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Bansi Pandit, *The Hindu Mind: Fundamentals of Hindu Religion and Philosophy for All Ages*, New Delhi: New Age Books, 2004, 448 Pp. Rs. 395 (First Asian Edition: Delhi, 2001). (Paperback)

Hinduism, the Sanātana Dharma is the oldest surviving religion in the world. This book presents the fundamental Hindu religious and philosophical thoughts in a logical and straight forward manner. Since the religious and philosophical literature of Hindu religion is vast, diverse and provides information about spiritual experiences on a large number of Hindu seers and saints, it is very difficult for a beginner to know about this religion without going through volumes of literature.

This book “Hind Mind” has two-fold purposes. First, it serves the purpose for those who are anxious to learn the basic concepts of Hindu religion without consulting the time-consuming research or involved in the complex Hindu thought. Second, the children born in Hindu families, especially outside India, lacking the opportunity to get some information about their own religion.

The author of this book mentions an excellent introduction to the philosophical, ritualistic, social, ethical and historical prospects of Hinduism. The main contribution of this treatise is that it emphasizes the interconnections and inter-relations among these different types of concept. The author tries his best to explain the important and essential fundamental concepts of Hinduism such as Brahman, *karma*, *dharma*, *māyā*, *saṃskāra* etc.

This highly remarkable book explains Hinduism in a lucid manner. This handy book provides a bird's eye view of the origin and progress of Hinduism. Each chapter is complete in itself, which contains informative tables and figures with cross references. It also gives perfect and rational answers to a number of questions on vast issues. This is informative, useful, effective and meaningful for the new generation which shows interest in western thoughts and culture. This compendium not only provides clarity of thought but also helps modern readers for a detailed understand of the difficult concepts. Here in this book the wisdom of Hindu heritage is highlighted and glorified that makes an everlasting impact on young Hindus who are forgetting their cultural heritage.

The faithful portraits of the sacred deities, well arranged and properly organized charts and tables, cross-references give enough information for a layman to understand the highly complicated and intricate issues of Hindu concepts. The language is very simple and crisp. Each and every reader must read this book to get basic information about Hinduism as well as Indian heritage and culture.

This book consists of 5 parts, focusing on four different topics which deals with religion and philosophy, symbolism of Hindu deities, Hindu epics and other topics such as four goals, Hindu *samskāras*, marriages etc. Besides these Part V contains Tables for better understanding; appendices with Meditation, Ārati- OM Jaya Jagadīśa Hare and sacred pilgrimages. The author also gives information about the cited works along with suggested readings; a glossary with a pronunciation guide and subject-Index for our detailed understanding. The cited figures includes classification of major scriptures such as *śruti* and *smṛti* with their sub-categories. Classification of other scriptures deal with six types of Vedangas and Upaveds i.e. Āyurveda, Dhanurveda, Arthaśāstra and Gandharva-veda. Understanding God in Hinduism gives information about the creative power of Brahman. Classification of Hindu philosophy deals with the orthodox school and heterodox with their sub-topics. Degrees of *bhakti* mentions about lower and Higher *bhakti* which are further divided into *bāhyabhakti*, *ananyabhakti* and *ekāntabhakti*. The Forms of *bhakti* deals with *Dāsyabhāva*, *Śakhyabhāva* and *Madhurabhāva*.

Besides these classifications, the author has given the figures of Lord Gaṇeśa, Brahmā, Viṣṇu, Śiva, Goddess Durgā, Lakṣmī, Sarasvatī, Śrī Rāma and Śrī Kṛṣṇa, Radhā and Kṛṣṇa, Hanumān, Sacred OM, Hindu Trinity and Principal characters of the Mahābhārata war.

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