

[Abstract of talk by Prof. Sachin Ketkar]

The Primeval Woman in the City: Modernism in Poetry of Malika Amarsheikh

Malika Amarsheikh (1957) introduced an urbanized sensibility, a cosmopolitan world view and modernist avant-garde idiom to women's poetry in Marathi with her collections like *Valucha Priyakar* (1979), *Deharutu* (1999) and *Mahanagar* (1999). She did to Marathi women's poetry, what BS Mardhekar (1909-1956) did to Marathi poetry in general. This rather late development of modernist idiom in women's poetry in Marathi hints at the deeply gendered and unequal social basis of modernism as a literary movement in India. The paper explores elements of Indian modernism in Malika Amarsheikh's poetry and assesses her contribution to Marathi women's poetry in terms of the distinctively modernist aspects of her oeuvre. The paper also considers the possibility of evolving a theoretical understanding of the poetics and politics of Indian modernisms that may contribute to the neglected domain of literary historiography of post-Independence Indian literatures.

Keywords: Indian Modernisms, avant-gardes, gender, literary historiography