

Annexure 1

M.A. Comparative Indian Literature

COURSE – 302

WOMEN IN INDIAN LITERATURE

This course undertakes a survey of women's literature in Indian literature from the earliest times and in the light of such a diachronic perspective attempts to understand three modern texts. The perspective is interdisciplinary and topics concerning women, feminism, gender, and politics. Women poets are conspicuous by their absence in medieval Indian literature. Contrary to Buddhism, Jainism and orthodox Hinduism, where women are not entitled for salvation, Bhakti sects provided an opportunity for the salvation of women. However, a conspicuous absence of women poets in Sanskrit literature and Classical Hinduism and their equally conspicuous presence in Buddhism, Bhakti sects is well attested through poetry and hagiographies. A brief survey of women in Indian literary representations provides a brief history and the ideological background of representation of women in Indian literature. The medieval women texts, coming from Buddhists nuns, Bhakti poets and Courtesans and Devadasis are analysed to demonstrate the counter-structures that are present in women's poetry and hagiographies, which contest dominant ideological structures. The three texts chosen for the course will be interpreted in the light of the diachronic background outlined here to demonstrate the continuities and changes in the representations of women in Indian literature.

1. Key-Concepts: Feminism, Women Studies, Gender Studies, Women in Literature, Painting and Sculpture. (20 marks)

2. A Brief Survey of Women in Indian literary representations.

Vedic literature, post-Vedic literature, Puranic literature, Buddhist literature, Jaina literature, Bhakti literature, Literature of courtesans, nuns, shamaness and priestess. (25 marks)

3. Women texts:

Therigatha and Sangam Women poets, Bhakti women poets: Tamil, Kannada, Marathi and Hindi Courtesan poets (25 Marks)

Prescribed Texts:

Ghare Baire – Rabindranath Tagore

Pan lakshyan kon ghetto – Harinarayan Apte

Phaniyamma – M. K. Indira

Women Writing in India, 600 B.C. to the Present - Tharu, S and K. Lalita (ed.)

Reading List:

Altekar, A. S. 1938. The Position of Women in Hindu Civilization.

Marglin, F.A. 1985. Wives of the God-King. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

n.a. 1989. ed. Truth Tales: Contemporary Stories Written by Women Writers of India.

New Delhi: Kali for Women.

Ramanujan, A.K. 1988. On Women Saints. In The Divine Consort: Radha and Other Minor Goddesses, ed. by Reynold et. al. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Ramanujan, A.K., Velceru Narayana Rao and David Shulman. Eds. 2004.

When God is a Customer: Telugu Courtesan Songs by Kshetravaya and Others.

Delhi: Oxford University Press.

Ramusack. 1990. From Symbol To Diversity: the Historical Literature On Women in India. South Asia Research, 10: 139-157.

Sangari, Kumkum and Sudesh Vaid. 1989. ed. Recasting Women: Essays in Colonial History. New Delhi: Kali for Women.

Tharu, S and K. Lalita. 1991. ed. Women Writing in India, 600 B.C. to the Present. Delhi: Oxford University Press.

S&F Online: The Scholar and Feminist XXX: Past Controversies, Present Challenges and Future Feminisms. 3.3-4.1, Fall 2005

M.A. Bengali

Paper 203

Women's Writings in Bengali

Women all over the world contributed to literature from the beginnings of civilizations. But with the advent of patriarchal order many of women's writings were wiped out. In India also Hindu religion in some point of time banned women's education. But still a few women composed devotional and narrative poems in Medieval Bengal. In the 19th Century with the spread of education many women in Bengal started publishing their writings. The first autobiography in Bengali was written by a woman. This course is designed to give the students an inside view of women expressing their weal & woe through their writings.

Texts:

1. Poetry: Chandrabati, Girindramohini Dasi; Priyambada Devi; Radharani Devi, Kabita Singha, Anuradha Mahapatra
2. Autobiography: *Amar Jiban*: Rassundari Devi; *Amar Katha*: Binodini Dasi;
3. Fiction: *Kahake*: Svarnakumari Devi; *Adaraer Na Anadarer*: Sharat Kumari Devi; *Pratham Pratishruti*: Ashapura Devi; *Draupadi*: Mahashveta Devi; *Matijaner Meyera*: Selina Hosen
4. Prose: *Bangali Meyer Bhabnamulak Gadya*: Sutapa Bhattacharya (ed.) 15

Reading list:

1. Murshid, Gulam, *Nari Pragati*, Naya Udyog: Kolkata, 2001
2. Ghosh, Sudakhsina, *Mrinaler Kalam*, Papyrus: Kolkata, 2007

3. Gupta, Jogendranath, *Banger Mahila Kavi*, A Mukhij & Co.: Kolkata, 1930
4. Maitra, Jnaneshchandra, *Narijagariti O Bangla Sahitya*, National Publishers: Kolkata, 1987
5. Devi, Anurupa, *Sahitye Nari: Srasta O Sristi*, National Publishers: Kolkata, 1949
6. Chakrabarti, Sambuddha, *Antare Andare*, Stree: Kolkata, 1995
7. Deb, Chitra, *Antahpurer Atmakatha*, Ananda Publishers: Kolkata, 1984
8. Todd, Janett, *Feminist Literary History*, London, 1988
9. Niranjana, Seemanthini, *Gender and Space*, Sage: New Delhi, 2001
10. Ghosh, Sudakhsina, *Meyeder Upanyase Meyder Katha*, Deys Publishing: Kolkata, 2008