

## Concept Note

### International Conference

on

### **DEMITRIOS GALANOS AND HIS LEGACY: Indo-Greek scholarship 1790-2018.**

**3<sup>rd</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2018**

**Demetrios Galanos** (1760–1833) has a special place among the foreign scholars who came to study India in the nineteenth century. He was the only one who stayed in India for 47 years, and except for the first seven years when he lived in Calcutta, for 40 years he lived in the city of Varanasi, mastering Sanskrit, Hindi, Arabic, Persian and several other languages, from local scholars, most of all from Munshi Shital Singh. He translated into Greek the *Bhagvad Gita*, among many other Sanskrit texts. His major contribution was the compilation of a Sanskrit-English-Greek lexicon of about 9000 words. He died on 3<sup>rd</sup> May, 1833 and was buried in the cemetery for Catholics with wordings, “*Eis mnemen Demetriou Galanou tou Athenaiou*” (*In the memory of Demtrios Galanos, the Athenian*) carved on his gravestone.

Galanos first came as a young teacher to the children of the then prosperous Greek business community settled in Calcutta, where he collected a small fortune from his tuitions as well from investments in business. He then afterwards moved to Varanasi living an austere life of a scholarly recluse. His surviving funds were used for the establishment of Athens University of the newly independent Greek state.

The IGNCA has undertaken to revive the memory of Galanos to further focus on an age long tradition of scholarly and creative exchanges between India and Greece by several academics and artists both Indian and Greek, in modern times. Cultural cooperation between India and Greece is also the need of the hour seeing the present scenario. It is also proposed to invite some Greek musicians who will present their art at dedicated concerts, in addition to giving presentations in lecture-demonstration style.

Conferences and concerts will be held in two places, New Delhi (3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> February, 2018) and Varanasi (8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> Feb 2018). The academic programme and musical concerts shall be held under the Bharat Vidya Prayojana, a long term academic programme of the IGNCA. After the inaugural

on 3<sup>rd</sup> February, 2018, another day of conference will be held at IGNCA, Delhi where learned papers will be read. After a break of three days, the conferences shall resume at Benaras Hindu University in Varanasi. The IIC, New Delhi, Bharat Adhyayana Kendra of BHU, Varanasi, Indo-Hellenic Friendship League, New Delhi and Embassy of Greece are active collaborators in the event.

The specific aim of these events is to review and record the cultural contributions of Greeks and Indians from Galanos to the present.

Papers will focus on all the major scholarly works done by Galanos, Eliko Zannas, D. Vassiliadis, Leda Shantala, N. Kazanas, P. Kavouras, E. Abadzi, D. Dinopoulos and several others on the Greek side and on the Indian side by U. P. Arora, Gaya Charan Tripathi, Bharat Gupt and many others. It will also cover a study of the great impact of Indian music on the Greek traditional music and thus on Greek films from 1940-70. Greek musicologist and musicians performing traditional Greek music, influenced by Indian melodies, has also been invited.

As part of the celebrations, the IGNCA proposes to seek a digital copy of all the manuscripts of the works of Galanos preserved in the National Library in Athens. This is in continuation of the procurement of a microfilm of Galanos's Sanskrit-Greek Dictionary by Prof. Bharat Gupt in 1996 for the IGNCA.

The IGNCA also proposes to sign MOUs with many Greek Universities, beginning with University of Athens, Pandeon University and the University of Volos for cooperation in the field of philosophy and arts.

