

Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts Regional Centre

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IGNCA, Varanasi started its journey in 1987 in association with Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, Sarnath. It achieved the status of an independent unit in 1988 with a group of active researchers and employees under the leadership of Dr. Bettina Bäumer and started working as a branch office of Kalākośa division, IGNCA, New Delhi to undertake research and publication programmes related to preparation of reference works, glossaries, dictionaries and encyclopaedia concerning the arts, humanities and general cultural heritage.

At the outset, main concern of IGNCA, Varanasi was to prepare and publish Kalātattvakośa (to be completed in about 15 volumes), containing approximately 261 terms on fundamental concepts of Indian arts. Seven volumes have been published so far; Volume VIIIth is under preparation and IXth is under process. Besides Kalātattvakośa the Centre is carrying out other activities like editing of some of the texts of Kalāmūlaśāstra Series, the task of reference collection from various Indological disciplines for IGNCA's other projects with the help of experts. Apart from this, it is organizing periodical lectures, Seminars, meetings and workshops etc.

In course of its about 29 years' journey IGNCA, Regional Centre, Varanasi came in contact with four eminent scholars, viz., Dr. Bettina Bäumer was the first coordinator who worked in IGNCA, Varanasi from 1988 up to 1995. During her coordinatorship IGNCA, Varanasi has published Kalātattvakośa Volumes I–III, Prakṛti Volume III (Mahābhūta Seminar Volume) and Śīparatnakośa – all these texts were edited by Dr. Bettina Bäumer.

Prof. R.C. Sharma took the charge of Hony. Coordinator IGNCA, Varanasi in the April, 1995 and continued up to July, 2003. In this period IGNCA, Varanasi has published Kalātattvakośa Volume IV & V and revised edition of Kalātattvakośa Volume I & II as well as A.K. Coomaraswamy's Perception of the Vedas.

In 2003 Prof. Vidya Niwas Misra joined as Hony. Coordinator of IGNCA, Varanasi and continued till his last breath on 14.2.2005. During his time, Kalātattvakośa Volume VI took its shape. Apart from Kalātattvakośa Volume VI, at this period IGNCA, Varanasi started the project of Glossary of Key Art Terms.

Prof. K.D. Tripathi has joined IGNCA, Varanasi in the June, 2007 as Hony. Coordinator. By this time status of IGNCA, Varanasi has been elevated as a Eastern Regional Centre of IGNCA however, with the same object, i.e., one of the unit of Kalākośa Division. In 2016 the status of this office renamed as Regional Centre, Varanasi. The IGNCA elevated his status as Advisor in the August, 2008 and continued till

4.12.2016 and from 4th December 2016, Dr. Vijay Shankar Shukla taken over the charge of this centre as Regional Director. IGNCA is going to open six more regional centres (along with existing three centres) across the different parts of India for extensive interaction with the valuable culture of this country. Now the word Eastern has been elevated and Regional Centre, Varanasi has become a part of total nine Regional Centres spread all over the country.

Academic Activities:

I. Kalātattvakośa

The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) is mandated, among other tasks, to explore and expound the multi-layered and multi-dimensional nature of Indian arts, while highlighting their holistic approach. Amongst its series of publications the **Kalātattvakośa** (KTK) occupies a significant position as a multi-volume encyclopaedic lexicon of the fundamental concepts of Indian arts, which are essential for their appropriate contextual understanding.

These timeless concepts, denoted in terms of pervasive keywords, have been culled out from various textual sources of Sanskrit, Pāli and Prākṛta following extensive discussions with eminent subject experts. The entire KTK project is thematically structured and every volume is a conceptual continuation and extension of the previous one, rather than being a stand-alone compilation of related articles. So far, six volumes have been published and the themes concerned with terms on *Vyāpti* (Pervasiveness) KTK Volume I, *Dēśa-Kāla* (Space and Time) KTK Volume II, *Mahābhūta* (Primal Elements) KTK Volume III, *Sṛṣṭi-Vistāra* (Manifestations of Nature) KTK Volume IV, *Ākāra-ākṛti* (Form/Shape) KTK Volume V, *Ābhāsa* (Appearance/Symbolic Form) KTK Volume VI and *thāna/Āyatana* (Substratum/ Abode) Volume VII have been brought out in this series.

At present IGNCA, RC, Varanasi concentrates in preparing Kalātattvakośa Volume VIII on *Pratika – Saṅketa* (Symbols & motifs). The eminent Art-Historian & Emeritus Professor, Prof. M.N.P. Tiwari has accepted the Editorship of the same. Apart from Kalātattvakośa some other new projects have been taken up details of which is given below.

Besides the preparation of Kalātattvakośa's remaining volumes IGNCA, RC, Varanasi proposes to expand its activities through several unique and challenging projects.

II. Edition of Nāṭyaśāstra

Under the Kalāmūlaśāstra programme of IGNCA a number of texts have been published. From the very beginning, Nāṭyaśāstra of Bharata was included in this programme as a primary text. Now, IGNCA, RC, Varanasi has undertaken the project to prepare the Nāṭyaśāstra text on the basis of unpublished selected manuscripts from

National Archive, Kathmandu, Nepal and a few other unpublished manuscripts procured from available in Hindi region. In this series first volume is sent to press, IInd Volume is under process of Editing. Besides, preparing the critically edited text of Nāṭyaśāstra Nepal version, IGNCA, RC, Varanasi has been working on the Prayoga (performing aspects) of Sanskrit theatre also. Accordingly a month long Workshop (15.1.2014 - 16.2.2014) on Indian traditional theatre based on *Chau* dance under the name *Sastra* and *Prayoga* was organized by IGNCA, RC which was concluded with a stage performance of Sanskrit play *Veṇi Saṃhāra* at Nagari Natak Mandali on 16.2.14.

III. Publication of other volumes:

Two Monographs, (1) a Special lecture (held on March 2010) volume, i.e. “Meaning & Beauty: Shasric Foundation of Indian Aesthetics” and (2) a National Seminar (held on February 2011) Proceedings, i.e. “Indian and Western Philosophy of Language” is in press.

IV. Computerization of Reference Cards:

At present IGNCA, RC, Varanasi possesses 76000 Reference cards as ready-materials for the Research Scholars of our country, especially for the Indological Study. All these cards have been computerized and linked to the website of IGNCA, for the consultation of scholars from all over the World.

V. The Documents of the Regional Folk Tradition of Narratives and Music:

IGNCA, RC, Varanasi has started another fresh programme of the documentation of the folk traditions scattered all over the Eastern part of U.P. and Bihar, Chattisgarh and Bundelkhand. As a part of the programme IGNCA, RC, Varanasi has started the Lokakhyana project in which the documentation of narrative tradition of Biraha of South Varanasi and the adjacent areas of Mirjapur and Allahabad and so on have to be documented. This programme includes the documentation of “*Chanaini*” a tradition of Chattisgarh.

IGNCA, RC, Varanasi is also trying to provide platform to a legendry artists as well as emerging artists of Dhrupad – the famous form of classical music in its Annual Dhrupad Festival started in October 2016. In addition to above several programmes on semi classical music especially Thumri, Dadra, Hori, & Chaiti are being organised from time to time. So far four recital of folk narrative has taken place:-

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|-------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
| 1. Biraha | 2009 |
| 2. Lorik-Chanda | 2011 |
| 3. Various Forms of Folk Songs of Eastern UP | Feb, 2012 |
| 4. Folk Dances and Theatrical Forms of UP and Central India | Oct. 2012 |

VI. Preservation of Shastric Tradition of Kashi:

Every year the Institute arranges (i) seminars concentrating on the themes of Kalātattvakośa, (ii) special lectures and (iii) lecture-series on various facets of Indian Aesthetics, Vakyapadiya and Indian Philosophy of Language. Since time immemorial, Kashi has been a centre of traditional studies. Generations after generations have studied and preserved its Shastric tradition. Hence, IGNCA, RC, Varanasi has taken up programmes of preservation of present knowledge tradition of Kāśī through Gurukulam, Kashi-Vyakhyānmala and Memorial Special Lectures. In this way IGNCA, RC, Varanasi is treading onwards and carrying forward its mission for which it has been setup.

VII. Interpretation Centre:

Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India has decided to develop Interpretation Centres in some schools and colleges in Varanasi to create awareness among children regarding luminaries of Varanasi or theme related to the cultural heritage of Varanasi. IGNCA, RC, Varanasi has been assigned to work on three themes/luminaries viz., Ramnagar Ki Ramleela, Kashi Ki Matha-parampara and Smt. Siddheswari Devi. Accordingly three Interpretation Centres have been established in different schools across Varanasi. These centres are working properly since 2016.

Staff-Members of IGNCA, Regional Centre, Varanasi

Dr. Vijay Shankar Shukla - Regional Director

Academic Staff

1. Dr. Narendra Dutt Tiwari - Research Officer
2. Dr. Rama Dubey - Project Associate
3. Dr. Rajani Kant Tripathi - Project Assistant
4. Dr. Trilochan Pradhan - Project Assistant

Administrative Staff

1. Sri Sanjai Singh - Asstt. Financial Advisor & Accts. Officer
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