitā, Charak-samhitā, Kautilya's Arthshastra, Pingala's Chandah Sutra (5th century BCE) to Āryabhatīya (5th century CE), Bakshāli Manuscript (7th century CE) and Purānas (1st to 11th century CE).

With painstaking detail, illustrating original diagrams and equations, he has established the extent of fundamental concepts of science and mathematics that ancient Hindus had discovered. The book demonstrates the fundamental building blocks of math, physics, chemistry, mining and metallurgy, astronomy, medical/biological sciences/Ayurveda as well as the mind-body integration techniques (yoga, pranayama, meditation) that ancient Hindus had discovered as far back as 2000 BCE to 500 CE.

Alok kumar is a distinguished professor of Physics, author/co-author of books on the history of science, and has a deep knowledge and respect for ancient Hindu texts. Only a scholar with such impeccable credentials, broad interests and decades of perseverance can pull together the history of science of ancient Hindus in an objective manner. Lucidly composed in simple vernacular without jargon, carefully annotated and citing a substantial bibliography, this book is a fascinating read to understand the historical progression of science from Hindus in India during 2000 BCE to 500 CE, to the Arab world in the later part of first millennium CE, and from there to the western world in the second half of second millennium CE.

However, the history of science as the world knows it, and as it is taught to students all over the world, was written during the colonial period by western scholars who ignored the contributions of Hindus and claimed that science originated in Europe in the last 500 years and the rest of the world learnt it from the western sources. What a strange twist of history.

Those who are keen on learning the ancient origins of science owe deep gratitude to Dr. Alok Kumar for this remarkable book.

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