

Retracing Transit of Venus - Connection to Madras Observatory

Transit of Venus that occurred in 1874 and 1882 and seen in India, drew enormous public and scientific interest. The Madras Observatory, being the premier centre for astronomy those days, made elaborate arrangements for transit observations.

Chintamany Ragoonatha Chary, the first assistant at the Madras observatory, was a man who possessed an enormous knowledge of both traditional sidhanthic astronomy as well as modern astronomy. He undertook to describe this beautiful celestial event and educate the public. Ragoonatha Chary, with encouragement from N. R. Pogson, then the Government astronomer at the Madras Observatory, brought out a pamphlet. Originally written in Tamil, it described with illustrations the phenomenon of transits (over the Sun), their circumstances and how they are observed.

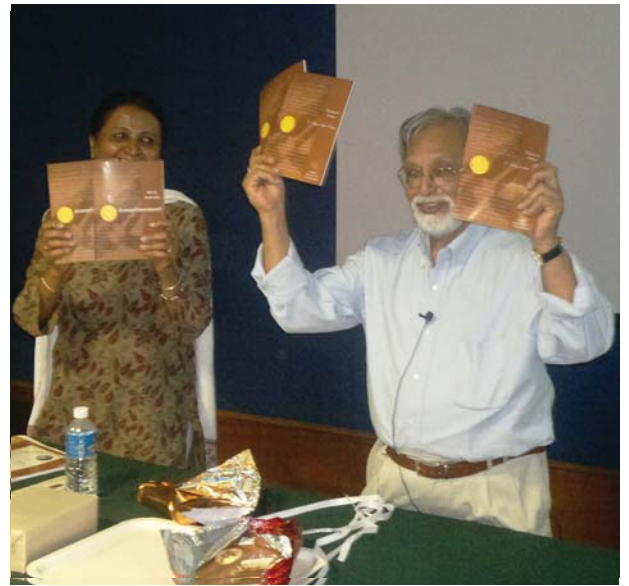
The Indian Institute of Astrophysics, has inherited this legacy and possesses copies of the pamphlet in English, Kannada and Urdu in its archives. The reprinted editions in English and Kannada versions of "Transit of Venus" were brought out by IIA Archives before the worldwide event of Transit of Venus on June 6, 2012.

This Archives publication was officially released by N. Kameswara Rao, former Senior Professor of IIA on the 25th May 2012, after his talk on "Ragoonatha Chary and his Astronomy at Madras Observatory" delivered at IIA.

-Christina Birdie,
Librarian, IIA



Chintamany Ragoonatha Chary



Release of the IIA Archives publication on "Transit of Venus" by Prof. N. K. Rao

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