

**Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Eastern Regional Centre, Varanasi**  
**A report of the release function of Natyashastra vol. I: Nepali Version**  
**( A Kalamulashastra Series Publication)**

The release function of the New edition of Natyashastra vol. I of Muni Bharata, prepared by Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), Eastern Regional Centre, Varanasi was organized by IGNCA, New Delhi, in association with Bharata-Ilango Foundation for Asian Culture (BIFAC), Chennai at the mini hall of Narada Gana Sabha, TTK Road, Alwarpet, Chennai on March 3, 2016 at 6.30 P.M.

The function started with the procession lead by Padmabhashana Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam, trustee of IGNCA, New Delhi and Managing trustee of BIFAC, Chennai and Prof. K.D. Tripathi, editor and Advisor, IGNCA, ERC, Varanasi with the volume I of the Natyashastra placed on the Poornakumbha. Prof. Tripathi was followed by Smt. Veena Joshi, MS in-charge, IGNCA, New Delhi, Dr. Sudhir Lall, Assistant Professor and coordinator IGNCA, ERC, Varanasi, Shri Sanjai Singh, A. F. A. & A.O. IGNCA, ERC, Varanasi, Dr. Narendra Dutt Tiwari, Research Officer, IGNCA, ERC, Varanasi, Dr. Rajani Kant Tripathi and Dr. Trilochan Pradhan, Project Associates, IGNCA, ERC, Varanasi, Prof. R. Nagaswami, Prof. K. G. Paulos, Dr. Pappu Venugopal, Dr. R. Ganesh and other dignitaries present in the function. Thereafter, Prof. Tripathi performed "Jarjar Pooja" (meant for removing obstacles). An inaugural dance by the students of Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam was performed as the mark of beginning of the celebration.

The welcome speech was delivered by Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam, followed by the honouring and felicitation of the dignitaries present on the dais.

**Dr. N Gopalswamy, former Chief Election Commissioner and chairman, Kalakshetra Foundation, Chennai, released the book, Natyashastra vol. I, of Muni Bharata and offered the first copy to shri Chinmay R. Gharekhan, the president, IGNCA trust, New Delhi and copies to other dignitaries.** On behalf of Bharata-Ilango Foundation for Asian Culture **Dr. N. Gopalswamy, Former Chief Election Commissioner of India and Chairman, Kalakshetra Foundation, Chennai and Dr. P. Subrahmanyam conferred the title "Bharataputra" the life time achievement award for his unique contribution and dissemination of Natyashastra throughout the country.**

In the beginning of academic programme, Prof. Tripathi gave a brief introduction of the book Natyashastra. He spoke about history of printed editions of the Natyashastra. He informed that eight MSS from Nepal and two MSS from Jaipur were utilised in this edition. Among the MSS from Nepal the oldest one was written in 1223 AD. Out of these MSS first, second and forth were written in Bhoojimole script and third, fifth, sixth and seventh were in Newari script. The eighth one the transcribed copy of the second MS was transcribed in 1826 A.D. in Devanagari script. The patron of MS was some General Bhimsen and the scribe a Buddhist Sundara. His son Vidwan Padmanidhi corrected the copy. According to the colophon of the MSS, these were not only written for academic purposes but also for performance purpose.

Prof. Tripathi, in his speech, expressed his gratitude to Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts especially to the president of IGNCA trust, New Delhi and all the Member secretaries including our present MS in-charge Smt. Veena Joshi for their constant support and inspiration behind this publication. Natyashastra is one of the two hundred works under the Kalamulashastra series, Kalatattvakosha (Lexicon of the Arts) and so on. He expressed his thankfulness to his team members who worked hard for this publication with great enthusiasm and zeal.

Chinmay R. Gharekhan, the President of IGNCA trust, New Delhi stated in his address that it's really a proud moment for IGNCA as well as for himself. He stated further that he would like to recall Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan Jee, the creator of IGNCA's words: "IGNCA is indeed an unique organization and that can't be compared with any other institution", and louded contribution of Prof Kamalesh Datta Tripathi, the Advisor and in-charge of Varanasi centre in a high pitch tone.

A symposium on "**Natyashastra in South India**" was also organised on this occasion. The panellists were Dr. R. Nagaswamy, Prof. K. G. Paulose, Dr. Pappu Venugopal Rao and Shatavadhani Dr. R. Ganesh.

**Prof. R. Nagaswami** spoke on **Natyashastra in Tamil soil**. The great poet Ilango of 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD has utilised all the aspects of Natyashastra in his composition called "**Chellapatigaram**".

If Natyashastra is Veda or Lakshanagrantha or Grammer every aspect of it and every chapter of it has been utilised completely. This composition is called "**Natakakavyam**" by Medieval commentators. In the beginning of Natyashastra Bharata describes vrittis. There are four vrittis namely Bharati, Sattvati, Arabhati and Kaishiki. "Chellapatigaram" has got three chapters Puhar kadam, Madurai kadam and Vendi kadam. At the end of each kanda there is a summary or gist given by the author Ilango himself. In which he writes that the first kanda contains Bharati Vritti, the second Kanda utilises Arabhati and Satvati Vritti and the third kanda utilises the Kaishiki Vritti. "Chellapatigaram" contains a lot of kadai. Some people interpret that kadai is derived from katha but Adyaranalla says it is not katha but it is Gatha, song, poetry. Gatha is Kadai in Tamil and it means song and dance. According to him each and every chapter in Natyashastra has been exploited in "Chellapatigaram" to the maximum extent. Chellapatigaram, that goes back to second century AD and even earlier, is a very good example of study, research and use of Natyashastra in Tamilnadu.

**Prof. K. G. Paulos**, while speaking on aspects of **Natyashastra in Kerala**, mentioned this state has innovations, where all the techniques of actual performance are centred on the Natyashastra. The earliest form of acting in Kerala is Kutiyattam. The Kutiyattam has been duly recognized as the intangible heritage of humanity of UNESCO. Further he underscored the importance of the new edition of Natyashastra: Nepali version and stated that this work will enrich the contemporary study of Natyashastra.

Another panellist **Dr. Pappu Venugopal Rao** spoke on the **Natyashastra in Andhra Pradesh**. According to him the most important thing to remember is the contribution of Manavalli Ramakrishna Kavi (1866-1987). He was a voracious reader and patronage of art and culture. If he had to choose between buying a Manuscript and buying a meal, he would skip the meal and buy a MS. Unfortunately, in the last years of his life he sold some of them to buy food. With that kind of passion he had collected about 40 MSS of Natyashastra and the sole **Abhinava Bharati** and his "**Bharata-kosha**" is an encyclopaedia for all of us who have anything to do with musical dance.

Then he mentioned another scholar **P. S. Apparao** who translated **Natyashastra in Telugu**. In its forward Prof. V. Raghavan writes: "in Andhra particularly **Bharatashastra** have been highly developed in medieval time in courts of Kakatias, Reddies, Rayas and Nayadoos. Bharata's Natyashastra is an encyclopediya. Some chapters, topics and subtopics of it was published as an independent book in due course of time. The Scholars of Andhra have written many books based on Natyashastra, Rasarnavasudhakar by Singbhoopal (1330), Prataparudrayashobhooshanam (14<sup>th</sup> century) and so on.

Shatavadhani **Dr. R. Ganesh** spoke on the topic **Natyashastra in Karnataka**. Karnataka has cherished in both Tattva and Prayoga, Lakshya and Lakhsana and so many things that overlap with Andhra and Tamilnadu. In Karnataka, Sanskrit and Kannada tradition both prevailed in a wonderful harmonious manner one barrowed from the other, no contempt, nothing was seen as marga and deshi coexisted. Marga is realisation and deshi is a presentation. A realisation is internal and a presentation is external. Realisation is Anubhava and presentation is Abhivyakti. The Adi Kavi Pampa himself has a lot of details regarding Natya. His first work Adipurana describes the celestial dancer Nilanjana dancing in the heaven, the first Tirthankara's realisation of transcendental nature of life and its ephemeral nature. In terms of particular section Pampa comes with so many details of dance, so many variety of dancers, and word "adabu" which appeared first time in kannada literature. So the word adabu goes back to 9<sup>th</sup> century. Sanskrit, kannada and prakrita scholar T. V. Venkatachalam shastri's student Dr. Tulasi Ramachandra has published one book "**Padagati and Paadagati**", which gives details of the Natyashastra and the tradition of dance in Karnataka and in Kannada literature. It describes some special acrobatic dances like Suchimukha nritya. Where the tips of needles are smeared with poison, and dancers should enter from one side and exit from the other. Without getting her life in to risk, She carries dancing without looking the theatre.

In the presidential address, Dr. N. Gopalswamy congratulated Prof. Tripathi, the recipient of "**Bharataputra Award**" and other dignitaries present on the dais, he also congratulated panellists who presented such a detailed expositions of Bharata's Natyashastra. Further he recalled the day when he was associated with the Ministry of Culture, and the day on which UNESCO conferred the world's heritage status on "**Kutiyattam**". He stated that it was a good fortune for him to visit to Kerala and witness the Kutiyattam dance performance. He went to Kurlanoor area to see the place where the Kutiyattam artists were trained and visited the Madhava Chakiyar's place. Couple of days before he

left the Ministry of Culture, UNESCO also conferred the world's oral heritage status on Vedic Chanting. The person who brought IGNCA to such a glory has been Dr. Kapila Vatsyayana. One can not really describe the extent of her contribution. It would be suffice to say for her that Indian heritage would have not got the fame and position in the world heritage without her perseverance and tireless effort. He hoped that in the leadership of Shri Chinmaya R. Gharekhan, IGNCA will act wonderfully in terms of preserving this culture. He also mentioned that a huge number of MSS have been digitized or microfilmed by IGNCA. He made a humble request to put more efforts to bring out these digitized versions as prints form with commentaries. In the end, he congratulated Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam and was quiet sure that in her guidance and direction IGNCA and BIFAC will raise to new heights.

The function was concluded with the vote of thanks delivered by Ms Veena Joshi, MS in-charge, IGNCA, New Delhi, followed by a dance performance "**Nrityarpana**" by the students of Dr. Padma Subrahmanyam, comprising three dance style i.e. Mohiniattam, Bharatanatyam and 3 Angaharas.

The function was co-ordinated by Dr. Gayatri Kannan, a trusty of BIFAC. At this occasion many other dignitaries like Prof C. V. Chandrasekhar, a renowned artist and Professor graced the occasion as an audience.

(Narendra Dutt Tiwari)