

Report

Two day National Seminar on

'Shastric and Prayogic Elements of Agamas'

7th to 8th January, 2015 at SCSVMV, Kanchipuram.

A two day national seminar on '**Shastric and Prayogic Elements of Agamas**' was jointly organized by Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) and Sri Chandrasekharendra Saraswathi Viswa Mahavidyalaya (SCSVMV), Kanchipuram from 7th to 8th January, 2015 at Sri Sankaracarya Auditorium, SCSVMV, Kanchipuram. The seminar was organized to discuss the relationship between the emergence of textual theories of Agamas and the existing actual practices. Along with this concept, lots of other questions, curiosities and enquiry in to the Agamic texts for understanding the cultural and artistic rules, conventions, practices and traditions enshrined in our Agamas were also explored during the two day Seminar.

The seminar provided a platform for dedicated traditional and modern scholars, competent in their fields of study, to discuss the various aforementioned aspects of the Agamas. The seminar was conducted in six sessions. The inaugural session was presided by one of the most eminent Shivacarya, namely, Sivasri Saluva Rajappa Sivacharyar. He congratulated both the institutions for having organized this important seminar. On the stage of the Seminar, sandalwood icons of Lord Siva and Goddess Uma were also prepared and installed. In his presidential address, Prof. Dr. Vishnu Potty, V.S., Vice-Chancellor, SCSVMV introduced the various programmes and

courses on Agamas, being conducted at the SCSVMV and presented a bird's eye view of the Agamas. This was followed by a Presentation by Dr. Sudhir Lall of IGNCA, Joint Coordinator of the Seminar which focused on the academic activities of the IGNCA. A special guest, the royal prince of Travancore Sh. Martand Varma, hailing from the great lineage of Travancore kings who have been great patrons of Indian arts and Culture, also joined the Inaugural. The Prince in his very brief address congratulated the two institutes for coming forward for organization of such a wonderful Seminar and hoped that Agamic studies will find a new boost through this endeavour. Then Dr. Sushma Jatoo of IGNCA, Coordinator of the Seminar, made an engaging and interactive Presentation about the theme of the Seminar. Dr. Narayan Dutt Sharma, Head (Kalakosa) IGNCA in his special address emphasized about the importance of Agamic studies.

The Seminar witnessed some brilliant presentations on all the three schools of Agamas. On this occasion, along with Academic sessions, special practical sessions were also held highlighting the aspects of Musicology and Danceology pertaining to Agamas. On the evening of first day, the practical session began with a rendition of *Pallaki Seva* (Service of Palanquin) by Ms. Sumitra Vijaya, who made a PowerPoint presentation of this form along with practical singing. The text of this *Seva* was composed by Maharaja Shahji of Thanjavur in 17th century in Telugu and is styled after the *Gita Govinda* of Jayadeva. The composition talks about brining of Mahesvara by *sakhis* (friends) of Parvati. It may be noted here that Ms. Vijaya got the original musical notes for this rendition from her Guru, who received it from the tradition of Devadasis, and hence it was a very authentic rendition.

On the evening of second day, Mr. Vijay Madhavan presented the Pushpanjali. This again was a simulation of the traditional Pushpanjali being performed at the famous Kapalisvara temple of Mylapore and belongs to the Devadasi tradition. He also presented a Thevaram. He concluded with a dance based on a composition of Devi Andal (Goda), the only female Alvar among the 12 Alvar (Vishuite) saints of South India, which is still danced at Srivilliputhur, the birthplace of Andal. These ritual performances are part of traditional *Nityotsavas* (daily rituals) of the temples.

Coinciding with the Seminar, the SCSVMV organized the A/V Documentation of the Ardra Abhishekam of Lord Shiva done at the famous Kachchapeshvara Temple of Kanchipuram.

On 8 th of January, 2015, Member-Secretary, IGNSA Ms. Dipali Khanna and Executive-Director, IGNSA-SRC Mr. Vikram Sampath, also joined the Seminar and attended the Fourth Technical session and the Valedictory session. In her address during the Valedictory session, Ms. Dipali Khanna highlighted the need of collaborative studies and inter-institution networking of all the stakeholders working in the field of Agamic studies so that the synergy thus created may be channelized in a positive manner. She was happy to see the involvement and participation of young researchers of the Kanchi University in the Seminar. She also requested all the participating scholars to submit their revised presentations to the Organizers so that Proceedings could be brought out in a time bound manner.

Following speakers read paper during four technical sessions:

(Full text will be made available soon)

Session	Speaker	Paper
Technical Session I	Ms. Deepa Duraiswamy, Chennai	Temple Management in the Agamas
Technical Session II Saiva Agamas	Dr. S.P. Sabharatnam Sivacharyar, Chennai	The Significance of Five Functions of Lord Siva Performed at Various Levels
	Sivasri. G. Karthikeya Sivacharyar, Thiruparamkundram	Samayacaravidhi
	Dr. A.M. Ravi Vaidyanaat, Kanchipuram	Significance of Yoga and Mental Discipline in Saiva Agamas
	Sivasri S. Sriram Sivam, Bangalore	Ankurarpanam
Technical Session III Vaisnava Agamas	Dr. S. Padmanabhan, Chennai	Name & Validity of Pancaratra
	Dr. K. K. A. Venkatachari	Significance of Prathistha Vidhi
	Dr. S. Muthu Bhattar, Chennai	Features of temple Construction in Vaikhanass Agama
	U. Ve. Muralidhara Bhattachar	Catussthanarcanam
Technical Session IV Saktagamas	Dr. R.S. Nandakumar, Mysuru	Saktagama : A contemporaneous Study
	Sri Parthasarathy, Chennai	Ahangrahopasana vimarsah