INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

Eastern Regional Centre VARANASI.

Proceedings of two-day Kalatattvakosa-Samgosthi (17-18th March, 2009)

In order to articulate Kalatattvakosa Vol. X (concentrating on the themes of *natya* and *sangita*) a two-day Kalatattvakosa samgosthi was held at 'Rajshree Hall' of Katyayani Apartment, Durgakund, on 17th-18th March,2009. The inaugural session was chaired by Prof. N. Ramanathan from Chennai. Renowned art-critic Prof.Rai Anand Krishna adorned the chair of chief guest while Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam graced the occasion as special-guest. The following members were present:

- 1. Prof. G.C. Tripathi (IGNCA, New Delhi)
- 2. Prof. Jaishankar Lal Tripathi
- 3. Prof. Adya Prasad Mishra
- 4. Prof. Reva Prasad Dwivedi
- 5. Prof. Bratati Chakrabarty
- 6. Prof. M.N.P. Tiwari
- 7. Prof. R.C. Panda
- 8. Prof.P.K. Agrawal
- 9. Prof. Manjula Chaturvedi
- 10. Prof. Kamal Giri
- 11. Prof. Ritwik Sanyal
- 12. Prof. Rashmikala Agrawal
- 13. Prof. Gopabandhu Mishra
- 14. Prof. K.D. Tripathi (IGNCA, Varanasi)
- 15. Ms. Amali Perera
- 16. Mr. Mathew Sebashan
- 17. Mr. Rakesh Edwin
- 18. Ms. Anna Kavatevaskaya
- 19. Dr. Gayatri Kannan
- 20. Dr. Chandrakanta Rai
- 21. Dr. Bhanu Agrawal
- 22. Dr. Rama Ghose
- 23. Dr. P.C. Hombal
- 24. Smt. Mala Hombal
- 25. Smt. Medini Hombal
- 26. Dr. Layalina Bhatt
- 27. Dr. Iravati
- 28. Dr. Sashi Kumar
- 29. Dr. Satyavara Prasad
- 30. Dr. Gyanesh Pandey
- 31. Prof. Bhagvat Sharan Shukla
- 32. Dr. Shyam Narayan
- 33. Dr. Kunwarji Agrawala
- 34. Dr. Sadashiv Dwivedi

- 35. Dr. Sukumar Chattopadhyay
- 36. Dr. Shitala Prasad Pandey
- 37. Dr. Rajendra Prasad Gupta
- 38. Dr. U.C. Dubey
- 39. Dr. Vibha Dubey
- 40. Dr. Sumantra Mandal
- 41. Dr. Mrityunjai Mazi
- 42. Dr. Neeraj Pandey
- 43. Dr. R.K. Tripathi
- 44. Smt. Bimla Poddar
- 45. Smt. Shipra Chakrabarty
- 46. Lt. Col. Akash Sachan
- 47. Dr. Vidhi Nagar
- 48. Ms. Veena Singh
- 49. Ms. Soma Dutta
- 50. Ms. Jugnu
- 51. Ms. Alka Giri
- 52. Ms. Prateechi Chaturvedi
- 53. Ms. Sangita Kaliya
- 54. Ms. Anamika Rai
- 55. Ms. Sujata Mishra
- 56. Ms. Surabhi Seth
- 57. Ms. Priyanka
- 58. Ms. Anita Kumari
- 59. Ms. Ambika
- 60. Ms. Jayanti Dubey
- 61. Sri A. Kumar
- 62. Sri Ambuj Tripathi
- 63. Sri Vivek Kr. Jain
- 64. Sri Satyajit Dutta
- 65. Sri Pankaj Rai
- 66. Dr. Rama Dubey
- 67. Dr. Pranati Ghosal and all other staff members of IGNCA, Varanasi

The inaugural session of two-day seminar opened with a beautiful prayer to the Universal Mother Tripurasundari rendered by Dr. Gyanesh Pandey. In the holy atmosphere sanctified by the resonance of benediction, Prof.K.D. Tripathi rendered welcome address to the assembled guests. In his speech, Prof. Tripathi gave a brief survey of Kalatattvakosa volumes published so far and in a nutshell gave an outline of the forthcoming volumes. Special guest, Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam delivered inaugural address. In her short speech, she appreciated

entire scheme of Kalatattvakosa and at the same time, she introduced the theme of the present seminar.

As a chief guest of the seminar well-renowned Art-critic Rai Anand Krishna discussed illustrious singer Mian Tansen's life and his contribution to the flourishment of Indian classical music and focused on the nature of *svara*, *tala*, *raga* etc. In order to exemplify *tasira* of various *ragas*, he sang small units of *MarwaTodi*, *Gurjara Todi*, *Darvari Kanada*, *Malakosa*, *Mian ki Mallara* etc. Prof. N. Ramanathan gave presidential remarks and this session ended with vote of thanks rendered by Prof. K.D.Tripathi.

Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam:

First academic session was chaired by Prof. G.C. Tripathi, H.O.D., Kalakosha Division, IGNCA, New Delhi and the speaker was illustrious dancer, Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam who delivered a demonstration-lecture on nrtta-nrtya, accompanied by Dr. Gayatri Kannan. In a nutshell, Dr. Subrahmanyam in her speech gave entire gamut of nrtta-nrtya and discussed etymology, related words and different horizons of meaning of the word nrtta-nrtya based on three gunas and five mahabhutas. But it is remarkable that she could not agree with Dhananjaya's (10th Cent.) definition, distinguishing nrtta as mere rhythmic steps bereft of bhavas and nrtya as dance-performance manifesting internal ecstasy of joy. She opined that from the very outset (be it Vedic Literature or Bharata's NS) *nrtta* has never been defined as bhava-vihina. She remarked that natya is not any thing different from *nrtta*, rather it is something which includes both *nrtta* and nrtya. According to Dr. Subrahmanyam natya, nrtta, nrtya, nartana, lasya, tandava—all these are synonymous; rather these are various facets of same concept *natya*.

In this context, she focused on four types of *abhinaya* physical (*angika*), verbal (*vacika*), emotive /internal (*sattvika*) and decorative

(aharya). In course of her lecture she told that angika abhinaya is a vital part of Indian traditional theatre and it comprises sakha, ankura, and nrtta. In order to discuss gestures she told that proper word for gesture will be hasta and not mudra. In her opinion mudra is something different and it has nothing to do in dance. In order to distinguish these two she remarked mudra is employed to connote one's journey from external world to the Inner Self and nrtta-hasta-s are used to express one's internal feelings to the external world. In this context she mentioned names of various nrtta hasta-s, viz. Samyuta hasta, asamyuta hasta, pataka hasta etc. In her opinion ankura is another word related to hasta. In fact, ankura meaning sprout is the viniyoga of sakha or hasta, and wheat it is creatively used it expresses something meaningful. To exemplify this ankura, she demonstrated figures of Mahalaksmi seated on lotus, in abhaya and varada posture Mahasarasvati holding vina (lute), pustaka (books) and aksamala (rosary).

Later she focused on the postures like *tribhanga*, *abhanga* etc. and discussed different branches of dance-performance i.e. functions of *siras*, *uras*, *kati*, *bahu* etc. Different functions of head are named as *sirokarma* in the NS. She illustrated its thirteen functions (*trayodasa vidham sirah*). To exemplify *katibheda* and *bahubheda* she demonstrated five functions of *kati* (*kati natye nrtte ca pancadha*) and ten functions of hand. In course of her lecture she also discussed *upangas* like eyes, brows, face, lip etc. and their functions. Later on, in order to illustrate *hastabhinaya* and *padarthabhinaya* she demonstrated *bhramari hasta*, *bhramara cari*, *rathakranta cari*, wavy postures of Kalabhairava and his attributes.

In order to discuss *tandava* and its nature, Dr. Subrahmanyam remarked that Bharata was taught by the sage Tandu and technique of dance introduced by Tandu accompanied by *pancamukha-vadya* was known as *tandava* and in the hands of post-Bharata authorities sense of *tandava* has been restricted to mean the vigorous dance by male-performers. In course of

her lecture she differentiated *lasya* and *tandava*. She remarked that at the time of Bharata these two were treated as two bifurcations of nrtya and it has been distinctly differentiated by post-Bharata authorities.

She concluded that before 2000 years in Bharata's hand there was no basic difference between *nrtta* and *nrtya*. It is Dhananjaya (10th cent.) who distinctly differentiated these two. But according to Dr. Subrahmanyam *nrtta* is not a mere drill or puppetry it infuses *sattvika abhinaya* in absence of which *nrtta* will become a bogus thing. At the end Prof. G.C. Tripathi gave Presidential observation over this lecture.

Prof. G.C. Tripathi

In the beginning of 2nd Session Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam showed a video-show on the encounter of Jatayu and Ravana. Next, Prof. G.C. Tripathi delivered a lecture on *mudra* which was chaired by Prof. N. Ramanathan. In this lecture Prof. Tripathi surveyed entire universe concentrating on the core concept of *mudra*. He proved that *mudra* is permeated in dance, drama, rituals even in our day-to-day communication. Actually it was a semantic journey of *mudra* from Mesopotamia to Kashmir.

As regards the origin of this word, he showed the connection of Indian *mudra* with Mesopotamian '*muzara*' meaning coin or Iranian '*muzra*' or Persian '*musthra*' (to mean a written document). But the concept *mudra* is very much Indian and it is found in different branches of art not only in India but in Tibet, China, Japan and South-East Asia and adapted even by Buddhists.

In course of his lecture Prof. Tripathi discussed its different etymologies and multiple layers of meaning. It is remarkable that all these meanings are lying hidden in the root *mud*. According to dictionaries *mudra* means facial and verbal expression, seal or sealing, signate ring, sign, token, communication, bodily gesture, any imprint, imprint of Supreme Goddess, meditational concentration, money, one of the five varieties of script, etc.

As regards derivation, *mudra* may be derived from the root *mud* "to be happy" with the suffix *rak*. In the Tantric tradition, it was explained as *mudam rati dadatiti mudra* meaning that which gives pleasure or causes to be happy. Or, it may be shown as *modayati dravayati iti mudra* meaning that which melts away or causes to melt is *mudra*. But it is difficult to ascertain whether all these meanings are connected with the original concept lying in the root *mud*.

Later on Prof. Tripathi discussed *mudra* as it is found in the AV and Nirukta. He continued and showed the development of the concept *mudra* in Tantra and Saiva Philosophy especially Kashmir Saivism i.e. Pratyabhijna Philosophy. In order to find out the origin of the word *mudra* Prof. Tripathi traveled back in Indus Valley Civilization where different *mudra*-s are engraved on the seals and sealings. Similarly some *mudras* are engraved on the Mesopotamian seals and sealings also. Hence, he tried to link the word *mudra* with Mesopotamian '*muzara*', Iranian '*muzra*' or Persian '*musthra*'. In course of his lecture he also mentioned the interlink of all the meanings of *mudra*. Later on he remarked that *mudras* are universal because not only humans but animals also use various *mudra* to express their feelings; e.g. gorilla, monkey, tigers through various gestures (*mudra*) communicate with other members of their community.

Next, he discussed development of *mudra* in Tantra Literature mainly in Pratyabhijna Shastra. In this stream *mudra* has been derived from the roof *muc* to release or to be released; *mocayanti dravayanti grahadibhyah iti mudra*. According to this belief *mudras* are identical with *para sakti* i.e. Supreme Goddess, *mocanam dravanam yasmat mudrahtah saktayah smrtah*. Meditational concentration also is called *mudra* and in this context he defined and explained *sambhavi mudra*. Then he discussed varieties of *mudra* viz. *kayiki, karaja, manasi* etc. Next he focused on *mudras* used in day-to-day activities esp. in the *puja* rituals. At the time of giving bath (*snana*) and offering *upacaras* to the divinities varieties of *mudra* (*svastika mudra, dhenu mudra, ankusa mudra*) are shown to please the god.

In course of his lecture Prof. Tripathi mentioned two main functions of *mudra* i.e. (i) to communicate own feeling/purpose and (2) to concretize abstract

ideas through postures. He also focused on *mudra* in classical art-form e,g, in dance, drama and sculptural art.

Prof. Tripathi mentioned *mudras* are specific to different cultural communities that is why people of different culture have their own *mudras* to mean various things. *Mudra* in different cultures have its own history of development. In order to exemplify he mentioned some *mudras* (*abhaya*, *varada*, *upadesa*) common for Hindu divinities and some *mudras* which characteristics of Buddhist masters (rather preceptors) like Asvaghosa, Nagarjuna etc.

At the end of his lecture Prof. Tripathi distinguished between *hasta* and *mudra*; both of them stand for gestures conveying some specific *abhipraya* but the basic difference is through *hasta* one's outward journey is conveyed whereas through *mudra* one's inward journey is meant. It is a matter of sheet surprise that *mudra* which in Pratyabhijna Philosophy touches the height of Supreme Goddess, same *mudra* when it covers the aspect of money, it is very much down to the earth.

Prof. K.D. Tripathi gave some illuminating comments. At the end, Prof. N. Ramanathan gave his presidential observation.

The morning session of 18.3.09 was chaired by Prof. N. Ramanathan. Prof. K.D. Tripathi started the session by chanting a benedictory hymn. The speakers of this session were Dr. Sukumar Chattopadhyay and Prof. Kamalesh DuttTripathi who presented their papers on *asana* and *abhinaya*.

Dr. Sukumar Chattopadhyay:

First speaker of this session was Dr. S. Chattopadhyay who delivered a lecture on *asana*. Dr. Chattopadhyaya in his brief lecture discussed derivation, etymology and multiple layers of meaning of the word *asana* which are connected with the root *as* (meaning to stay or to sit).

Being derived from the root as and followed by locative suffix *lyut asana* may be explained as asyate upavisyate yatra that on which some body stays or sits. Citing from different commentaries of Amarakosa (Ksirasvamin, Bhanuji Diksita and Rayamukuta) Dr. Chattopadhyay elaborately discussed etymology of the term, which in his language is the core meaning of asana. In course of his

lecture he continued to discuss semantic development of *asana* and in this connection he mentioned some related words traced in Vedic Literature viz. *asandi, asandika, kasipu, kurca, prastara* and *phalaka* which are various synonyms of *asana* (seat) meant for king and his priests.

Gradually he explained various aspects of asana occurring in the Vedanga Sutras, Mahabharata, Smrti texts, Yoga philosophy etc. In order to discuss duties and position of student in a class-room Gautama Dharma Sutra instructs the student in a distinct language where to sit and how to take position before guru. Mahabharata discusses varieties of asana to mean yogic posture, viz. padmasana, vajrasana, bhujangasana, svastikasana etc. At the same time it is one of the sixteen objects to be offered to the deity and respectable persons like teacher, guests etc.. In Manu Samhita and other texts of Polity like Arthasastra asana is one of the six foreign policies of king meaning to keep patience and observe the activities of enemy king. In the parlance of philosophy especially Yoga Philosophy asana means yogic posture. The Yogasutra defines sthirasukham asanam.

Later on he explained development of *asana* occurring in the texts of Ayurveda, Tantra, classical Sanskrit Literature like Pratimanatakam, Raghuvamsa, Balaramayana etc.

In the last phase of his lecture, Dr. Chattopadhyay told importance of *asana* in the texts of dance, painting and sculptural art viz. Visnudharmottara Purana, Sangita Ratnakara, Silparatnakosa etc. In the texts of dance *asana* occurs to mean the position and posture of dance; while in the books of Sculptural Art it means seat or pedestal of the image. In this context he focused on difference of *mudra* and *asana*.

On this paper, Prof. K.D. Tripathi rendered illuminating comments how asana means stasis even in the moment of dynamism. However, Prof. Tripathi suggested some important aspects of asana dealt with in various other fields not taken into account by Dr. Chattopadhyay in his paper and advised him to include the same in order to make it upto the mark. Sri Kunwarji Agrawala also gave some comments on this multi-dimensional concept.

Prof. K.D. Tripathi:

Prof. K.D. Tripathi was the next speaker, who delivered his speech on abhinaya, a pervasive term. In his detailed speech based on NS and Abhinavabharati thereon, Prof. Tripathi discussed the meaning of abhinaya, its etymology, varieties of abhinaya, their different angas and aspects, theatrical auditorium etc. In his words, "traditional notion of abhinaya is restricted in NS and Abhinavabharati." The root ni being prefixed by abhi and followed by ac forms the word abhinaya which means abhi nayanam abhinayah or abhi niyate arthan i.e. carrying forward the meaning of drama to the audience. It covers all the histrionic activities physical (angika), verbal(vacika), mental (sattvika) and decorative (aharya).

At first he explained what is *natya* and its probable definitions provided in the NS itself. Then he talked why it is simultaneously called *veda* and *sastra*. Because of its beginninglessness (*anaditva*) it has been called Veda and as because entire discipline of *abhinaya* has been systematized here, therefore it has been designated as *sastra*. Prof. Tripathi opined that *natya* is not mere mimesis but it is realistic representation of the emotive states (*bhava*) of beings and retelling of *rasa*. Because *natya* is deeply rooted in *bhava* (or *cittavrtti*) which may be explained as *bhavatiti bhavah* or *bhavayatiti bhavah*. In *kirtana* it means something repetitive but in a work of art particularly in theatre, it is not only retelling of *bhava* but it is something glorifying restatement because *natya* creates space between actor and spectators.

Next he dealt with *natyagrha* (theatrical auditorium), its different shape and size which is discussed in the 2nd ch. Of NS. In the 3rd ch. Entire matter of Universe is recreated in *natya* i.e. theatrical performance. Later on he talked on the language of theatre which is derived from *nrtta*. In this context he told "*tasya sakha ca, nrttanca, anukarananca*" i.e. *sakha, nrtta* and *anukarana* these three comprise theatrical language.

Next, he switched over to rasa, "natyam rasah" (natya itself is described as rasa), how this rasa is created (vibhavanubhavavyabhicaribhava

samyogadrasanispattih)—this rasa is dealt in the VIth ch. of NS. Although abhinaya covers all the four aspects but as because sattvika abhinaya was dealt in details already, Prof. Tripathi concentrated on angika and vacika abhinaya. To explain angika abhinaya he discussed different angas and upangas and their different functions. Later on, he talked on vacika because speech is the cause of entire universe and in Indian Traditional theatre speech occupies a vital position. As regards plot of theatre, NS covers loka, veda and adhyatma as pramanas i.e. authentic sources from which theatrical plot may be collected and as regards its script NS discusses on arya bhasa, jati bhasa, desa bhasa etc. Next he talked on phonology and morphology of theatrical language which have been discussed in NS (9th – 13th ch.). Then Prof. Tripathi concentrated how 17th ch. of NS brilliantly discusses the principles of recitation (pathya guna) and rendering of language. They include usage of specific musical notes for particular moods or sentiments and identification of three voice registers in siras, uras and kantha and four pitches of udatta (high), anudatta (low), svarita (circumflex) and kampita (quivering). He also focused on the treatment of six ornaments of delivery (varnalankara-s), viz. high, low, excited, grave, fast and slow taking into account the voice in terms of degree (raising or lowering) i.e. spatial attribute and in terms of speed i.e. temporal aspect. In course of his lecture he also explained six angas viz. viccheda, visarga, arpana, anubandha, dipana and prasamana and their necessity.

Prof. Tripathi also discussed *samanyabhinaya* and *citrabhinaya*. At the end of his lecture, Prof. N. Ramanathan gave presidential comments.

In the 4th Session of the Seminar, two lectures were delivered on (i) *sangita-gana-gita* by Prof. Ramanathan and (ii) *karana/angahara* by Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam. Both the lectures were chaired over by Prof. Ritwik Sanyal.

Prof. N. Ramanathan:

Prof. Ramanathan was first speaker of this session who presented a collective paper on (a) sangita-gana-gita, (b) marga-desi and (c) vadya-atodya

(which are necessary components of *sangita*) although in Kalatattvakosa, Vol. X, they will have to be treated as three separate articles.

Prof. Ramanathan started his lecture with *marga/desi* interpreted by A.K. Coomaraswamy "*marga* as sophisticated/classical and *desi* as folk/native." Both the words are adjectives of *sangita* and *raga*. Actually these are technique (*paddhati*) of presenting *gana/gita*. In course of his lecture, Prof. Ramanathan mentioned names of various *paddhatis* viz. *suddhapaddhati*, *gaundalividhi*, *perani vidhi* discussed in the Nartanadhyaya of SR. Prof. Ramanathan linked this *suddhavidhi* with *marga* and *gaundali vidhi* with *desi* technique.

In this context he reminded the audience that these are not associated with Bharata School. Later exponents like Kasyapa, Kohala and Matanga discussed on employment of *gramaragas* in drama. Even musical forms like *prabandha* associated with drama were not traced in Bharata's NS.

In this context Prof. Ramanathan opined that most possibly works of Bharata and Dattila seem to have undergone changes even after *Desi* texts had come out suggesting a slight influence of the latter. Kohala seems to belong to desi school.

Next he told on the relationship of *desi* and *sangita*. According to Prof. Ramanathan's opinion "in a way *desi* and *sangita* are synonyms and he reminded that in the beginning *sangita* did not connote sense of music as found in the texts of 14th century. Performance of *sangita*, primarily meant music supported by dance and drumming. Thus *nrtta* seems to have been incorporated as a decorative limb. So music performance made up by *sangita*, supported by *vadya* and movements of body (i.e. *gatra viksepa*) is explained in the *suddha paddhati* and *gaundali vidhi* dealt in the SR. But it is to be noted here that *nrtta* as a limb of *sangita* did not incorporate the aspect of *abhinaya*.

In course of time connotation of *sangita* underwent change. In the next phase, Prof. Ramanathan told on *gana/gita/gandharva*) which denoted for tonal or melodic forms. Next he defined *gana/gita/gandharva* according to SR (4.1):

ranjakah svarasandarbhogitam ityabhidhiyate /
gandharvam ganam ityasya bhedadvayamudiritam// (SR)

According to this definition delightful arrangement of texts/words is called *gita*, *gana* and *gandharva* are its two varieties only.

This *gana/gita* arises from tune/voice. In this context he mentioned primarily *samagana* also stood for a collection of tune and not a collection of words. In non-saman system that of Bharata, Dattila and Visakhila *gandharva* was used to mean music. In the NS *gana* is used to mean a restricted sense i.e. *dhruvagana*. *Gita/gana* primarily stood for music, rather a meaningful text i.e. lyrics (vani). Later on Prof. Ramanathan dealt *prabandha* composition of *gita* and its varieties like *salagasuda*, *desi suda* etc.

The last phase of his lecture was on *vadya/atodya* i.e. all the instruments used for musical performance. He mentioned four varieties of *vadya* i.e. *Ghana,susira, tata* and *avanaddha*. NS has devoted an entire chapter on *vadya* (34th ch.) for the embellishment of musical performance. In this context, he mentioned names of different *vadya-s*, their use, technique of playing, varieties of drums, how they were manufactured etc. At the end of his discussion, he dealt on *nrtta, nrtya* and *natya*.

Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam:

Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam was last speaker of the session, who told on *karana/angahara*. She started with the definition of *karana*: "*hasta-pada samayogah nrttasya karanam smrtam*" as defined in the NS. In course of her lecture she mentioned 108 *karanas* dealt in the Natyasastra and other authentic texts of music. In this context she reminded *karanas* are courses of action, it is not a posture but a movement. Each of the *karana* is a unit of *nrtta*.

In course of her lecture Dr. Subrahmanyam narrated history of South Indian temples where *karana* sculptures have been found, e.g. in the Tanjavur temple, Visnuswami temple of Chidambaram and Kumbhakonam temple images have been found which may be described as best examples of *karana*.

Next she told *angahara* which consists of eight *karanas*. In course of her lecture she mentioned thirty-two *angaharas*. Through a video demonstration she

illustrated 108 *karanas* and thirty-two *angaharas* and how they have been engraved on temple sculpture. She also focused on *pindi, mandala, khanda* and *cari*.

Prof. Ananda Krishna and Prof. K.D. Tripathi gave illuminating comments over this lecture. Prof. Ritwik Sanyal gave presidential observations on both the lectures. The programme ended with vote of thanks rendered by Prof. K.D. Tripathi, Advisor, IGNCA, Varanasi.

Pranati Ghosal