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Alberuni's India



Synopsis

In 1017 CE, at the behest of Sultan Mahmud of Persia, Alberuni, also known as Al-Biruni, travelled to India to learn about the Hindus and to discuss with them questions of religion, science and literature and what formed the very basis of their civilization. He remained in India for thirteen years, his exploration and study of the country gave way to a scholarly work that, in its profound understanding of almost all aspects of Indian life, remained unmatched for eight hundred years.

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Customer Reviews

If you are a scholar of Indian history and anthropology, this book may be just what you're looking for. It was a major break-through when it was written 1,000 years ago by a Central Asian polymath Alberuni. It is chock full of an outsider's view of Hinduism, Sanskrit, Indian mathematics and calendrical science. Laws, customs, religion, holidays, all are discussed in what has been described as the world's first anthropological study. Everything is there for this to be a smashing book. Everything except readability. If you aren't a scholar of Indian history, how much do you really want to know about the Indian science of calendars? Believe me, however much that is, this book has it and then some, and therein lies the problem. "Too much information," as my son likes to say.

It's seldom I complain that a book is too thorough in its examination of a subject, but this one qualifies. Here is a partial list of chapters, to indicate what I mean: On the Veda, the Puranas and other kinds of their national literature Their grammatical and metrical literature Hindu literature in other sciences- Astronomy, Astrology, etc.

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