

On different cultures of computations with geometrical entities in Sanskrit mathematical and astral sources

Agathe KELLER

Université de Paris, FRANCE

WHAT DOES IT MEAN to associate a numerical value with a geometrical entity such as a segment or an area? Different answers were given to this question in Sanskrit mathematical and astral sources leading to different ways of computing with numerical entities related to geometrical ones. This paper will argue that different “literate” cultures of computation with geometrical entities existed within Sanskrit sources even before ideas inspired by Arabic and Persian texts seeped into South Asian Sanskrit literature. We will use do so by looking at excerpts ranging from the *Śulbasūtras* (ca. first millennium BCE) to the *Krīyakramakarī* (ca. 1540).