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*Rahul Sankrityayan*

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*Rahul Sankrityayan*

?????? ?? ???? Rahul Sankrityayan

Volga Se Ganga is a collection of stories by great scholar and Writer Rahul Sankrityayan. Rahul Sankrityayan was a true vagabond who traveled to far lands like Russia, Korea, Japan, China and many others. He mastered the languages of these lands and was an authority on cultural studies.

It was first published in 1944 and is considered the greatest Hindi Book of modern Indian Literature. It was translated into many languages including English, Tamil, Telugu, Russian, Chinese and many more. This book is now also considered a Classic in History of Indian Literature.

## ?????? ?? ???? Details

Date : Published 2011 by Kitab Mahal (first published 1942)

ISBN : 8122500870

Author : Rahul Sankrityayan

Format : Paperback 396 pages

Genre : History, Historical, Short Stories

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## From Reader Review ?????? ?? ??? for online ebook

**Swati Agrawal says**

Finally done with this epic and I loved it.

I am an absolute no one to write a review for this amazing book. But I must say, it was an experience in itself.

The way society has changed over the past few thousand years, and why. Can't say I understood all of it but somehow, I felt my own thoughts resonating through major parts of the book.

I would recommend this book to everyone, however would suggest not to take up the original Hindi version as at times it becomes hard to understand.

Try getting hands on the English translation, or any other local languages that it has been translated to.

## **Sudeeran Shanmughadoss says**

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## Indian says

Historical account of the flight of Aryans from Volga (Russia) to Ganga (India) stretched over 20,000 years

One of the landmark historical-fiction penned in hindi by the super amazing gifted Rahul Sankritayan. The depths of his histyorical canvas startles me, that too when this book was actually first written & published in 1942!

Wish we had a English translation for all his books.Rahul Sanskrityayan was much bigger than William Dalrymple & Amitava Ghosh combined together.

Hope the English translation gets marketed well & reaches the English audience!

## **Gorab Jain says**

If books could be food for thought, this is a platter!

From the evolution of humans, to group, to family, to rivalry, to society, to country, evolution of religion, politics, God... Lots and lots of controversies! Mostly from an Indian context.

Initial stories had much more punch and impact than latter ones (except the mind blowing last chapter!)  
Really enjoyed this!

Thanks Santa for the lovely gift and fellow mates for the enriching discussions.

### **Asha Mohun says**

A worth read...this book takes us back to the old times...as if we are travelling along with the characters of this book.

## **Arun Radhakrishnan says**

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## **Arun Divakar says**

By the time a human being says goodbye to this World, he or she would have gone through a varied amount of experiences. A human life viewed in retrospect is an odyssey of sorts, a journey through cultures, lives, relationships and environments. To use a little more decorative language, it can be said that every life is a story that walks on two legs : always exciting and never much of a bore ! Now zoom out that viewing lens a little bit and let's look at a town, then a village and let's go farther to a city, a state, a nation, a continent and at the maximum point of focus let's look at humanity itself. It is a multitude of stories and if we were to borrow a statement from that grand old Greek named Aristotle, then the sum of all these parts is greater than the whole of humanity. Rewind these stories to the dawn of mankind and your book of stories start overflowing. The whole idea of this book is to capture the march of humanity centered around Asia from the first group of hunter gatherer humans to the time of WWII. The timeline as a whole is extremely ambitious and brimming with images and ideas. I am awed by Rahul Sankrityayan who was a tireless traveler in real life and came up with this collection while under incarceration for his participation in the Indian independence movement.

This is not a single story but a collection of multiple vignettes over a gradually unfolding timeline from the time of the first Aryans who migrated from across the Volga till the 1942 Quit India movement. Each chapter focusses on the life of one group of humans who bear witness to a monumental historic/political event of their times. The stories chart the rise of the present day societies which is to say that we see a gathering of humans moving from a matriarchal society to a patriarchal one, we see how sex slowly becomes a taboo subject, the rise of Vedic religions and Gods by suppressing or amalgamating with the pagan gods, how slavery becomes a norm, the first arms race, a consensus driven society becoming a monarchy and later an empire and so on as modern civilization takes root. The Wikipedia entry for the author calls him a polymath and a polyglot and it is by no means an exaggeration for the degree of detail that he captures in these stories are nothing of short of amazing. It is no mean feat to pen your short stories across a vast landscape full of larger-than-life characters who have formed the idea of India across decades.

At a later stage in his life, the author acquired Marxist socialist leanings which tend to rear up all too often in the final chapters of the book. The societal and political unrest of the times are captured in the conversations



**Asim Nondon says**

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**Shrilatha says**

highly recommend.. it's difficult to get this book these days i guess (always out of stock). it was written in hindi , n been translated to engslish, n almost all indian languages.. i read the kannada translation.

**Bhavika says**

Even when I had barely read 3 or 4 chapters, I realized that Volga se Ganga was going to be one of those few books that you keep pulling out from the shelf and read again and again. What an exquisite way of writing history!

The concept of the book is very interesting. Man's journey of 8000 years is divided into 20 short stories, from prehistoric times on the upper banks of Volga, to the years of approaching climax of the Indian freedom struggle. I am amazed by the magnitude of details provided in less than 350 pages. While I did feel throughout the book that the stories were heavily loaded with facts and that somewhere in this process, the stories lost the essence of being a story in the traditional sense, but then, as I later discovered, Rahul Sanskrityayan himself stated that he would be content even if the book qualified as history written in an interesting manner. Well, that it does, beyond any shadow of doubt.

There is a prominent leftist tilt in the interpretation of history, which was very much expected from the author. The central theme in most stories is the political system of the time and its impact on the social and economic conditions of common man. In this, the perspective appears to be somewhat deterministic.

The extremism is quite apparent and the point of view of the author might appear aggravating to many. The tradition of Vedas, Upanishads and Puranas has been portrayed as systems designed by the rulers and their priests as means to perpetuate their supremacy. Various religious doctrines have been fiercely criticized as the reason for the disparities in the society. He has not even spared Kalidasa who is believed to be praising the Gupta dynasty and its scions in his books like Raghuvansham and Kumarsambhava, in lieu of the Raghukula and Kumara Kartikeya. But if one has even a hint of a liberal nerve, Volga se Ganga is indeed, very gripping.

I personally found the last four stories less appealing. But nevertheless, the delight of reading the other stories does more than just compensate for this. *Volga se Ganga* is a brilliant piece of work. And of course, the Hindi is beautiful.

## Syeda Lammim says

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Abhaga says

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One of those books whose name I remembered from my school days and finally picked up to read. With such a long built anticipation, expectations were high. But the book sadly didn't live up to them.

The stories in the collection show snippets from various eras for Human history as Aryan tribes move into India from Central Asia and settle down. Although they are called stories, they are more like sketches and descriptions of those periods often from the point of view of verity of characters.

The stories are vintage Rahul ji. His vast scholarship is on display. While many of the historical assertions will not hold in the light of what has been discovered since, he must be judged based on what was known at that point of time. He doesn't mince his words and there are no holy cows. Everyone from Gupta Rulers to Gandhi and Ambedkar come in his line of fire. He believed in Buddhism and Marxism and extols them through out but doesn't hold back when he seems them something wrong as well. Unfortunately amidst all that, the fictional part, instead of being a conduit for ideas, feels like a baggage.

Also my gripe with the abysmal levels of production quality from some Hindi publishers continues. The book's introduction has portions copy pasted from another book and they forgot to change the book title also! Not only is the printing and binding quality pathetic, but also the text seems to not have been proofread or edited. What a shame for such a great scholar!

## **Nazrul Islam says**