

**Fausto Freschi e Andrea Cuna**  
**About this book**

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## About this book

The idea of putting together this book stems from the conference entitled “The Universe of Knowledge: Celebrating Shiyali Ramamrita Ranganathan (1892-1972) on the 50th anniversary of his death”, organised by the “Luigi Pio Tessitori” Indological Society in collaboration with the Department of Languages and Literatures, Communication, Education and Society of University of Udine, and held at the “Graziadio Isaia Ascoli” Friulian Philological Society in Udine, Palazzo Mantica, on 21st October 2022<sup>1</sup>.

The series of essays collected in the book revolves around two lines of inquiry. The first one focuses on Ranganathan’s cultural background with the aim of exploring some aspects of his personality and work. To this end, the rich and complex set of references to the cultural and philosophical roots that shaped his epistemological vision have been contextualised within a broader and more general historical and critical framework. Likewise, key concepts fundamental to the understanding of the philosophical and doctrinal presuppositions underpinning his work have been examined in their original and proper cultural context, emphasising the crucial role played by Hindu doctrines and the cultural tradition to which he belonged. The second line of inquiry takes a look at the most recent research developments combining classical Indological research with digital information and communication technologies, which fall under the purview of Digital Indology. Although many of the ideas contained in this part of the book are in a state of evolution and have not yet found their way into widespread practice, they open up new avenues for exploiting Indic knowledge through innovative digital ecosystem<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The “Ranganathan Project” has been proposed within the framework of the 2023-2025 Strategic Plan of the Department of Languages and Literatures, Communication, Education and Society of University of Udine as part of the “Texts and contexts, identities and cultures”, an action of the broader departmental research project entitled “Traditions/Translations: Texts, identities and contaminations in multilingual and intercultural contexts”.

<sup>2</sup> The essays by G. Ciotti, M. Franceschini and M. Dello Buono, C. Livio have been peer reviewed through a process administered by the editors.

In taking leave of the book, the editors are aware that no volume could provide a comprehensive overview of Ranganathan's personality and work, not to mention a detailed study of their many ramifications. The lacunae will be evident to anyone knowledgeable in the topic. Nonetheless, they hope that the book will serve as a stimulus for strengthening collaborative research and knowledge exchange between Indologists and information professionals interested in fostering Digital Indology as a discipline and practice.

It has been a long journey to get here, and it has been a smooth one in some respects, a rocky one in other respects, but we have finally made it. This is without any doubt a great team effort and we would like to thank all our colleagues who have contributed to the book. Our heartfelt gratitude also goes to Antonella Riem for all her advice and encouragement since the very beginning of the "Ranganathan Project".

Fausto Freschi and Andrea Cuna  
*Udine, July 2024*