Jagannātha Samrāṭ

Narahari Achar

Born  (India), circa 1657

Died  (India), circa 1744

Jagannātha, the famous Guru of Savāī Jai Singh, hailed originally from Maharāśtra. His father was Ganeśa, and grandfather, Viṭṭhaḷa. At the suggestion of Jai Singh, Jagannātha studied Arabic and Persian and became proficient in both. He translated works on astronomy and mathematics from Arabic into Sanskrit. His major work, Samrāṭ Siddhānta or Siddhāntasārakaustubha, is based on Tūsi’s version of the Almagest of Ptolemy; the first 13 chapters of Samrāṭ Siddhānta run parallel to the 13 books of the Almagest. Jagannātha also translated Euclid’s Elements into Sanskrit in 1719, and the latter work is called Rekhāgaṇīta. He compiled a glossary of technical terms in Sanskrit and composed a work on instrumentation called Yantraprakāra. Jagannātha was himself an observer and regarded observations as the pramāṇa, or deciding factor, whenever there were discrepancies between theory and observation. He admired Ulugh Beg and the advances in astronomy and mathematics in the Islamic world. Jagannātha did not use telescopes in his observations nor did he include telescopes in his work on astronomical instruments.

Selected References

Jagannātha (1901-1902). The Rekhāgaṇīta or Geometry in Sanskrit. Bombay Sanskrit Series, nos. 61 and 62, edited with notes by K. P. Trivedi. 2 Vols. Bombay: Nimaya Sagar Press. (This is actually part of the title.)

