

Keynote address

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Music, Society and Everyday life

On the very outset I would like to thank Prof. Ravi Sharma and erudite scholars and students of Naad Nartan for inviting me to this 6th National Conference and performances to deliver its Keynote address. As a student of Indian Musicology and its historiography, I find this task as a very happy welcome endeavour. I have believed that our art and culture is an integral part of our society, and this has sustained through to our times since the time we became bhāratīyas or Indians as you might want to call. With this conviction and focus, I have endeavoured all my academic and performance activities. This conference and its concept are thus has endeared itself to me in more ways than I can express it.

For the sake of my keynote, I would like to strike the keys and notes starting from 'everyday life' to society and then on to music envisioned here as saṅgīta : the tauryatrika. When I say music, I focus on the music called saṅgīta, society as our Indian society, and everyday life as the varied life and patterns and twists and turmoil of all of us living between the range of huge cities to small villages in our country. Our everyday life is conditioned by our socio-cultural, religious, family-norms upbringing to begin with. What we learn in our childhood, we retain it as memory and perhaps live many facets of it automatically in our everyday life. Our thinking is generally and primarily conditioned by this factor. As and when we age to our maturities, we expand this circle of living experiences to various externalities. The concept paper for this conference eruditely portrays the three authors : Tia DeNora (Sociology of Music), cultural production theorists like Theodor Adorno (the intellectual non-conformist German scholar), and Pierre Bourdieu (the French Sociologist who stressed the physical aspects of social life and the importance of practice and its embodiment in societal interactions). I find these thinkers on socio-cultural aspects to be more focussed on what we now call as thinkers of an era of socio-cultural renaissance based on contemporary non-conformism.

In our own history of music, we have Mataṅga Muni who wrote Bṛhaddēśī in 7th century. Mataṅga mentions the 'deśī' as his conceptual recognition which ensconces

most of the ideas of these three western scholars. However, when Mataṅga Muni says : dēśē dēśē pravṛtto asau dhvaniḥi dēśī iti saṅgnitaḥa | and then he goes on to say that this joyous dhvani that various places on our earth enjoys ensconces the factors of its place and time, and thus is a unifying factor for the whole place and can be called as a whole <bṛhat> dēśī : He goes on to indicate a little immiatly about the possibilities of this causal effect : abalābāla gopālaiḥi kṣitipālaiḥi nijēcchayā, gīyatē yā anurāgēṇa svadēśē dēśīḥi ucayate || A more in depth study of his work portrays the astonishing truth that in 'bṛhaddēśī' is described the very first concept of 'democracy'. Mataṅga is perhaps the very first preceptor of the democratic setup for the society and uses this as the unifying force for various societies and the dēsa which constitutes it all. This bṛhaddēśī society now describes the freedom factor in saṅgīta as guṇa (enriching factor) and not as a dośa (divisive factor). I see here in the concept of this conference, that also includes the Saṅgīta Ratnākara of Śārṅgadēva of 13th cent. Śārṅgadēva also reminisces Mataṅga in various places when he goes on to prove his factor of taryatrika when he describes saṅgīta. Day to day life of all, beyond caste creed and gender, geo-specific locations, multi-cultural backgrounds were united into one wholesomeness by the unifying factor of our saṅgīta.

Day to day lifestyle as enumerated generically in Ayurvedic literature provides a comprehensive picture known as Dinacharya : 1. Brāhmī muhūrte pratah jāgaraṇam. 2. Prātah samskāra (includes daivasmaraṇam, mukha/dēha kṣālana (śauca) including dantadhāvana, jalapṛāśana, 3. Dainandika āśauca (evacuation), 4. nasya āsvādana, 5. abhyaṅga, 6. Vyāyāma/yoga/aṅgamardana, 7. Prāṇāyāma and dhyāna, 8. Manasā bhojana, 9. Udyoga, 10. Ānandollāsavilāśahāsa in the evening, and 11. Nidrā viśrānti. This would completely sync well with our daily circadian rhythms. Even a causal overlook of most of classical musicological texts and a few jānapada song sources depict music as an integral part of a typical dinacarya of all, whether one is a commoner or a king. Our musicological texts depict musical compositions and dance choreographic elements to include one and all in all walks of life and in ages in a lifetime.

Now, if one takes a purview of our present dinacari, the ayurvedic dinacari can be traced too but with some shifting and minor re-adjustments in that order. Some are missing too like : dhyāna, prāṇāyāma, nasya āsvādana, aṅgamardana, and manasā bhojana. Some other prescriptions therein are also corrupted to an extent that our modern life has allowed or influenced : mainly the ānandollāsavilāsahāsa as our mānasollāsa (corrupted by consumption of inebriating elixirs, overexciting activities, fatalistic infatuation etc), yoga (corrupted by the confusion that yoga is only a vyāyāma or body bending), nasya āsvādana confused with dhūmasevana etc. Nevertheless, one may notice that music has caught on with these tendencies too ! our popular and social media, enticing advertisements, pseudo-pontification of our basic spiritualism which has led us toward abject materialism: all these have influenced us in this to a very large extent. As a consequence of these, our society has dichotomised into many facets and parts in its generic practical identities. And thus, we have this variety and styles and flavours and fervours in our music too. We have what we have generally and unabashedly accepted as music constructed or created to serve its secondary purpose of ‘background solace’ in places like gyms, trams and trains, public transport busses and taxis, blaring speaker blasts in public functions and festivals, mellow music in temples and elite places, therapeutic ayurvedic places and surgery theatres (they even include vedic ‘chants’ with instrumental BGMs!), clubs stages to give out trans-music for weird experience. Our experiments with jugalbandi (Karnāṭaka music and Hindusthāni Music put together in vocals and instruments ensembles) extending to include western, south Asian and other places from our globe (if they could meet the basic pitch and harmonic contents of music). Whatever happens and gains popularity in our world elsewhere are now being imported into our lands and performed as something special, weird or interesting to catch the attention of our audiences. All these are equally applicable to our dance forms too. Our dance fraternity is ever experimenting, but I have this conviction somehow that our classical dance fraternity are a little more conservative and preserve their styles and values in such jugalbandis. For our artists, it may be a satisfying creative activity and with economical gains. For puritans, its an aghast situation, for our young ones, it is exiting but fleeting experience. All these varieties have thus become fleeting constructs and experiences in our times. The volatility has induced some measure of what we call as corrupting influence or invasions on our

art structure. All these seem to be taking us to a ‘cross-road’ juncture in the near future.

Our society, then and now always seems to be on ‘cross-roads’. Even during the times of Mataṅga Muni and Śārṅgadēva, to 16th century, to the first part of so-described modern era in our music (from 18th century onwards), our society has faced many upheavals and agitations. I believe that it is in our nature that as Indians we find mature solutions to these troubling times. The turbulent society finds its solace in first, eschewing the problem and digesting its ‘foreign influences’ or internal matters, soon after our society turns itself inward to enquire whether there are equivalent to the eschewed issues, later on it converts the very ethos of the foreign or infiltrating or influencing issue as an integral part identifying itself with the wholesomeness of our Indian-ness and finally bequeaths it to the future generations with the provision that it shall be taken as a virtue as ‘vasudaiva kuṭumbakam’. Our music, dance and instrumental colloquium reflect this in its minute details too and yet remain as an integral part of our Indian-ness. I have this innate urge to include all the details and information on this topic for this keynote address, but however, the factor of ‘kālātikramaṇa’ limits my enthusiasms ! it is adequate here to say that whatever the turmoil (kāla/kalāti vayśamyata), kṛtyavaiparītya (extremisms) and sandhikāla śūnyatā avastha (stupefaction in the in-between times), our arts in its tauryatrika avatāra has sustained the text of times but also became the suvarnasētu (golden bridges) to the inter-mediary unsettledness.

There is another question to be asked here : is music a universal language? Any language needs to have a referential grammar to it. Such grammatical words have or should I say, needs to have one or many, but specified meaning to it which in turn can be explained with other words and phrases too. Words in a sequence would make sentences that not only give us a gumption of meaning as an experience but also an expression to a specific purpose. These are the basic essentials of any language in any part of our world. However, saṅgīta and nāṭya are different from these factors in many respects. Music is a conscious creation and organization of tones and rhythms into a form. It is also a product of svara kinesis. Our music can be monotonic (ārcika as in rgvēda), di-tonic (as in ballad singing = gāthika), tri-tonic (sāmika), quadra-tonic (swarāntara, cātuhsvarya, traceable to tribal music of śabara, Pulinda, Barbara, kirāta as mentioned even in Mataṅga’s times), penta-



tonic (auḍava), six-tones (śāḍava) and all seven notes (saptaswara sampūrṇa). Our nāṭya too is a composite choreography of innumerable dēha rēkha lakṣaṇas. Our instruments give clarity and definiteness to many essentials and basics of saṅgīta and nāṭya lakṣya lakṣaṇas. All these eschews its own systems, styles and disciplines to give a self-sufficient aesthetic or experiential ideas which are non-discursive and autonomic in nature in their sections and compositions. The experience comes because of the art moving in time. A fixed pattern of time offers a foil for the movement. Our instruments have an important role to play in all this and are wonderful human inventions by which the melody and time are patterned and structured to give out an expressions and experiences. However, any sort of an equivalent to language grammar cannot be applied to this system. Our art experience is indeed a wholesome experience but doesn't have a niścītārtha as in bhāṣā. Thus, equating our music as a world language would be that much unacceptable if there comes a time when the entirety of human endeavour as a language is unified (as in the case of contemporary computer language in ones and zeros). Until then the concept of viśva saṅgīta or vaiśvika saṅgīta will be an evolving concept only.

Our society, like in many parts of the world, is a constituent of many religions, ideologies, identities and revolutionary movements. Needless to say, our music has taken all these into its content and context. The present conference is a very portrayal of this wonderful vāsudēva kuṭumba. I need not say anything more in this but only to congratulate on the organizers and speaker, chairpersons and observers in this conference. I express my reverence to all of you and my appreciations to Prof. Ravi sharma ji and all organizers of this event. I have created a separate section in this address my keynotes on the social movements, some religious practices, identities and so forth in that section in a little measure. I have also addressed some measure in its inclusivity in our academic curriculum and some thoughts on research, its methodologies and methodological hierarchy. Being an academician and having served in some measure in various indian universities, I have some experiences and prescriptions to share to prescribe some good measure with our Higher Education bodies and ministries for their policy shaping. I hope the learned audience will get to reach its content in print.

I would like to say a word on the musico-therapy : I feel that this subject is still in its first stage (infancy!) and

more resources, time and scholarship is needed to take this to the level of studies elsewhere in our world.

Multi level broadening of our musical and danceological academic understanding needs to be addressed not just by our artists and their fraternities. Our Universities are indeed very important role playing power entities, no doubt. But our places of learning in our country are still controlled by policies of rules of our land. These policy provisions were formed after our union territory was formed by essentially politicians accepting this in our highest body of democratic institutions. We need great visionaries, artists, philosophers, sociologists, art-industry influencers, and most importantly our student-teacher fraternities to reform and modify the policy and empowering environments to betterment. Our universities need more data, they need more direct information access, our libraries have to be a composite of world unified data banks. Our researchers need more funds and freedoms. Our governmental bodies need to open our art academia to the world and invite other academic bodies to be able to be a part of our efforts. All these are happening in other fields, notably, medical and pharmaceutical fields. A similar provision needs to be make for our arts too. This will help our art world to evolve to include essential factors like music and gender, therapy, technological enhancements (in AI and machine building), neo-instrument construction and materials for construction, cultural anthropology, musico-politico-strategies, our tauryatrika migrating in its soul to other parts of our world, art tourism and above all and most importantly, the culture and value in Indian society, religion and tribal practices to be preserved, preached and propagated.

Origin of our saṅgīta and nāṭya are attributed by different places and cultures in our society to God, to Satan or Shaitan (in some cases in folk or tribal cultures), to sages, to hunting calls of primitive men (as in the western thought), to tendency to create word and language, to beautify simple numerical ratios of sound and line-forms (rēkha) to the unique ability of the human mind for symbolic transformation, to behavioural vocal and physical urges in moments of fear, grief or joy etc.

All these may be true. However, I take this opportunity to reiterate what my guru Rā.Satyanārāyaṇa says : the source of all music and dance is the heart of man which sings out and in dance expressions in a language transcending words for the harmony among nations and symphony of all human endeavours towards peace and fraternity.

Musicology and music performance, academia : The first thoughts...

In today's world, "music" often refers not just to its performance but to its pervasive role in the lives of practitioners and audiences. This evolution transforms music into a multi-disciplinary, multi-platform, multi-national, multi-cultural experiences reflecting contemporary thought and culture in our country. Music has now been deemed integral to our intellectual pursuits, marking significant cultural turning points. Currently, it is undergoing a transformation into various styles and genres, reminiscent of the term "saṅgīta" used by our ancestors. The term saṅgīta is indeed a derivative of our aspiration for 'samyag gīta', to comfort us with the thought that what we perform as a melody - seeking pleasure, enlightenment, intellectual satiation, socio-politico-cultural identity, a cultural diplomacy statement and so forth - is an all inclusivity to our conscious active social existence.

Contemporary musicians, dancers and instrumental virtuosos are engaging in research, innovation, and modernity, often detaching from traditional forms. This doesn't mean that they wouldn't honour the tradition based on which perhaps they have inherited and mastered the art, its techniques and performance bases. As I have understood it, it simply means that the demands of our chaotic times, multiple exposures to cultural alienisms, fancy-factors that catch our attention are huge and inevitable. The concept of Naad – Nartan has clearly enumerated this factor and has even suggested for a revision of our university syllabus to judiciously but ably catch on with our times and its shifts in our art-purposes. Our own times have debated that shift is essential to a large extent and our ever creative and 'freedom-seeking' musicians and dancers have even said that it is inevitable. However, I feel that this shift has created a fragmented continuum from tradition to innovation, leading to performances that primarily serve transient pleasures rather than fostering deeper connections with audiences or future generations. I believe that the transition from tradition to innovation and to modernity must have an historical perspective and logical process that takes in all the developments into its consideration to further settle onto some generalization of our ideas and purposes. I believe that saṅgīta śāstra can do this for us and I do stand by the concept note of this Conference that saṅgīta essentially means the tauryatrika : gīta vādya and nr̥tya.

In this keynote address, I seek to examine the underlying causes of this trend among tauryatrika practitioners, emphasizing the intersection of science, humanism, musicology, and music/dance. I aim to clarify the meanings and relevance of these concepts through a correlation focused on their interdependencies and divergences. The intent is to address the systemic evolution of these fields rather than just their technical and fleeting needs and aspects. By exploring the relationships between science (vigñāna), musicology (śāstra of saṅgīta), and saṅgīta (tauryatrika), I want to highlight the importance of grounding our understanding of tauryatrika in its logical, research-based frameworks. By all these, I believe, that I may touch upon the value based and much thought of concept of this Conference and its purposes that Naad Nartan has hosted for us.

Our saṅgīta is dynamic in its core values and performances. To do this, it seeks to include research, science, humanisms (The cultural movement of the Renaissance; based on classical studies) and musicology (the semantic study on Music). Let me take these little by little.

Research

I believe that research in saṅgīta is essentially the process of discovering, rediscovering, or ascertaining truths, realities, or facts. It encompasses any scholarly investigation aimed at uncovering these elements. The concepts of truth and reality are deeply intertwined with metaphysics, epistemology, and the semantics of logic and language.

Research can also be defined as a careful and critical inquiry into facts or principles, an assiduous examination aimed at establishing knowledge. In the social sciences and humanities, research focuses on managing concepts or symbols to achieve generalizations. These generalizations are intended for extending, correcting, or verifying knowledge, which can contribute to theory construction or enhance artistic practices.

In contrast, research in the sciences employs specific methods to uncover new knowledge, develop applications for existing knowledge, or explore relationships among ideas and events. All scientific discoveries, technological advancements, and scholarly challenges stem from research efforts. While pure research is often driven by the pursuit of recognition and academic fulfilment, applied research in technology typically aims to yield practical products and financial benefits.



Based on these observations, I propose that the very core values of our research methodologies be carefully modified and adapted to serve our saṅgīta.

- We have inherited two streams of such methodologies : one from our ancient and hoary Bhāratīya knowledge systems : This is based on referring to our musicological textual references entirely based on its original language, the language in which it was originally written, or at the least based on its truthful translations based on Indian languages. This would really usher in true, value-based purpose to its studies. It may be seen in the bhāratīya samśodana systems, it never endeavours to ask a question to dismiss the very basis of the subjects (say based on Veda and its vāṅmaya, vēdānta, śikṣā, śāstra, nyāya etc) but the questions are asked to ‘enquire’ more to make the subject more contemporarily relevant. I strongly believe that this will be good for our tauryatrika subjects samśodana too.
- The second one is what most of our contemporary research endeavours seem to be doing : freely and agreeably adopt and accept the research methodologies that are in tandem with ‘global’ or even ‘Victorian’ era prescriptions that even our modern science and technologies are not applying to their researches. It is disheartening to note that our higher education bodies, research bodies and many universities prescribed research methodologies are still in its archaic times and feel comforted by following such redundancies. This seems to have ushered us into our times when such translations are based on its ‘English’ or ‘foreign language’ translations (some have Arabic, French translations). Even in cases where original textual treatises (TT) were translated into some Indian languages, these are most likely be based on those English translations ! In most of these cases, the translator essentially wouldn’t be bothered with the textual treatise’s ‘hrdaya’ – the heart of the matter of art, but would be at best, an expert in both the languages : original and its translation languages. In this case the artist who would want to refer and do research wouldn’t be bothered to study the original TT’s language but would entirely depend on the translated language which is very likely not to have adequate words and terminologies to include specific inherent cultural values and phrasal idiom. So much,

thus, the research would be poorer by its values and service to its purposes. We need research methodologies based on our own logic (navīna and pracīna nyāya, śāstra nirmāna techniques and so forth). While having said the above, it may be also necessary to make few points on the Phases in a research Investigation as follows;

- The first step in research is to identify a practical, real problem and understanding it well.
- Next, these problems should be clearly and specifically defined, each on its own merits with unbroken connection to the system and focus.
- After that, ideas about each of these problems should be developed, and information sources should be gathered.
- It’s crucial to be familiar with previous research on the topic. For this multi-disciplinary approaches, inter-dependence subjects (like language and its idiom etc), corollary and even peripheral disciplines may be considered in some cases if it relates to a specific problem.
- With the above points and work therein, now, it is very likely that the nature of the study, its objectives, and the methods should be clearly attained and hence stated.
- A strategy for collecting valid data and its bases can now be established. For experimental studies, the design and field study can now be planned. Our country’s higher institutions of learning, higher education ministry of our state and central governments should form a policy in this matter on an urgent basis. It is a matter of utter anxiety that our state and central universities have not formed a ‘university <knowledge> circuit’ of any measurable sorts to achieve these high calibre academic achievements. Our state and central governments have not formed any cohesive and harmonious university regulation acts and policies to augment this. Perhaps, to my ideas, this may be the cause for our UGC to fail to formulate any useful regulations. However, there is a constant effort by UGC to ‘upgrade’ our knowledge base and validations. This effort lacks the basic ‘university circuit’ and perhaps and an extension of this to ‘like minded foreign university circuit’ which should be applicable both ways (our universities to have their off-campus points in foreign universities provision is not there but as

of now the foreign universities can establish their centre in our universities under conditions).

- For non-experimental studies, one may choose the type of observation, such as natural, statistical, interviews, questionnaires, subjective responses, or case studies. The data collection strategy should align with the type of musical research, like psycho-musicological, aesthetic, philosophical, semantic, creativity, or style.
- Define key terms and the scope of the research project.
- Pretest the design and strategy.
- Develop a research model.
- Analyse and interpret the collected data.
- Apply validation tests to the model.
- Interrelate different aspects of the research.
- Organize the thesis with chapters, additions, and annexes.
- Document sources and create a bibliography.
- Seek expert review and make revisions if needed.
- It may be noted here that most of our research endeavours seem to focus mostly on the last five points rather than the essential previous points. A truly bhāratīya samśodana paddati would mitigate this void.

Musicology and Humanism: A Clear Overview

Humanism in Context : Humanism, which has largely replaced the term ‘humanities’, encompasses the study of languages, literature, arts, religion, philosophy, and history. It focuses on what is characteristically human, emphasizing the importance of human experience and satisfaction. Key aspects of humanism include:

1. A reasonable balance in life.
2. The study of humanities.
3. Freedom from strict religious dogma.
4. A vivid interest in all aspects of life.
5. An intense response to human emotions.
6. A philosophy that centres on humanity as the core of understanding.

Differences Between Scientific Research and Humanism: There are notable distinctions between research in the sciences (I will refer science as vigñāna, for the sake of its distinction in the present context) and in humanism:

- **Objective Focus:** Vigñāna aims at understanding inanimate reality, while humanism emphasizes human and social values.

- **Methodology:** Vaigñyānika methods deal with inanimate subjects, focusing on causal relationships. In contrast, humanistic methods relate to the spirit and beauty of human experiences.
- **Reproducibility:** Results in vigñāna research are reproducible and predictable, whereas humanistic findings are often subjective and contextual.
- **Environment:** Vigñāna research typically occurs in controlled, artificial environments. In the arts and humanities, especially in performance, techniques are more relevant within the living context of human experience.
- **Comparison Groups:** Scientific <vis a vis, vigñāna> investigations usually involve control groups for comparison, a practice not always applicable in humanistic research.
- **Goals of Research:** The goal of scientific inquiry is generalization, while humanistic research often focuses on specific human experiences.
- **Language and Communication:** Scientific research uses technical, concise, and often mathematical language. In contrast, humanistic disciplines require more nuanced and expressive forms of communication.

In summary, while both fields contribute valuable insights, they approach their subjects from fundamentally different perspectives, reflecting their unique focuses on the inanimate versus the human experience.

Based on these points of observations, it would now be possible to take on a little measure of our musicology. Bhāratīya śaṅgīta śāstra has its own history. Its historiography however is still in its infancy in comparison with its various global music and its studies. It is necessary to expand our musicology to correlate and cover the disciplines, modes and methods adopted by others.

Musicology : the bhāratīya perspective

Indian musicology is the field of śaṅgīta samśodana and, likewise, danceology is a field of nāṭya samśodana. I have defined both to denote my field of focus and not in its vast English terms and terminology. For us, it involves the careful and critical inquiry or examination in seeking facts or principles relating to music. So, everything written about music and nāṭya is not music/danceology. Study and research in it must possess an acceptable quality of scholarship. Science of music and dance is often confined to acoustics, physiology



or psychology as applied to music and dance. The art of tauryatrika concerns the activities of composition, performance, listening, auditoria, pedagogy etc. The science of tauryatrika concerns knowledge in these areas and therefore presumes sensitivity to the art that is tauryatrika. So, a research scholar in music and dance must be familiar, in the best Indian tradition, familiar with both the theory and practice of these.

In our performing arts, the investigated phenomena are more complex and the data, less exact. Some areas in our art research remain speculative or non-experimental. The following points can be taken to arrive at a conclusion as to what more to be added to our musicological / danceological curriculum, what can be modified, what can be considered archaic. It is my humble hope that the following points would assist us in reforming our musical, dance and related arts curriculum that can be recommended to our institutions of higher studies.

- ❑ Experimental research in tauryatrika has become more and more reductionistic in its models. Data on our art experience are based on introspection and memory of the experiment at some point or points during the investigation, statistical methods do not provide the solution always in an art investigation.
- ❑ Objectivity in research in our arts, social and humanistic disciplines is of a different kind and is based on psychological, psychophysical or psycho-physiological aspects of the experience and depend on human interest and evaluation.
- ❑ Roots of our art research often ramify into sociocultural soil and are conditioned by it.
- ❑ Because human behaviour is neither uniform nor invariable, causal relations are more complex in research related to our arts ; that is, uniformity lies more in the physical stimuli than in response.
- ❑ Unity in the natural sciences lies on the generality of method and not on the materials.
- ❑ Agreement of results based on demonstration

is less easy in research in our arts and social sciences, especially in those relating to affective, aesthetic and creative aspects of the experience in our arts.

- ❑ Reproducibility and predictability are far more difficult and more complex in areas of statistical behaviour. The behaviour of a group of human beings is far more difficult to analyse, reproduce or predict than of a group of atoms, molecules or stars.
- ❑ Observer's <prēkṣaka> viewpoint is more difficult to minimize in an art research, social sciences and the humanities and is more important, valuable and even indispensable indeed. The physical and natural scientist adopts a position which is external to the observed phenomenon and is of neutrality.
- ❑ Our art research scholar cannot escape from his interests, values, methods and objectives which are implicit or inherited in his sociocultural conditioning.
- ❑ Control over variables is still inexact in research in our art, social sciences and humanities.

I firmly stand by the concept and purpose of Naad-Nartan Conference, it is time that we re-wrote our syllabus, made it more Indian in nature, beyond its cast and creed, beyond its religiosities, beyond its cultural ideologies and divides. It is time that our highest bodies of academia listen to the collective urges of prescriptions and proscriptions of our students, teachers and researchers in our arts. However, we need to be now very astute in our modes and modifications of our descriptions, narratives and characterization of saṅgīta and its academic syllabus. It is also the time for us in India, to judiciously accept and amend the external multifaceted influences and cultural impressions that we are facing from all sides in our globe.

It is my honour to have been invited to this conference and to deliver this humble keynote address.