

2 Day National Seminar on
Female voices in Indian Literature :
With Special Reference to Andal, Akkamahadevi, Lal Ded , Mirabai

Organized by
Centre for Women's Studies and Development
Faculty of Social Sciences, BHU

Theme of the Seminar

If literature, though imaginative, can be used for a systematic study of society, the status of women's authorship, and the nature of their depiction within the Indian literary tradition are certainly issues of great relevance. For the degree to which works are penned by women, the manner in which these texts are critically received, and the roles women occupy within the general body of Indian literature, are all reflective of societal attitudes toward women. Unfortunately, the Indian literary canon is characterized by the inadequate representation of female-authored works. Much of the Indian literature has been dominated by a canon that nearly dismissed women's writing more than two centuries ago. In many instances, Indian women writers are marginalized by their male counterparts, and their works either remained unacknowledged or tokenized by literary critics.

The counter-canon that have emerged as the result of this exclusion have helped to establish women's writing in mainstream culture, but still in some ways fail to acknowledge women's literature and their texts are denied canonical status, and in most cases, excluded from the mainstream publications that examine Indian literature. Although the general body of feminist criticism has been greatly instrumental in the increased awareness of female-authored texts, feminist authorship is inscribed within relations of power.

The contribution of women writers in different languages deserves special attention. Women writers like Ghosha, Lopamudra, Gargi, Maitreyi, Apala, Romasha Brahmavadini, etc., right from the days of the Vedas (6000 B.C. – 4000 B.C.), focused on the image of women in mainstream Sanskrit literature. The songs of Buddhist nuns (6th century B.C.) like Mutta and Ubbiri and Mettika in Pali express the torment of feelings for the life left behind. The Alwar women poets (6th century A.D.), like Andal and others, gave expression to their love for the divine. Lal Ded (1320-1384), the Muslim poetess from Kashmir Lalded & Habba Khatun, represented the sant tradition of bhakti and wrote Vakhs (maxims), which are peerless gems of spiritual experience. Meera Bai, in Gujarati, Rajasthani and Hindi (she wrote in three languages), Avvayyar, in Tamil, and Akkamahadevi in Kannada, are well known for their sheer lyrical intensity and concentrated emotional appeal. Their writings speak to us about the social conditions prevailing at that time, and the position of woman at home and in society. They wrote poems with both a religious and a secular sensibility. Through their poems they addressed the issue of personal freedom and turned every wound inflicted by life into a poem.

Sub-Theme of the Seminar

1. Female Voices in Indian Literature
2. Female Voices in Bhakti Movement
3. Andal
4. Akkamahadevi
5. Lal Ded
6. Mirabai

Note:

Last date for the submission of the **abstract** (500 words typed in **Microsoft Word**. For English text use font '**Times New Roman**' and for Hindi text use font '**Khalnayak**') is 31.07.2010. Abstract should be submitted in both hard and soft copy (by CD / e-mail at seminarcwsd2010@gmail.com)

Registration Fee-

For Teachers Rupees 500/-

For Students/Research Scholars 250/-

Date of seminar will be announced after 31.07.2010.