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NABA BALLYGUNGE MAHAVIDYALAYA

(Formerly CHARUCHANDRA EVENING COLLEGE)

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Topic: *Hindi Bhakti Sahitya: Naye Pariprekshya*

Seminar type: Departmental

Resource person: Smt Mamta Trivedi, Assistant Professor, Department of Hindi, Jogesh Chandra Chaudhury College

Date: 6th October 2023

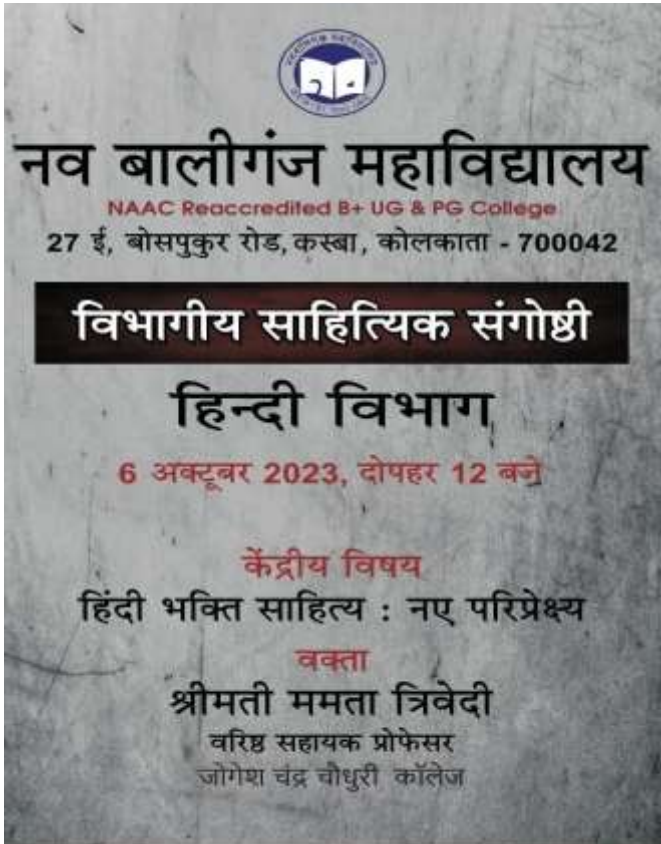
Organizer: Department of Hindi, Naba Ballygunge Mahavidyalaya

No. of participant: 25

Links to the seminar on Institutional Youtube channel:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pdEib_onm2I

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jMDhY1-26Go>



Poster of the Hindi Departmental Seminar *Hindi Bhakti Sahitya: Naye Pariprekshya* on 06.10.2023

Ghosh
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After the felicitation of the guest speaker, the Principal of the college, Dr Ayantika Ghosh addressed the audience with a brief note on bhakti sahitya in Bengali before the students would be exposed to the vistas of Hindi devotional poetry. She said that the gems of Bangla bhakti sahitya, She delineated a clear concept of Bhakti literature. Bhakti literature refers to a vast body of devotional poetry and religious texts that emerged in India during the medieval period, roughly between the 6th and 18th centuries. The word “bhakti” derives from the Sanskrit term meaning “devotion” or “love,” and the literature associated with it expresses intense personal devotion to a chosen deity, often within the framework of Hinduism. It was delightful to listen to Dr Ghosh tracing the nature of Bhakti literature—that it is characterized by its emotional intensity, accessibility, and emphasis on personal experience and expression. It challenged the rigidities of caste, ritual and orthodoxy and promoted a personal and emotional relationship with God. This literature is composed in various regional languages, including Tamil, Hindi, Bengali, and others, making it relatable to people across different regions and linguistic backgrounds.



Smt Mamta Trivedi, Assistant professor, Department of Hindi, Jogesh Chandra Chaudhuri College and guest is felicitated by a student in the departmental seminar *Hindi Bhakti Sahitya: Naye Pariprekshya* on 06.10.2023

Smt Mamta Trivedi in a very student-centric method discussed the trajectories of the development of Hindi Bhakti sahitya (Devotional literature) from newer perspectives. She delineated the nuances of Bhakti poetry saying that songs of “bhakti” that brim with intimate and impassioned devotion to a personal god are sung in mandirs and mandals, gurdwaras and dargas, homes and alone in solitude.

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Smt Trivedi said that many voices of plurality or faiths exist under its sky, and devotees continue to be enthralled by the lives of the great medieval mystic poets. The songs' poetic and profound appeal to align one's self with cosmic harmonies continues to strike a chord. Even though the bhakti poets composed, sang and wandered several centuries ago, they always race ahead of us, arching towards the infinite, the beautiful, mysterious and sometimes terrifying terrain of the sacred. They burnt all boundaries of belonging to belong solely to their beloved. They strove to possess and, equally, be possessed by grace in a spiralling dyad. They shared their passion with others in a call so visceral, primal and wondrous that we still thrill to it today. The roar, tick and ache of their longing, bliss, viraha and unstoppable quest for transcendence also forged a new poetics that challenges translators even today. Tracing the history of Bhakti movement she said that the Bhakti period of Hindi literature is the initial part of the medieval period. This is the period which has been famous for ideological richness and artistic splendor. In this period, Hindi poetry has achieved excellence not in one aspect but in many aspects. On this basis, scholars have declared the Bhakti period as the golden period of Hindi literature. The reality is that this period of Hindi literature is the period of movement, propaganda, development and miracle. From both ideological and artistic perspectives, many poets of this period not only come in the category of the best poets till date, but also remain relevant with their ideology. Tulsi, Sur, Kabir are such poets. Not only this, the influence of these poets with unbeatable personality on the common people of India also remains till date. From both cultural and moral perspectives, the deep impact of the poets of this period is still prevalent in the minds of the people.



Dr Mamta Trivedi, the resource person, explains the nuances of Bhakti poetry in Hindi Departmental seminar on 06.10.2023

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The devotional consciousness that developed in the Bhakti period was not accidental, its seeds were sown in ancient times. Its refinement and development took place only during the Bhakti period. Generally, the boundary line of the Bhakti period is from 1350 to sometime before the end of the seventeenth century. It can be accepted till 1650. Yes, some scholars accept it from 1375 to 1700. She further said that Bhakti literature encompasses a range of poetic forms, including hymns, songs, narratives, and dialogues. Some notable examples include the Tamil works of the Nayanars and Alvars, the songs of the medieval saints like Kabir, Mirabai, and Tulsidas in Hindi, and the compositions of the Vaishnava poet-saints like Surdas and Tukaram. These literary works often employ metaphors, symbolism, and vivid imagery to evoke deep spiritual experiences and convey the devotee's longing, love, and surrender to the divine. In the words of Smt Trivedi the literature which flourished before the Bhakti period was created in such political circumstances in which the foreign Yavana rulers were making every effort to establish their foothold here. On one hand there were these efforts of the Yavanas and on the other hand there was the voice of opposition and rebellion from the Indian Rajput warriors. In this situation, the literature of the ancient times was written. Smt Trivedi further said that by the time the Bhakti period came, there was a slight change in the circumstances. Still, no major change was visible. The clear situation was that the dominance of the Yavana rulers had been established over northern India and gradually other Indian kingdoms were also being humiliated. The famous ruler of the Khilji dynasty, Alauddin Khilji, was full of the desire to hoist his flag all over India. Both North India and South India were terrified of his power. In South India, there was a constant struggle between Vijayanagara and Bahmani kingdoms for gaining control over the region between Krishna and Tungabhadra.



The participants listen to Dr Trivedi in rapt attention as she explains the trajectory of development of Hindi Bhakti poetry in the Departmental seminar on 06.10.2023

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The participants were spellbound to listen to the ghazal *Kahan toh tay tha charagan har ek ghar ka* sung melodiously by Smt Trivedi. Outlining the politico-situational context of Bhakti poetry in Hindi, she said that as a result of struggles, in such an atmosphere of uncertainty and terror, literature and religion could neither get the patronage of the kings nor could they get shelter. Due to political upheaval and despair, the entire environment was becoming full of conflict. The public was disturbed. The kings were disappointed. They did not have the resources to support art, literature and culture. In such a situation, the Indian people were looking at wherever they could get sympathy. They wanted their shelter, they were looking for some support in which they could feel safe.

Outlining the situational context, the speaker defines the socio cultural ramifications. The role of the society of that time in the origin of the literature created during the Bhakti period is also not negligible. While presenting the picture of the social background of the Bhakti period, a critic has said a lot in brief. "The condition of the society of that time is also worth considering in the creation of the Bhakti period. As per the previous article, even after the victory of Brahmin religion, it could not have been accepted by the common people. Similarly, the society could not adopt the Vedic Varnashram Dharma system in its previous form. The Brahmins, who were considered the backbone of the society, were so powerful that they could manage the various parts of the society properly and the government could run at their behest. As a result, just as there was a lot of disorder in religious beliefs, the system of society also got affected. There was a break, but it was creating more and more inequality in its external form. Many castes and sub-castes were formed and discrimination increased among them. The feeling of high and low was also reaching its peak.



Dr Mamta Trivedi, the resource person, sings the ghazal *Kahan toh tay tha charagan har ek ghar ka* as a part of explaining Bhakti poetry in Hindi Departmental seminar on 06.10.2023

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The position of the Khis in the society was also considered low. The structure of the society till the Brahmin Kole was such that everyone got the opportunity of cultural and religious education in some form or the other. Even in the Buddhist period, the education was carried out in monasteries and Viharas and through the travel of the monks, but later, there was a lack of education for the masses because the learned class of that time was away from the common people and was engrossed in their debates and thoughts. Perhaps due to this reason, the society of the Bhakti period had become more superstitious and was getting involved in meaningless conduct and behavior. Just as there is an attempt to bring equality in class differences in the Bhakti movement, in the same way the importance of the Guru and the glory of knowledge have also been declared. Although at this time there was a sense of coordination and liberality towards caste and general behavior and there was opposition to prohibitions, yet there has been a difference of opinion among Vaishnav devotees and saints on this subject as well. Paishnav devotees believed in Varnashram Dharma, they were opposed only to the prevailing customs and tradition. Bhakti poets wanted to imagine that ancient Varnashram Dharma in which the social chain was unbroken and orderly, but Nirgunkari saints do not have such an ancient viewpoint. They are completely opposed to outdated customs and blind beliefs and these poets have strongly opposed them.



Dr Manisha Shaw, Assistant Professor,
Department of Hindi, Naba Ballygunge
Mahavidyalaya delivers the vote of thanks in the
departmental seminar *Hindi Bhakti Sahitya: Naye
Pariprekshya* on 06.10.2023

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Students of Hindi Department listen to the speaker attentively in the Departmental seminar on 06.10.2023

Charts projecting the development of Hindi Bhakti Sahitya, laboriously made by the students of Naba Ballygunge Mahavidyalaya in the Departmental seminar on 06.10.2023

Outcomes of the seminar:

- ✓ Ability to understand about the movements in Hindi bhakti poetry
- ✓ Ability to understand the meaning of the terminology Bhakti
- ✓ Knowledge about the Various Bhakti poets and their songs/ghazals

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