# Gurudev Tagore Chair offers Guru-vandana to Dr.G.K.Bhat.

The Gurudev Tagore Chair of Comparative Literature, University of Mumbai, organised a two-day seminar on ‘Critique on Dr. G. K. Bhat’s contribution’ beginning on Thursday, 30th July, 2015 at the seminar hall of Ramkrishna Bajaj Sanskrit Bhavan, University of Mumbai.

The seminar which had Sahitya Akademi Awardee Dr. Vijaya Rajadhyaksha as the Chief Guest and Vice-Chancellor of Kavikulaguru Kalidas University, Dr. Uma Vaidya as the Key note speaker, began with the traditional lighting of the lamp and offering of flowers to Goddess Sarasvati and Guru Dr. G. K.Bhat by the esteemed Chief Guest, Key note speaker and Dr.Gauri Mahulikar, Head of Gurudev Tagore Chair of Comparitive Literature. This was followed by a Sarasvati vandana in Sanskrit by a student of the Sanskrit Department.

Dr. Gauri Mahulikar then, in her introduction to the seminar, spoke about the inception of the same. She mentioned Prof. Meena Gokhale as the inspiration behind the concept which is on account of the birth centenary year of Dr. Bhat and thanked all the students of Dr. Bhat for having assembled in large numbers from places out of Mumbai like Pune despite unfavourable weather conditions. She also emphasised on the significance of the time chosen for the seminar – Gurupournima. For the seminar was a Guru-vandana to the legendary teacher by his students and grand-students. So there could not have been a better day to organise the same.

Dr. Manisha Dikshit, daughter and student of Dr. G. K. Bhat shared her experiences with Dr. Bhat as a father and teacher. One of the interesting facts mentioned by her was that Dr. Bhat made her read his works before sending them to the publishers which was his way of inculcating literary culture into his daughter that she treasures unto today. Backing the saying ‘Behind every successful man is a woman’, she made a note of Dr. Bhat’s wife, Smt. Sushma Bhat’s contribution in providing him with the freedom much required of a writer for the thinking and understanding that goes behind his writing.

Dr. Gauri Mahulikar then got the audiences acquainted with the Department of Gurudev Tagore Chair of Comparative Literature, that has had great leaders like Prof. Vasant Bapat, Prof. Bhalachandra Nemade etc and under whose flagship the seminar was organised. The seminar’s Keynote speaker, Dr. Uma Vaidya herself had headed the department in the past organising successfully a seminar of all the Gnyanapeetha awardees. She took note of the varied seminars conducted by the Chair including topics like Narratology, poetics etc some of it in collaboration with the Sanskrit Department of the university.

Then Prof. Meena Gokhale introduced the Chief Guest Dr. Vijaya Rajadhyaksha – a writer, critic, researcher, Professor emeritus and colleague of Dr. Bhat. This was followed by the Chief Guest’s speech who was overwhelmed to see the huge Gurukula assembled to pay tribute to a person who had different facets to his personality. Dr. Bhat’s quality of attracting students to his lectures was admired by her which she had herself experienced. She concluded her speech by saying that if the poet Prof. Karandikar were to compose a second-half to his poem ‘*sadguru* *stavana’*, he would have, for sure, included Dr. Bhat’s name in the list. For, Dr. Bhat was an ideal guru.

Dr. Uma Vaidya in her key note address called Dr. Bhat as a conqueror in the literary field. As a student of Dr. Bhat, she remembered his dancing figure on the dais and how the students unanimously felt that one day Bharata – the author of *Natyashastra* himself will occupy a seat in Bhat sir’s class to experience the exposition of his *Shastra*. As an overview of the huge body of Dr. Bhat’s work, Dr. Uma Vaidya classified them on the basis of medium (language), literary type and branches of study. She mentioned Prof. Khandekar’s use of the adjectives रसिक and पण्डित for Dr. Bhat, research methodology used by him while preparing editions of different Sanskrit plays, impressive convincing capacity etc. She said that Dr. Bhat convincingly takes the reader to his conclusion slowly, steadily but assertively. She touched upon every aspect of Dr. Bhat’s work to be dealt in the seminar, introducing them to the audience with some observations but leaving the detailed study to the paper presenters. Thus introduced, the audience was thrown into a pool of interesting observations to be revealed in detail through the various paper presenters.

With this, the inaugural function came to an end with Dr.Gauri Mahulikar thanking the Chief Guest, Keynote speaker and other invitees and students for their overwhelming presence. She made a note of the overflowing crowd due to which the further proceedings were shifted to the auditorium of the Sanskrit Bhavan and also of Doordarshan for having covered the inaugural function. ‘Well begun is half done’ – on this note the audience moved in for the first session of the Seminar.

The first session included two papers.

1. Dr. G. K. Bhat’s views on Vedas by Prof. Mrunalini Newalkar.

This paper aimed at lifting the veil that encompassed the identity of Dr. Bhat as a vedic scholar. The paper which was woven around the collection of 11 papers of Dr. Bhat in the book Vedic themes noted his variety and clarity in presenting a view-point, width and depth of research, method of comparative analysis, reflection of hermeneutics and morality in his writing, freshness of thought and independence in research as well as his logical and historical approach.

1. गो. के. भटांच्या लेखणीतून भास नाटके

(Bhasa’s plays through the writings of Dr.G.K.Bhat ) by Dr. Vaishali Dabke.

This paper concentrated on Dr. Bhat’s critique of Bhasa’s plays as reflected mainly through his thesis ‘The Dramatic themes of Bhasa and their treatment’. Research methodology adopted by him, his research on conflicting ideas in Bhasa’s writing, establishment of his independent views on the same and thereby his priceless contribution to the world of Sanskrit poetics was emphasized.

The second session that began post lunch saw 4 more presentations on the following topics.

1. डॉ. गो. के. भट यांच्या दृष्टीतून भवभूतीची नाट्यसंपदा

(Plays of Bhavabhuti through Dr. G. K.Bhat’s perspective.) by Dr.Manjusha Gokhale.

The paper which was read out by Prof.Shobha Sahasrabuddhe of the Sanskrit department, due to the unavailability of the presenter, focussed on Dr. Bhat’s perspective on Bhavabhuti and his works. It threw light on some of Dr.Bhat’s most important opinions regarding Bhavabhuti’s style (both the positives as well as the lacuna), his persona, his exposition on Bhavabhuti’s famous tagline – एको रस: करुण एव, etc.

1. गो.के.भटांच्या लेखणीतून मुद्राराक्षस व वेणीसंहार : अनुवादमीमांसा

( Mudrarakshasa and Venisamhara from the point of view of Dr.G.K.Bhat : An analysis of his translation By Prof.Suchitra Tajane)

This paper proposed Dr. Bhat’s translation to be of the type of भावानुवाद. It focussed on Dr. Bhat’s style of giving both the meanings in his translation in case of an intended pun, use of small sentences while translating poetry, etc.

1. Prof. Dr. G. K. Bhat’s contribution to the field of Sanskrit Poetics by Dr. Parineeta Deshpande.

This paper was mainly based on Dr. Bhat’s two very popular books – ‘Rasa theory and its allied problems’ and संस्कृत काव्यशास्त्राची प्रस्तावना. It focussed on the compact contents of the book, simple and lucid exposition facilitating easy understanding of the subject, panoramic survey of the tradition of sanskrit poetics that stands testimony to Dr. Bhat’s holistic approach towards the subject, etc.

1. गो.के.भटांच्या लेखणीतून कालिदास : एक समीक्षा (Kalidasa from the point of view of Dr.G.K.Bhat : A critical analysis) by Dr. Gauri Mahulikar.

This paper focussed on Dr.Bhat’s views on Kalidasa’s humour, creative genius, characterization and romanticism. It observed Dr. Bhat’s Critical and analytical research attitude. It also made a note of the fact that though a great admirer of Kalidasa, Dr.Bhat doesn’t shy away from pointing out his short comings.

With this, Day one of the seminar came to a close. Both the sessions were chaired Dr.Siddhartha Wakankar.

Day two began at the Seminar hall of Ramkrishna Bajaj Sanskrit Bhavan, University of Mumbai with a sweet rendering of Saraswati vandana.

Session three began with the paper,

1. डॉ.गो.के.भट यांचा विद्वान, व्यासंगी आणि विनोदी विदूषक ( Dr.G.K.Bhat’s scholarly, diligent and humorous Vidushaka.) by Dr.Rekha Inamdar Sane.

In the absence of the presenter, the above paper was read out by Meenakshi Dikshit and was based on Dr. Bhat’s book named ‘Vidushaka’ that traces the origin, development, language, types, qualities, etc of Vidushaka in Sanskrit literature. It reflects Dr. Bhat’s discipline in research, open mindedness and absence of preconceived notions in his writing.

1. डॉ.गो.के.भट यांचे त्यांच्या लेखनामध्ये व्यक्त झालेले रंगभूमीच्या विविध पैलूंचे आकलन. (An Understanding of the various aspects of theatrics reflected in the writings of Dr. Bhat) by Prof. Madhav Vaze.

This Paper was based mainly on Dr. Bhat’s work titled ‘Theatrical Aspects of Sanskrit Drama’. It highlighted the fact that Dr. Bhat analyses every concept in Bharata’s Natyashastra and gives his own explanation for the same.

1. डॉ.गो.के.भट यांनी केलेले संस्कृत नाटकांचे मराठी अनुवाद : विश्लेषण ( A Critical analysis of Dr. G. K. Bhat’s Marathi translation of Sanskrit dramas.)

By Dr.Saroj Deshpande.

This paper aimed at understanding the basis of Dr.Bhat’s translation of Sanskrit plays Uttararamacharitam, Venisamharam, Mudrarakshasam, Swapnavasavadattam and Urubhangam. The first one being in English and others in Marathi, other translations in English, Hindi and Marathi were considered in order to understand Dr.Bhat’s style of translation.

1. डॉ.गो.के.भट यांचे मराठी साहित्य आणि समीक्षा यांना असलेले योगदान

(Dr. G. K. Bhat’s contribution to the world of Marathi literature and criticism)

By Prof. Meena Gokhale.

The presenter began with an overview of Dr. Bhat’s journey as a writer. She spoke about his poetic genius and the influence of writers of varied cultures like Browning, Tennyson, Tagore, etc. The readings from Dr. Bhat’s writings were the highlights of the presentation. A befitting conclusion to this session was Dr.Bhat’s translation of Tagore’s poetry into Sanskrit alongside the original, read out by Dr.Gauri Mahulikar.

The post lunch session began with Dr. Urmi Shah, one of Dr. Bhat’s students and the chairperson for the day’s proceedings, sharing her experiences with Dr.Bhat. This was followed by papers of the fourth session.

1. Tragedy: An Indian Approach by Dr. Kanchan Mande.

Due to the absence of the presenter, this paper was read out by Prof. Harshada Sawarkar from the department of Sanskrit. It focussed on Dr. Bhat’s views on tragedy in Sanskrit drama.

1. गो.के.भट यांच्या समीक्षेतील लोकाभिमुखता ( G. K. Bhat’s readers oriented critique)

By Smt. Samira Gujar Joshi

This paper was presented with special reference to Dr. Bhat’s writing in the monthly magazine Amruta. It focussed on his style of writing and presentation, his efforts in spreading knowledge of Classical Sanskrit Literature among common people which he accepted and fulfilled as a vow in his life.

1. G.K.Bhat’s critique on Mricchakatikam by Prof.Prasad Bhide.

This paper focussed on the much needed representational aspect of Sanskrit Drama as against the popular literary aspect. It was based on the threefold problems that occur while contemplating the possibility of staging the play Mrucchakatikam and how Dr.Bhat addresses this issue, his analysis and solutions for the same.

1. Dr.G.K.Bhat’s contribution to understanding of Natyashastra by Dr.Veena Londhe.

In the absence of the presenter, this paper was read out by Prof. Shakuntala Gawde from the department of Sanskrit. It focussed on the evaluation of Dr.Bhat’s voluminous books ‘Bharata Natya Manjari’ and ‘Natya Manjari Saurabha’ done by comparing these books to other books on Natyashastra and through internal evaluation.

This was followed was the Valedictory function that had Dr.Sanjay Deshmukh (Hon. Vice Chancellor, University of Mumbai) in attendance. After the introduction, Hon. Vice Chancellor, in his brief address spoke on ‘Borrowing Bhasa’s eyes’ focussing mainly on the works ‘*Svapnavasavadatta’* and ‘*Urubhanga’*.

This was followed by a select few representatives from the audience expressing their views about the seminar. This included, Dr. Ankush Bhide, a student of Ramnarain Ruia college, expressing his awe at the ability of the speakers to hold the attention of young students for such a long duration. Vidya Gore, a student of M.A. Sanskrit of the University, spoke of how various aspects of Dr. Bhat, known to students as the author of the books they refer, was revealed to the students by the scholars within these two days. Ashwini Ashtekar, a Ph.D fellow of the Department, expressed her desire to follow the footsteps of Dr. Bhat in reading the entire collection of one author every vacation. Then came Prof. Swati Dravid, from Ramnarain Ruia College, spoke about the uniqueness of the theme – critique on the works of a critic and the various aspects handled by the scholars.

Then followed the speech of the Chief Guest, Dr. Sindhu Dange, who spoke about her experiences while working with Dr. Bhat, his supportive nature, etc. She ended on the note ‘Light shines warmest on those who reach for it.’

Dr. Gauri Mahulikar then in her speech formally thanked the Chief Guest, Dr.Vijaya Rajadhyaksha, the keynote speaker, Dr. Uma Vaidya, for their scholarly inauguration of the Seminar. She made a note of the speakers who, inspite of not being able to personally attend the Seminar due to heavy rains in pune, sent in their papers well in advance so that they could be presented in the Seminar. She also thanked a couple presenters who agreed to present papers at a short notice. She thanked Dr. Sindhu Dange for having accepted the invite to preside over the valedictory function. She also thanked the professors and students for their overwhelming response and the student-professor team of the Department for having helped in putting together this function.

With this the two day National Seminar, a *Guruvandana* to Dr. Bhat, a great scholar, writer, teacher and a great soul reached its conclusion.