*Nayi Kavita* (New Poetry)

*Nayi Kavita* [New Poetry is associated with Agyeya (1911-1987) and the seven poets published in Agyeya’s 1943 collection *Tar Saptak* (the name refers to a musical term for “higher register”). Agyeya went on to edit three other anthologies entitled *Second* [*Dusara*, 1951], *Third* [*Tisara*, 1959], and *Fourth* [*Chautha*, 1979} *Saptak*. The prefaces written by Agyeya and the poets became famous in their own right. There, Agyeya probed the place of modernism and tradition, of literary groupings and manifestos, of form and registers of language. Agyeya also insisted that no single criteria or aim unified their diverse formal and thematic experimentations. All the other poets of that collection were to become venerable figures in Hindi literature—Nemichandra Jain, Bharat Bhushan Agrawal, Prabhakar Machwe, Girirajkumar Mathur (1919-1994) and Ramvilas Sharma (1912-2000). Perhaps the most famous find of the first anthology was the young Muktibodh(1917-1964). Muktibodh’s theorizations of many of the questions that engaged Agyeya were to give the New Poetry in Hindi a robust intellectual infrastructure from which poets of the 1960s and 1970s could initiate points of departure. Though New Poetry is often contrasted with the poetry of the Progressives, which engaged social inequality, it is more meaningful to contrast New Poetry with the generation of the 1920s and 1930s—the Chayavadi poets (Chayavadi literally means “poets of shadows”). That older generation, writing in the noon of nationalism, asked the same questions of tradition, appropriate thematics, language and sound, and came up with a very different set of answers.