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SUB-THEME – 1:

**WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND
ENTITLEMENTS TO LAND AND LAND-
BASED RESOURCES**

AN INNOVATIVE APPROACH FOR ENSURING ENTITLEMENTS TO LAND AND LAND RESOURCES FOR RURAL POOR WOMEN IN WEST BENGAL

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Approximately, 40.5 crore women live in rural India. About 17 crore of them work in agriculture and allied activities. About 60 - 80 % of food and nearly 90% of dairy products are produced by these women. Due to out-migration of men, women-headed or women managed households are now about 32% of rural households.

'Land' is considered a male domain in our country. At the familial level, land matters are dealt with by male members. In India, sons have more chance to inherit family land / property.

In spite of various measures taken by the Government for promoting access to and control over land by women, there are some barriers, both perceived and physical that deter progress. Government officials at various levels miss out to pay heed to the directives meant for that and women are not aware about their entitlements. This calls for orienting women on the legal aspects of land ownership and awareness generation at all levels on the importance of secure land rights for women.

Landesa, being a research and advocacy non-profit organization aims to promote secure land rights for rural poor families as a viable strategy for poverty reduction. **Landesa's strategy is to work in tandem with the Government system and structure. In 2010, Landesa initiated a project which aims to improve girls' social and economic wellbeing, by increasing girls' and communities' understanding of girls' land rights.**

The project is being implemented in partnership with West Bengal's Department of Women and Child Development (WCD), as a part of the pilot implementation of the Rajiv Gandhi Scheme for Empowerment of Adolescent Girls (SABLA) in Coochbehar district of West Bengal. These projects have already started showing encouraging results. The innovative strategies of both the programmes brought effective changes in the direction of promoting Women's access to and control over land.

IMPACT OF CHANGING SOCIAL MILIEU AND EXISTING LEGAL FRAMEWORK ON PROPERTY RIGHTS OF ADIVASI WOMEN IN DANG DISTRICT, GUJARAT

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Dang district in South Gujarat is inhabited by five main tribes namely the Bhils, Kuknas, Gamits, Kunbis and Warlis. Until about ten years back, the identity of the village was supreme and

subservient to the specific tribal identity. This was despite the fact that each of these communities had a separate set of codes, mostly unwritten, and similar. Over the years, the cohesiveness in the adivasi society in Dang has come under a lot of stress due to various factors like divisive practices by various religious leaders, increased external interactions with non- adivasi traders, state policies, macro issues like globalization etc. The change is bound to have implications for women and their property rights.

In the context of Dang, the property rights of women are governed by several factors. The broader State facilitated Hindutva agenda has had its own implications for the property rights of women. By practice, the adivasis are turned into Hindus at the time of the birth registration. While the earlier birth certificates would only mention the name of the community, now, unless specified, the word Hindu is added against each name, with the result, that application of laws related to Hindus becomes the norm. Consequently, all adivasis in the region are more or less covered by the Hindu Succession Act. Interestingly, the protestant Christians, while practicing Christianity, continue to mention their religion as Hindus in their certificates. This creates a **situation of a practicing Christian's property dispute being addressed under the Hindu Law** if and when the matter reaches the court.

The central focus of this paper is to address the dichotomies created between customary law and state-enforce law. In this context, we explore:

- a) the customary laws related to property rights of women from the five tribes
- b) the latest position of the Courts on the interplay between adivasi customary rights and state enforced law with specific focus on property rights of women and;
- c) the operation of the law at the ground level and the implications it has for the property rights of women.

"WOMEN SUPPORT CENTRE"-SECURING LAND RIGHTS FOR SINGLE WOMEN IN ODISHA

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Land, a living-source and valuable asset for families, is regulated by governments. Despite numerous efforts by the state government in Odisha (India) to provide land to the landless, a vast majority of the poorest families are landless and reside on land without any legal rights. **Government programme mandates that every landless 'family' is eligible to get land.** However, in the absence of specific identification methods, women especially widows, abandoned, divorced, disabled and unmarried adult women residing with parents and relatives do not get counted as a **'family' for land allocation and are, thus, deprived.**

Landesa, a global non-profit, partners with governments to secure land rights of poorest families **with special focus on women's land rights, piloted a cell-Women Support Centre (WSC)-** in one district (Ganjam) of Odisha to identify and facilitate land and welfare services to single women. WSC functions as a cell within the land administration at tehsil level with a woman land official as nodal. Landesa designed a robust enumeration method, supports the programme in capacity building of government officials on gender and advocates for policy reforms to facilitate land allocation to women.

57000 plus single women living with family or relatives as well as women headed households(WHH) –who were invisible to government - have been identified by trained Anganwadi workers through WSC.

This initiative connects the identified women with welfare programmes such as housing, MGNREGA, food security, pensions, sanitation, livelihood and agricultural extension programmes in addition to secure land rights. Land titles enable women get residency, income and caste papers that help enroll their children in state-run schools for free education and other essential government services. Women also form collectives to manage community resources and participate in the development process.

Secure land ownership serves as a life-support tool for women when there is break-down in relationships. With secure titles and access to services, women have a say in the family on nutrition, education, healthcare and agriculture. Land ownership paves way for empowerment of rural women who were invisible and unreached.

KHASI WOMEN: LAND RIGHTS AND PATTERN OF USE AND OWNERSHIP

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Khasi society is a matrilineal society, where descent is traced through women and the principle of female ultimo geniture is followed in matters of inheritance. Customarily, property both in land **and other forms is passed on from generation to generation through the "khatduh" or the youngest daughter** in the family. It is to be argued, that this characteristic feature, in relation to property among the Khasis, is not as simple but functions under the rubric of many aspects of the custom. The approach of this paper is that it attempts to shed some light on the theoretical as well as practical nature of land rights of the Khasi women, bringing into focus the uniqueness and complexity of land rights and patterns of use and ownership **vis-à-vis women's role and ownership rights** and thereby underscores the interplay of gender roles in both administrative as well as domestic framework within the society. In decision-making on use of land, male members of the family, in the form of brothers or maternal uncles, play an important role. The female member is seen both as a custodian as well as an inheritor of the clan name, and male members function to support the identity of the clan. Furthermore the paper also looks at the

continuity and change in relation to land use and rights among the Khasi women in the face of many factors of influence and change in modern society. This portion presents some of the challenges and opportunities to better understand and improve the tradition and practice of land use and ownership rights in the society as a whole and in relation to women in particular.

THE GENDER-COMMUNITY INTERFACE IN THE FOREST RIGHTS MOVEMENT IN INDIA

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Land rights movements in India in the past decade, whether in the form of anti-displacement struggles or reclamation of state land, have rested their case on the argument that communities dependent on natural resources ought to have the rights and primary decision-making authority over these resources. This argument informs their critique of and alternatives to the development agendas of the state. Significant among the land reclamation movements have been struggles over forestland, which comprise the largest block of state land in the country. The key demand of forest rights agitations has been the implementation of the Forest Rights Act (FRA), 2006, which recognises the rights of forest dependent communities to land and other forest resources.

This paper is a study of one such forest rights movement, the Kaimur Kshetra Mahila Mazdoor Sangharsh Samiti, (KKMMSS) which has been active in the Sonbhadra district of the Indian state of Uttar Pradesh since 2000. This organization works with the understanding that the effective implementation of FRA requires that the legal rights over land be obtained in the form of community rights in preference to individual titles and that these rights can be successfully won **and safeguarded only by women. The FRA itself mentions women's special role in safeguarding forests.** In its dialogues with other land rights movements and negotiations with the state, this organization and the all India federation it is part of – the National Forum of Forest People and Forest Workers (NFFPFW) has lobbied for the institutionalization of both community rights and rights of women over forestland. As a self-proclaimed **women's organisation, it has been** experimenting with communal agriculture in the forestland reclaimed from the state in which women form the members of the collective.

Based on fieldwork, this paper examines the organisation's assumptions about gender roles, the ways in which community members make sense of the organisation's agenda and their views on development. It draws attention to the contentious issues that emerge when the twin agendas of **community ownership and women's rights are simultaneously pursued in a context of patrilineal inheritance and patrilocal residence.** It builds on the scholarship on the relationship between gender and land in India and at the same time draws attention to the specific experiences of social movements which seek to foreground both gender and community rights over land.

LEGAL EMPOWERMENT FOR LAND RIGHTS: THE WHAT AND THE HOW

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The issues of women's control and ownership over land are influenced by two factors.

- 1) Social factors like prevalent mindset against women owning land, social status of women, poor mobility leading to poor skills at managing land etc.
- 2) Lack of legal empowerment which includes lack of awareness, absence of enabling factors like access to an entitlement center, insensitive and irresponsive machinery, lack of representation during disentitling process etc.

The work of the WGWLO in ensuring rights of women over private land has tried to address all the above needs. Over periods of several years, it has been able to integrate the issue of **women's land rights in the ambit of several organizations' agendas. The collective efforts of the organization** which have organically grown to encompass the broad 4 pillars of legal empowerment namely creating awareness , creating a mechanism to respond to claims, removing procedural and systemic blocks and making the system sensitive and responsive have thrown some learnings. This paper attempts to capture the following aspects:

- 1) Identifying specific needs of legal empowerment with respect to **women's land rights**.
- 2) Evaluating various strategies used for addressing legal empowerment need on the issue.
- 3) While the focus will be on addressing all four pillars, a more in-depth analysis of setting up a paralegal cadre on the issue will be undertaken. Aspects like selection, the strategy for capacity building locating / institutionalizing them in local organizations, impact and learnings will be discussed at length.

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LAND UNDER DIFFERENT SITUATIONS IN ANDHRA PRADESH

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The existing knowledge from the literature on women's access to land makes clear the dearth of large scale empirical studies that provided estimates on women having access to land with a break up of source of accessing land, viz., natal family, marital family and government. The contribution of legal provisions for women to access to land and the socio-economic structures at **the community and village level for women's access to land has not been analysed with larger survey studies.** The impact of recent Hindu Succession Amendment Act of 2005 and the contribution of the recently implemented land purchase programme for the women from the

landed households need to be assessed. This paper addresses these issues across different socio-economic groups and across different spaces viz Irrigated/Dry land/ Dry land faction/forest- tribal covered under V Scheduled Areas in the state of Andhra Pradesh.

In the above backdrop, this paper addresses itself to the following research issues:

1. The proportion of women having land on their names as on the date of survey under different agricultural systems
2. Whether the practice of giving land to women has converged across situations, (irrigated, dry land, dry land faction and tribal) and socio-economic groups
3. Whether there is any intergenerational transfer of land across different situations and socio-economic groups
4. Whether practice of giving land to women has been extended to house and house plots?
5. What is the awareness in regard to legal provisions for women getting land through inheritance from the families?

The paper is based on primary data collected from four districts (Krishna, Adilabad, Anantapur and Khammam) in AP categorized under four different agro ecological systems as afore mentioned.

WOMEN, LAND AND RESOURCES: INDIAN ECOFEMINIST POSSIBILITIES FOR GYNO-ECO-FRIENDLY LIFE PRACTICES

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The Global Poverty Project reveals that even though women make up half of the world's population, work two-thirds of the world's working hours and produce half of the world's food, they earn only 10% of the world's income, own less than 1% of the world's property and represent 70% of the world's poor. In the Indian scenario, the patriarchal and capitalist agenda of controlling and consuming women and nature along with the enhanced conditions of poverty, unemployment and more widened gender gaps, mainstreams a new trend of embracing tradition and development at a favourable level in order to maintain the subjugation of both women and **nature. The recent Delhi gang rape and Uttarakhand floods are best examples of two 'man'-made disasters using violent measures over women and nature for sadist pleasure and profit.**

Ecofeminism as a movement in India in the post-colonial scenario is a promising strategy to promote Gyno-Eco-friendly attitudes and practices among the people so as to revert the traditional-development paradox in favour of women, nature and all marginalised groups.

My paper attempts to analyse the myths and truths of connection between women and nature through major theories of ecofeminism. Further, my paper focuses on various ecofeminist interventions in post-colonial India, ranging from Chipko movement in northern India to

Plachimada agitation in Southern India and Narmada Bachao Aandolan in Western India to women's fights against Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, 1958 (AFSPA) in Eastern India. Then, the paper identifies the possibilities of achieving women's rights and entitlements to land and resources employing ecofeminism and its movements. Finally, my paper suggests how ecofeminist interventions could be used as a means of resistance to the exploitative androcentric intrusions over women and nature, as a collective strategy to contribute to the welfare of the country and well-being of the people.

LOCATING LAND RIGHTS IN CUSTOMARY LAWS: A STUDY OF SUMI WOMEN IN NAGALAND

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The customary laws, which have been governing the tribal community in Nagaland, have institutionalized inequality. Sumi women do not have inheritance rights nor are entitled to inherit any major property. The inequality in the distribution of property even in the case of divorce and death separation gives a clear picture how inequality among the Sumi tribe is deeply rooted in the customary laws and which are still intact in the name of preserving the culture. The role of women in the family and their status is more or less the same among all tribes of Nagaland. However, the education level of Sumi women lags behind some of the tribes like Ao, Lotha and Angami to name a few. While colonial writers like Hutton and Mills have emphasized about the higher status of Sumi women and her significant role in the family, the fact remains that their so called 'higher status' and 'significant' role is limited only to the households. Like any other women, Sumi women are expected to be faithful wives and dutiful daughters but their participation is almost non-existent when it comes to major decision making. The basis on which women's status is judged is by essentializing femininity and using the usual androcentric categories of analysis like sexual morality.

The paper makes an attempt to understand gender relations among the Sumi community of Nagaland by looking at distribution of property, decision-making, gender roles and socialization process, and locate the land rights of women within the customary laws.

NO WOMAN'S LAND: EXPLORING WOMEN'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR LAND AND THEIR LEGAL ENTITLEMENTS

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The recognition of women as equal participating citizens entails equal control and decision-making power over land and land-based resources. Over the last decade, several legal changes **have reflected the formal acknowledgment of women's entitlements to land. In truth, however,** women are rarely able to access these rights, largely as a result of years of customary practice as well as social conditioning of families.

While land rights make for a financial asset for some women, they enable economic and resultant other freedoms for others. For many, land is the very source of livelihood and identity. For some women from traditional pastoral communities in Rajasthan, their entire world view stems from the forest lands and concomitant natural resources they have been living on and among for generations.

The legal landscape surrounding **women's entitlements to land can be divided into two parts.** The first is through the laws of inheritance, whereby ancestral land is passed down through generations within families. These legal processes both empower as well as exclude women. In India, there is an overarching division of succession laws based on religion, which creates uneven rights and entitlements amongst women from different religions. Significantly, the Hindu Succession Act was amended in 2005 to bring daughters at par with sons for the purposes of inheritance rights.

The second part of the legal landscape consists of the recognition of rights to forest land of Scheduled Tribes and other traditional forest dwellers through the Forest Rights Act, 2006. Greater say in decision making regarding the taking over of land for development projects has **also been brought in through the recent 'Right to Fair Compensation and Transparency in Land Acquisition, Rehabilitation and Resettlement Act, 2013',** which requires the consent of local landowners for acquisition of land for large projects. While these enactments are phrased in gender neutral terms, a closer look at ground realities reveals how women are continually denied an equal voice in these decisions. Thus, the question of translation of **women's land rights from euphemistic words on paper into a real transformation in women's relationships with their environment** remains a challenging one

INHERITANCE RIGHTS OF DAUGHTERS IN THE TIMES OF ESCALATING LAND PRICES: OBSERVATIONS FROM PUNE DISTRICT IN WESTERN MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

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With the rising land prices around the major cities of Pune and Mumbai, the incidence of land sale has increased in the last two decades. Even land which is of inferior quality in terms of productivity can fetch substantial amounts of money especially if it has access to road and is located at a spot with scenic beauty. Ownership and inheritance of land has become a contentious issue in land-owning families. Historically, daughters were excluded from coparcenary rights to parental agricultural land and it has only been with the advent of legislative amendments in the Hindu Succession Act 1956 (HSA) in 2005 that this position has changed. The rising land prices and amendments to the HSA have presented an opportunity (at least on paper) for the women from land owning parental families to earn their share in the land market boom.

Even though there may be considerable level of awareness about inheritance rights, it may not necessarily mean that it is socially acceptable for a woman to claim her inheritance rights in parental land. When a daughter chooses to claim her rightful legal share in the parental land she may face disapproval from the fellow villagers. In certain cases she may be coerced by her spousal family to claim these rights. Sharp rise in land prices may act as a trigger in the perceived inclination of daughters to claim rights in parental land.

The present paper is based on doctoral fieldwork in the Maval tehsil of Pune district in western Maharashtra where the land prices have risen considerably. It discusses the observations regarding rural Hindu women's awareness about their inheritance rights, their views on claiming these rights and the perceived impact on familial relationship if a daughter demands her share.

GENDERED DISPOSSESSION AND FEMINISATION OF HILL AGRICULTURE: THE TRANSFORMATION OF LAND RIGHTS IN ARUNACHAL PRADESH

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This paper investigates the transformation of land rights and changing gender distribution of work and employment in rural Arunachal Pradesh. Using secondary data from population census and agricultural census with primary data collected through household survey, this paper argues

that along with commercialisation of agriculture, an informal private property rights regime over agricultural land has already emerged in the state. This transformation is not simply a replacement of collective ownership by private ownership over land, rather it is a process of gendered dispossession, under which a particular group of farmers, i.e. women peasants, have lost their rights over land as privatisation of ownership has often meant transfer of land to male heads. The state has played a deeply ambiguous role during the period of transition, by allowing and even encouraging the gendered privatisation of land in practice, while formally recognising collective, community ownership over agricultural land. The emergence of informal land-leasing involving migrant tenant households and local landowners has introduced another class of invisible women farmers, who simply work as family labour in leased-in holdings.

This process of privatisation and commercialisation of agriculture has occurred in a phase of significant gendered diversification of the workforce increasing feminization. The burden of maintaining subsistence agriculture is being disproportionately shared by women. The analysis of time-use pattern of rural women in West Kameng district points out that on an average, women spent more labour days in farm operations than men. The average weekly time spent by women and men is almost equal in primary activities taken together. Thus, the evidence points to the fact the male-centric private property rights over land has emerged and expanded precisely during a period of increasing feminisation of agriculture and higher work burden of women in crop farming. This paper questions the notion that greater involvement of women in socially valued 'productive work' results in more egalitarian gender relations and argues that the political economy of agrarian transition provides a better framework to understand the gendered transformation of land relations in Arunachal Pradesh.

DISPLACEMENT: A TRAUMATIC EXPERIENCE FOR WOMEN: IN SPECIAL CONTEXT OF ALIENATION FROM COMMON PROPERTY RESOURCES AND GENDER INSENSITIVITY IN R & R POLICIES OF THE STATE

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Displacement is no more just an issue but it has become a great phenomenon of our time devastating lives of millions every year. In Indian states like Orissa, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh-Rural and tribal communities with very rich resources, cultural heritage and integrity are encountered by displacement through the giant projects, planned and executed by the state.

This paper portrays that although knowledge about the overall impact of displacement has been explored in the last three decades, the gender dimension of displacement have so far remained a neglected area in resettlement researches.

In rural and tribal areas, where women not have legal entitlement of land, displacement terminates their livelihood by alienating them from access to Common Property Resources

(CPRs). Consequently women lose their economic self-dependency and autonomy, which is a decisive element to maintain their status in household decision making process and society too. It has also been documented that after displacement and being separated from their natal homes, women feels more bounded to domestic violence and abuse from their husband and other in-laws.

This paper attempts to explore that-

1. Despite shared commonality of experience with men women do understand and experience displacement differently.
2. The state has done nothing to compensate displaced women. In fact, the State has a strong belief in the homogenous notion of family, which assumes that the benefits provided to men will directly trickle down to the women of the family.
3. In our country gender biases are inherent in most of the development planning. Resettlement planning is no exception. Contemporary resettlement policies are fully gender biased (in special context of Orissa resettlement policy-2006).

My paper would be divided in three parts. In the first part I will describe the effects of **displacement on women who do not have the legal entitlement to lands. In the second part, I'll** try to locate gender insensitivity in current resettlement law and policies, especially in The Land Acquisition Resettlement and Rehabilitation Act-2012 and Orissa Resettlement Policy-2006. And **in the third and last part of my paper, I'll conclude with my findings and it would consist some** recommendations to make resettlement policies gender just.

**UNDERSTANDING THE SOCIO-LEGAL IMPLICATIONS ARISING OUT OF THE
IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESOLUTIONS / NOTIFICATIONS OF THE STATE OF
MAHARASHTRA PASSED FOR PROMOTING LAND AND HOUSING RIGHTS OF WOMEN**

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The social and women's organizations in the State of Maharashtra have been working for many years to establish and lobby in favor of women's land and housing rights. In this context, the Government of Maharashtra's action to issue various Government Notifications and resolutions relating to women and land rights/housing rights gained a special importance. Many women's organizations and social organizations including the land rights campaigns actively and extensively took efforts in implementation of these GRs and notifications which perceived to recognize land rights/housing rights of women. The social impact of this work was found to be tremendous. Lately these organizations and groups realized serious concerns and legal issues related to the GRs which presumably guarantee women land and housing rights equal to their husbands. The opinions from the legal experts and the higher government officials also affirmed that the legal validity of the GRs is questionable and as such they do not confer upon women any legal rights as they claim to be. The paper proposes to present the social and legal

implications arising out of the implementation of the resolutions and the notifications of the State of Maharashtra which are supposedly passed/issued for promoting land and housing rights for women.

A CRITIQUE OF REHABILITATION POLICIES DURING DISASTER AND CONFLICT FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF LAND AND ASSET CREATION FOR WOMEN

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In any conflict situation women are the most vulnerable and also worst affected. In a scenario, **where women's economic rights are almost non-existent**, asset recreation post-conflict needs special attention, since it plays a significant role in restitution. Rehabilitation post any disaster be it natural or due to any other situation blinds the Government while making policies and makes blanket policies which invisibilizes the social and economic rights of women. The first part of the paper will, hence look at the importance of asset recreation after any natural disaster or conflict, and its significance to ensure effective resettlement and rehabilitation. Resettlement and rehabilitation packages have been formulated by the Government of India in the wake of various natural and manmade disasters, such as the, the earthquake in Gujarat, the Anti-Sikh riots in 1984 and the Gujarat riots in 2002, Bodo and Muslim violence in Assam in 2012. In the form of policy, the Supreme Court has formulated the rehabilitation package in Nandini Sundar v State of Chhattisgarh. The Government of India formulated the National Policy for Resettlement and Rehabilitation in 2007, the NHRC has also formulated guidelines for the rehabilitation of Internally Displaced persons. There are other provisions made in the UN Guiding Principles on Internally Displaced persons which will also be examined. The second part of the paper would seek to compare the various rehabilitation packages, policies and laws in place, in terms of asset recreation for women and analyse the efficiency of various provisions. The third and final part of the paper would derive out of the comparative, situations. The attempt is to address the following questions.

- Where policy exists, and does not address the specific needs of women
 - Where policy is absent altogether
 - Where the policy works against asset recreation for women.
-

FEMALE AGRICULTURAL LABORERS AND THEIR MODE OF PROTEST

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When we study the shift of population in the occupational structure in the Indian context we come across the dominance of agriculture as a livelihood for people. In this backdrop the focus of this paper would be the status of female agricultural laborers in India as a whole. Female labor within the household has been a major contributor to the cultivation process though in most cases the right to inherit the land has been denied to them. The invisible farm labor of women comes under pressure from diverse sections which have a crucial role to play in pushing the exploited sections of women laborers to unite and protest. This paper will look into this aspect of organized means of protest by these groups.

This paper will also look at the various aspects that act as pressure points like the familial ties and kinship which plays a significant role in determining the rights of women on land and their wages in performance of labor. Another thrust area in the paper would be to bring out in detail the kind of organizations women farm laborers associate to along with the emphasis on the basis of such a membership. It is an attempt to look at the various means and ways through which the women workers on fields come together to fight the exploitative gendered structures pertaining to the performance of their labor. This suppression can be inflicted due to the difference of caste or ethnic belonging along with sex.

In all the paper would try and evolve a study on the agrarian relations where female farm workers would create a new method of resistance suited to their settings in contrast to the oppressions unleashed.

VOICES FROM THE GRASSROOTS: WOMEN'S ROLE AND LEADERSHIP IN PEOPLE'S MOVEMENTS IN GUJARAT

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This paper presents the findings of a study undertaken by two leading civil society organizations in Gujarat: Utthan and Kutch Mahila Vikas Sangathan (KMVS). It addresses the question of **gender in people's movements and develops a gender analysis framework**. The context of the study is the struggle against the Nirma Cement Plant in Bhavnagar District (starting in 2007) and opposition to the Adani port and Special Economic Zone (SEZ), power plant, and metallurgical industries in Mundra, Kachchh District (starting in 2009).

Over six months in 2011, focused group discussions were conducted with the decision-making bodies of each movement and women leaders.

This study looks at several key **aspects of women's participation in people's movements including awareness, barriers to women's participation, sources of support, male leaders' perceptions of women's roles, and women's perceptions of their own participation.**

The results indicate that livelihoods threats are key in drawing women into movements. **Women's participation proved influential partially due to the heightened awareness of women** involved in capacity building initiatives led by Utthan and KMVS. When women across diverse communities organized, it represented a tipping point in creating genuine and sustainable **people's movements based on democratic strategies.**

While women involved in grassroots movements speak the language of rights and equality, women leaders also need to highlight the power relations imbedded in the processes, structures, and social perceptions of the movement itself. Despite this challenge, women involved in the two movements reported that they had seen a change in their lives and a broader recognition of their abilities and voice, particularly at the familial and community level. It is our hope that the analysis of these two movements represents a significant step in initiating a wider dialogue on these issues.

MONEY WHERE THE MOUTH IS: WOMEN, CAPITAL AND A LAND RIGHTS MOVEMENT

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Beed district in Maharashtra has historically been a site of political struggles, mostly anchored around caste, specifically Dalits. Different groups here have articulated Dalit rights from varied vantage points – human rights, rights to political representation, and land rights. Further, as the women's movement in India gained momentum, caste struggles in Beed began to incorporate a gendered lens.

The struggle for Dalit rights in and around Beed has been centered on access to agricultural land. This struggle began in the early 1990s and by the mid 2000s resulted in Dalit families gaining ownership rights over land. But being resource poor, these families could not productively farm the land nor could they access the capital necessary to buy productive resources such as ploughs or fertilizers. In order to solve this problem, the movement formed a women-run micro-finance company – Anik - that would capitalize these families.

This paper essentially, narrates the story of the women of Beed, and what pushed them to form Anik. It will focus on the unusual link between a political struggle and a women-led Micro-finance Company. At what stage of the struggle for land rights did the women identify access to financial capital as necessary, and why? How did they choose to act on it? How has this strengthened their movement, and transformed their lives? And how does this nuance their

articulation of feminism and a feminist movement? In turn, how has a feminist approach changed the contours of economic development and an understanding of capital?

The paper is based on detailed interviews with activists from these movements as well the women who are part of this Micro Finance Company. Often, we realize that there is an overlap between these two.

We hope this paper will add to current understandings of the changing landscape of social movements in India.

GROUP BASED LAND RIGHTS FOR RURAL WOMEN

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Women suffer from several handicaps, such as title to land, access to credit, inputs, insurance, technology and market. A number of policy documents, particularly the Draft National Policy for Women in Agriculture prepared by the National Commission for Women in 2008 and more **recently the Women Farmers' Entitlement Bill, 2011** proposed measures to provide for gender specific needs of women farmers, and also protect their legitimate needs and entitlements. The bill envisaged women farmer empowerment with equal rights over agricultural land and other related rights, particularly those pertaining to irrigation. The latest to address the issue of land rights of women is the Draft National Land Reform Policy 2013 which deals with numerous issues revolving around land including individual as well as group rights.

This paper explores **constraints to women's entitlement to individual land rights of which many** may remain as insurmountable barriers. As paradigm shifts in attitude towards inheritance of land by daughters may not be a realistic expectation in the foreseeable future given the prevailing socio-cultural environment and norms, stable user rights of land on group basis may **help in improving rural women's access to land, particularly for those belonging to landless and** marginal farm land owning households. Group rights to land may thus become particularly important for these categories of rural women for enhancing livelihoods. The paper also discusses how group rights to land in Kerala have helped in improving food security and food production and suggests that these rights should be enhanced as well as institutionalised for bringing about greater participation of women in land based livelihood activities.

INTERROGATING STATE AND POLICY: GENDER, LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCE REGIMES IN SOUTHERN RAJASTHAN

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Recent changes in land and natural resource policies in Rajasthan reflect a mixed landscape - a zealous attempt to pursue the path of neo-liberal growth on the one hand, towards industrialization, infrastructure and extractive industries on the one hand; an array of appeasing pronouncements on entitlements aimed towards inclusion on the other. Viewed from a feminist political ecology lens these skewed dualities of development represent an impending crisis especially in an ecologically fragile terrain, as communities realign arrangements to negotiate their rights in a regime of seemingly scarce natural resources. The impact of policies on water regimes, on forest access and on land use and access are manifested in the shifts in livelihoods practices, patterns of work, access to food and other resources from the commons and changing gender relations.

This situation represents a multitude of changing relationships women have little control over - the stress of coping with basic needs for survival; the compulsion to renegotiate social arrangements within their households and communities and with state and other actors in the face of depleting terrains and potential conflict, arising from contestations between communities. **These are the sites of women's struggles to survive and re-configure** their everyday narratives within a text that the state and market has pre-scripted.

The author analyses the contours- content and perspective of NR policies and programmes to **define the NR 'regimes' in Rajasthan; perspectives related to these as articulated by policy makers and implementers** are then analysed through a feminist discourse analysis framework. The implications of these policy and discourse positions are then analysed for multiple communities from a feminist political ecology perspective. Based on available documents and interviews with policy makers and functionaries, the fallouts of these regimes are tracked to a context of a village in Southern Rajasthan representing a mixed habitation and contesting NR dependency to analyse the implications of such declining NR access regimes on the population of tribal (Girasia) and nomadic(Meghwal) communities from a feminist political ecology perspective.

WOMEN, LAND AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: REVISITING THE DEBATE

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Agriculture has always been a male centric area, both as a practice and also as a focus of extension and development. Women were always reduced to peasants or labourers. The deep rooted patriarchy has percolated into the Indian agricultural polity also, so much so that it was not until 1985 that even lip service was paid to the issue of women in agriculture in the planning and policy making.

As per the Agriculture Census 2010-11, the total number of operational holdings in the country have increased from 129 million in 2005-06 to 138 million 2010-11 i.e. an increase of 6.61%. The percentage share of female operational holders has increased from 11.70 in 2005-06 to 12.79 in 2010-11 with the corresponding operated area of 9.33 and 10.36. This amounts to a mere .89% increase which is quite unsatisfactory keeping in view the contribution and participation of women in agriculture. Moreover, the increase is only in the operational holding which means all land which is used wholly or partly for agricultural production and is operated as one technical unit by one person alone or with others without regard to the title, legal form, size or location. So, if a woman is an operational holder that does not mean that she is the owner of the land. In the proposed paper I shall try to argue that the right to inheritance in landed property being given to women in 2005 has not resulted into the engagement of women with land. The important linkages between **women's land rights, development and sustainability** are neglected. The proposed paper will try to look into these neglected areas by documenting **women's restricted rights to land and linking its effect on sustainability**.

MIGRATION AND ESCALATING WOMEN PARTICIPATION IN AGRICULTURE: AN EVALUATION OF LAND REFORM PROGRAM FOR EMPOWERING WOMEN IN HILL RURAL AREAS OF UTTARAKHAND

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Migration from the hill rural areas of Uttarakhand has been an ongoing process. This process involves largely the males, of which the large majority is of the youth leaving behind the females with the families. In the urban regions of the district the male population is larger than that of females. Other revealing fact that evolves from the census 2011 is that the majority of the growth in male population even after being overall negative in rural areas has in fact been due

to the increase in male child population (0 to 6 years). These figures reveals the fact that females alone take the household burden and to an extent the burden of agriculture. The poor geographical and harsh environment of these regions along with the poor infrastructural facilities has always acted as an impediment in making agriculture as not only a source of subsistence but also of income and employment generation. Agriculture is not only the major source of subsistence but also a sector which helps women to reap the direct benefits of their efforts and inculcates in them the belief and independence which are basic necessities for empowerment. Government has always launched and implemented many programs of women empowerment **from giving them reservation in PRI'S to reservation in various self** employment and other employment programs like MNREGA but the overall impact of it has failed to improve the social and economic status of women. The Study here emphasizes on the possible role and significance and potential of agriculture in not only making them economically independent but to also evolve them as empowered human beings as it is the only sector which engages women in large proportions leaving aside no better alternative for economically engaging women in these backward regions. The study give thrust on the areas of land Reform giving gender based perspective, problems and requirements which could be brought in to not only empower the women but to also develop the agriculture which could itself evolve out of it.

TRIBAL WOMEN'S LIVELIHOOD AND RIGHTS IN GOA: A DAILY STRUGGLE AND SEARCH FOR THE ROAD

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This paper is an attempt to document the daily struggles of the women in my own community – the Velip community, which is considered as one of the Tribal communities of Goa. Life for tribal **women has become a daily struggle due to inflation and the high cost of living in 'touristic' Goa** as well as government policy regarding their traditional source of livelihood – namely kumeri or shifting cultivation. This has been a common practice among the tribal communities in several parts of India. It has been called by different names, for example jhum cultivation in North India, slash and burn, swidden agriculture etc. In Goa, shifting cultivation is locally known as kumeri cultivation or kaamat in Konkani.

In the generation of my grand-parents, ownership of land was not a concern. Communities moved about freely and cultivated crops for their own survival wherever the community settled. This was usually on the hilly slopes in the forests of South of Goa, which were abundant in **natural resources such as water and fertile soil. Women's involvement in kumeri cultivation was to minimize the need for cash and to sustain the family's basic needs of food. But today because** of government policy, forest laws, etc., the community has been denied access to land and other natural resources making survival by this traditional source of livelihood difficult. The age old way of coping with life by being self sufficient has become a problem affecting women in particular.

The present paper deals with the necessity of the tribal people especially poor tribal women who are more dependent on natural resources as means of livelihood and whose search for alternatives is the highlight of this paper. Being from the Velip community, this paper has a personal connection with me as I have lived through the struggles of women from different generations within this tribal community.

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO LAND: A CASE OF SHIVPURI DISTRICT IN MADHYA PRADESH

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Land has always remained a symbol of status, prestige, power and strength and women have been denied of this resource until a very recent past. Access to and rights over land and other natural resources is crucial for the livelihood needs of rural poor households, yet there are considerable social, political, and institutional challenges to be faced—and such challenges are even more pronounced for poor women. The Indian Constitution although prohibits discrimination on the ground of religion, race, caste, sex, place of birth but the fact of the matter remains that land laws in the country have remained gender discriminatory and thus has resulted in impinging upon women socio-economic and legal status. Endowing women with land is an important instrument for empowering them economically and strengthening their ability to challenge social and political gender inequities. There are various ways by which women can access land either through market or State distribution policies or by Inheritance (common way of accessing land.) According to the agriculture census 2005-06 women own only 9.3 percent of the total agricultural land and constitute just 11.6 percent of total land holders. This is really small relative to their three fold contribution to society-productive, reproductive and social. Feminist groups at national, regional and international levels have drawn attention to unequal land rights as an important mechanism through which female poverty and subordination is sustained and reproduced.

This paper in addition to gender discriminatory laws will also look into the women increased involvement in agriculture. As men migrate to urban area and to non-farm sector due to distress in agriculture and better job opportunities this lead to increasing number of women getting crowded into agriculture. In the recent development literature there is growing use of the term '**feminization of agriculture**'. Is it really so or it merely is the over representation of women work-force in agriculture labour whether as agricultural wage workers or unremunerated family workers. To strengthen my argument I will discuss my observations from Shivpuri district in Madhya Pradesh.

"WOMEN IN THE 'ALLAH JAANE' LAND: A STUDY OF RIGHTS AND ENTITLEMENTS TO LAND AND LAND BASED RESOURCES AMONG THE WOMEN LIVING IN THE CHOWLKHOWA CHAR - CHAPORI OF DARRANG"

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The river- islands of the Brahmaputra, the Chars, are inhabited by the migrants from the erstwhile East Bengal, later Pakistan and now Bangladesh from British period onwards. The Char dwellers are solely dependent on agriculture. Land is an identity to their existence. But the irony is that, the land around which their whole socio-economic life cycle revolves is temporary in nature, because of the annual flood and erosion. Besides **that, large areas of land are 'Touze' land, where neither cadastral surveys are** conducted nor they have any proper legislation for revenue settlement. The Char dwellers live amidst the constant threat of flood and erosion, and suffer from uncertainty regarding land possession. But, women are even more deprived and marginalized than the rest, so the present paper tries to understand the experience of women living in an environmentally unstable land with all the uncertainty regarding land possession. The study will also look into the process of dislocation, occupancy and resettlement from a gender lens.

Ownership of newly appeared Char, re-appearance of old eroded land and control over land has been a dominant issue of the Char areas. According to the Assam Land and Revenue Regulation, 1886, if eroded land reappear within the 5-6 years on the old site then the land should be resettled with the original lease holder and, if it appears after the expiry of specific time period then it would be purely government land. But in reality, emerging of a new Char or re-appearance of an old Char is always followed by **a violent conflict between the powerful local leaders or strong men 'Dewanis', whereby** the Dewanis gain control over the land, curtailing the right of the original owner or the poor farmers. Drawing from the wide spread assumption that the widowed and deserted **women in the Char are the "Poorest of the poor"**, the present paper attempts to understand how the interaction between gender, class, religious identity, patriarchy, social practices, institutional arrangement, power play and environmental vulnerabilities together determines the rights of women over land and land based resources.

DECENTRALIZATION, PARTICIPATION AND WOMEN: A CASE STUDY OF FOREST RESOURCES IN UTTARAKHAND

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The one-third reservation of seats for women in the local bodies, along with reservation of seats for scheduled castes and scheduled tribes in proportion to their regional population was the revolutionary provision of the **Seventy-third Constitutional Amendment Act**. But women's participation in formal structures of governance, whether in formal political institutions or other institutions for policy making and implementation, has remained inadequate. The entry and presence of a few women in these structures became a mere symbol of their presence giving the illusion that women are able to enter all spheres of life without any problem. In this paper, through the selected case studies of the local level institutions such as Van Panchayats and Joint Forest Management Committees of Almora, Kumaon Division, Uttarakhand, an attempt has been made to analyze the institutions at the grass root level and how the functioning of these grass root institutions get influenced by the presence of women as a head of the institution. It will also examine the manner in which these arrangements affect collective outcomes in terms of efficiency and equity. The study of Van Panchayats has illustrated questions of overarching **bureaucratic influence and 'the politics of presence'** remain pertinent if decentralization has to achieve its radical potential.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS IN HILL FARMING IN NAGALAND

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Mountain ecosystems can survive only with the communities and specifically the women who have become the primary workforce in these terrains in the backdrop of migration, climate change and conflict. Nagaland has seen million mutinies in its history and the mountain ecosystem has been home to many such movements. People have survived in the forests in hiding with basic food crops like paddy and millets in the past. Today communities value these crops as survival crops which can sustain in very rough climatic conditions and anybody can afford to grow them. Most of the men have lost their lives in conflict with the state forces, with factions and even to maintain territorial integrity. Men are trained to be hunters and fighters from their very childhood and women are trained to be providers, nurturers and protectors of nature. This gender defined distinction has its roots in the survival mechanism of life in the mountains. Women have been much more resilient in recent times to maintain traditional agricultural practices in the mountain eco-systems. Sustainable agriculture in Naga Hills is a reality. But gradually the shift from food crops to cash crops is an emerging trend. There are

some affluent farmers who have additional land for experiments with spices, exotic fruits and timber producing trees. These choices are hardly consulted with women farmers. If there is more money in this kind of cash crop production then the family decides to venture into cash crop cultivation. In spite of such extensive contribution to the agriculture sector, women farmers in Nagaland do not have any substantive decision-making power in their agrarian affairs. The process of feminization of agricultural labour is increasing in the remote mountain pockets of Nagaland. This paper will attempt to highlight the ecological rights of women farmers in mountain eco-systems in Nagaland.

STATE RESPONSIVENESS TO WOMEN AND LIVELIHOODS: A CASE OF HARYANA FOREST DEPARTMENT

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The author draws attention to the efforts made by Haryana Forest Department in mainstreaming gender issues within the Department. The effort becomes particularly of overriding significance in the rapidly changing socio-economic background of Haryana that paradoxically has one of the lowest gender sex ratio in India coupled with high industrialization as part of the corridor of infrastructure development in the National Capital Region.

The Haryana Forest Department has in this existing scenario, made concerted efforts where both **common and private property for afforestation is dwindling and its space for women's role through the forest department interventions. To galvanise it a women's empowerment cell first** of its kind in India was established by the department based on a success of Gaganpur village in **Ambala district, where two women's group in collaboration with the Village forest Committee** undertook social fencing of 11.41 hectares of Panchayat land and after a span of 10 years a cumulative timber sale of Rs 1 crore 89 lakhs was undertaken with additional benefits of fodder **and women's confidence in negotiations with community and the forest department.**

The success of this became a harbinger for the Forest Department in 2011, through innovative funding to establish the cell that cuts across all the projects and divisions of the State. The cell at present ensured recruitment of women forest officers, sensitization of the forest department on gender issues and it gave **visibility to women's achievements in augmentation of resources.** The researcher clearly acknowledging that this nascent experiment by the department will not be able to address the structural inequities that have contributed to social practices resulting in low gender sex ratio in the state and parallelly other mechanisms would have to be explored.

The paper has been written based on a detail field work that was undertaken by the presenter as part of an evaluation exercise of the Haryana Forest Department in August 2013.

ENHANCING LIVELIHOODS OF WOMEN: A STUDY ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF HOMESTEAD LAND

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It is an irony that, gaining importance to land as a resource for development has actually lead to alienation of this resource to the poor, particularly women. While the influential get huge tracts of land under different guise, worst being lands under SEZ act, land to poor is shrinking. Even as, according to NSSO data, the extent of landless poor in rural India is around 31 percent, housing schemes by government hardly leave land space enough to meet basic household needs. And today, this scarcity also points to the shrinking status and subjugation of women on all counts. Burden on women grows further, when men of the house are forced to migrate in search of livelihoods. Access to even small plots may not only improve nutritional levels, provide additional income and security to women but is likely to influence their empowerment process and enhance status in the family. Further, a learning here may positively influence government to design suitable policies favouring women.

The present effort is a comparative study to examine the overall impact of homestead land on the livelihoods of women and family, influence on the status and empowerment of women. The study will provide an understanding on the difference between families utilising homestead lands for economic gains and improving food security, against those not having or not utilising homestead lands for the said purpose. The study may also help understand important distinctions related to socio-economic pointers between two contrasting families. Data will be collected through well designed survey formats, in-depth interviews, critical observation in field, and discussions with NGOs working on homestead land. Critical analysis will help to establish role and significance of homestead lands.

LAND AND PRODUCTIVE ASSETS: THE STRUGGLES OF WIDOW FARMERS IN THE VIDARBHA REGION OF MAHARASHTRA

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The empowerment of vulnerable and marginalized women is steadily gaining importance in the world of social research. Efforts have been made to address them on priority basis to influence policy makers formulating developmental agenda. Of the lot, single women form a considerable portion of vulnerable and marginalized groups in the country. According to the 2001 census,

there were about 3.6 crore (36 million) single women in India comprising 7.4% of the total population. This data is not accurate as there are cases of under reporting and not reported due to social stigma, low levels of literacy; sometimes, simply the inability to identify. It is necessary to elaborate that the issues confronting single women are not homogenous as their vulnerability increases when they are ranked in low income groups.

In this paper, we attempt to describe the experiences of low income single women farmers of Yevatmal and Wardha districts of Maharashtra based on their identity as farmer, their access to land, market and claim for entitlements. Our experience shows that in a patriarchal, caste ridden society, when men themselves find it hard to cope with the clutches of social control, then, **women's issues become too traumatic and hard to solve thereby challenging the theoretical discourses of women's agency.**

It is equally important to understand whether the target group is enabled to negotiate different channels of access. It was also observed that they were distanced from systems and procedures and had little knowledge of institutions and funds. They looked upon the functionaries as agents of power and wealth.

This paper basically looks at the state of citizens under a patriarchal society and seeks to narrate a few cases of Wardha and Yevatmal districts wherein women, despite being primary producers, failed to integrate quintessential factors like linkages, networks and knowledge, which make them owners of their produce and help access means of production.

POST LAND REFORM ERA OF RURAL WEST BENGAL: GENDERED ACCESS TO LAND RESOURCES

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Land is the primary means and instrument of production in a largely agrarian economy. It is the most important source of security against poverty as well as a wealth creating and livelihood sustaining asset. Land is also considered to be a key factor in determining social position and identity within the community. Conditions of dominance or subjugation are determined on the basis of land ownership.

Over the past few decades, while land reform has made little headway in most of India, West Bengal has achieved notable land reform progress. West Bengal having only 2% of the geographical area and 3.5% of agricultural land in the country accounts for 20% of the total ceiling surplus land distributed in the country (Ref : Census of India, 2001). The progress has occurred in three areas: redistribution of vested land ownership, regulating sharecropping relationships, and distributing homestead plots¹. Despite this apparent success of land reforms, **the question of women's access to land has been largely neglected. Land titles have been granted either in the form of sole ownership of male members or joint ownership with their**

female counterparts. The overarching structure of patriarchy ensures that in spite of having equal legal rights to a particular plot of land, female members are neither able to benefit economically nor are they able to negotiate issues of their gender roles and identity. Structural issues such as intra-household allocation of resources and power dynamics clearly indicate that **land solely in the hands of male members doesn't necessarily guarantee female welfare. There has been a shift in male rural workforce from agriculture to the nonfarm sector, while women's** domestic work burden, lower mobility, lesser education and fewer investable assets limit their entry into non farm sector. This had led to an increase in the percentage of de facto women headed households, who are severely constrained due to the lack of land titles. The exclusion faced by women in terms of access to land remains a reality in contemporary India due to social and administrative bias in government land distribution programmes, current legal framework of Inheritance laws and lack of adequate financial resources to buy or lease land from the market. **In this paper, I wish to explore the dimension of rural women's access to land in the context of** relatively successful Land Reforms of West Bengal.

ROLE OF ADIVASI WOMEN IN ANTI-LAND ACQUISITION MOVEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF JHARKHAND

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In the Indian Territory, the state of Jharkhand has a large reserve of natural resources. Since, the British period, mining activities had been carried out to supply raw materials for the industries. Jamshedpur, the first steel plant, drew all its raw materials from the neighboring areas. This forms the background for displacement. Post-Independence era witnessed large-scale displacement alongside national projects- Bokaro steel plant, DVC (Damodar Valley Corporation) and Coal India, are part of the same.

After few years, Koyal-Karo Dam Project and Netarhat Field Firing Range were to acquire lands **causing huge displacements. Subsequently, the people's movement against land acquisition gained force. A new wave was created as a consequence of various people's struggles, bringing** together social activists and leaders from all spheres. It was here that the leadership of women remained remarkable.

Dayamani Barla, is one such indigenous woman leader and activist, who has contributed immensely in many such struggles against land acquisition. After Jharkhand acquired statehood, the process of acquiring lands for industries became rapid, After an MoU with the government of Jharkhand, Mittal-Arcelor Steel Plant acquired 10,000 hectares of land which could have displaced 54 villages in the Districts of Gumla and Khunti. Post-1990s, as economic policies ushered industrialization more private companies entered the scene. Between, 2006-2008, 66 MoUs were signed between private companies and Jharkhand Government under State Industrial Policy. They faced massive opposition from the locals. Munni Hansdaka and Nirmala Murmu

played crucial role in leading these people's movement against such private companies to protect the rights of the natives vigorously.

Everywhere, women alongside their male counterparts took active part in demonstration, responding to needs of the time they even picked up traditional arms to fight against the oppressor. The reclamation of communal rights over lands through large-scale participation of women in public sphere was tough. III- treatment at the hands of the paramilitary troops **deployed during 'the operation green hunt' in 2010 is one such example out of many that have been silenced. 'Operation Green Hunt' was projected by the Government of India as an offensive mission to counter uprising Naxalism but it came down heavily on the movements of the people. There are accounts of rapes by Paramilitary and state police.**

This paper will take a look at indigenous tribal movement as conducted by indigenous women and their negotiations with state. This paper attempts to make a note of remarkable changes in the status of women and save them from oblivion.



SUB-THEME – 2:

**ENCOUNTERING GLOBALISATION:
WOMEN AND SOCIAL SECURITY**

CHANGING CONTOURS OF GENDER RELATIONS IN TRIBAL COMMUNITIES: JHARKHAND

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The idea of tribal people, tribal society and its intersectionalities with the mainstream development process has been an issue of contestation amongst various scholars and laymen. There have been several studies conducted to understand tribal societies and their socio economic living conditions in India especially in the post reform period, that is post 1990s with an intense focus on the impact of development efforts on tribal societies. These studies especially in the northern and eastern regions of India have revealed the large extent to which deprivation, marginalization and land alienation is being experienced by various tribal communities due the rapid process of industrialization.

Within the gambit of these studies, the body of knowledge focusing on the women's position in tribal society still remains in a nascent stage. Due to the fact that the different schools of thought ascribed and described the tribal society from a mainstream and outsider perspective, the understandings on status of tribal women have not been uniform. This definition of the word **"status" of women as defined by the scholars gives very skewed perspective. Largely prevailing** perspective is that tribal societies are relatively egalitarian in nature, where women have greater freedom and dignity and division of labour is not purely based on gender. This view on equality is based on the fact that tribal women have historically a predominant role in the economic sphere, shouldering a large number of economic tasks along with men. However this perspective has not been able to adequately explore the marginalization of women at individual, household and societal level.

The paper tries to study and analyze the nature and dimensions of relationship between men and women and their relationship with institutions like their family, work system in tribal communities in Jharkhand in the context of rapid change in the economics of Jharkhand. The paper also intends to understand, in the light of their changing engagements in livelihood activities, the varied consequences it bears on tribal women and how the tribal community and specially women perceives and responds to these emerging changes.

DANGEROUS DOMAINS: NEW NEXUS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN JHARKHAND

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On November 15, 2011, Sister Valsa John, a Christian nun was gruesomely murdered by a group of forty armed men in her residence in the village of Pachwara, in Santhal Parganas, Jharkhand. It was Sister Valsa John— admired and respected by the locals, for her commitment to their cause, who had taken the initiative to lodge a case in the Ranchi High Court, citing the Santhal Parganas Tenancy Act. This was in response to a bid by Panem, a private public enterprise to take over the area rich in mineral resources. The company was forced to negotiate and comply with compensation package, which included the building of a hospital.

The murder of Sister Valsa John serves as an exemplary case of the collusion of the powerful agencies—of corporate, the state, the extreme left and the right—operating in contemporary Jharkhand and creating new economies of violence against women. It also brings to the fore the vulnerability of non-tribal women, whose work makes them a threat to the corporate and militant **outfits in regions identified as 'tribal-belts'**. This paper is an attempt to draw attention to a new nexus of violence against women in Jharkhand. It will draw upon at least three other cases of violence by the state and militant groups between 2008 and 2012.

BEING BEAUTIFUL: WOMEN IN ASSAMESE SOCIETY, SOME PRELIMINARY NOTES

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Assigned with the private domain one primary duty for women in the context of her social life includes representation. This duty to 'represent' delimits the range of her choices and enforces decisions regarding her body. Their bodies are deliberately formed and deformed to meet standards of beauty; to reflect family standards, to be eligible for marriage etc. With castism, racism, capitalism working hand in hand beauty standards has come to be desired and strived for regardless of its standard measurements and costs. However, this relationship between **women's body, beauty and her social standing places her amidst lot of insecurities**. At the same time, these standards being set outside the individual vary according to their spatial temporal contexts. It is often believed that liberalization, brought about through globalization would free women from the clutches of such practices. But patriarchy being a constant surpassing spatial temporal context women today are seen to be equally burdened to meet social standards of

beauty. Matrimonial adverts still openly mentions how the girl should preferably look like. The various practices carried out, traditional or modern, are intrinsically related to the social values that are gendered and patriarchal in nature. Beauty standards designed to exercise social power **and control over women's bodies and to foster and make easy the working and** accomplishment of other patriarchal norms and values. The operation and normalization of beauty practices are thus ensured to recreate and reproduce control over her body.

The fashion industry, many a times, is portrayed as working in favour of the feminist agenda, of liberating women, freeing them from the clutches of the veils and household responsibilities. At this juncture it is important to remind ourselves of the working of capital, its interest and its coalition with patriarchy. Here capitalism does not work to break the stereotypical understanding of women body; rather it redefines another category of female body and sexualizes even this body as well. It is under this context that this paper seeks to understand how notions of beauty get ingrained in the life of a woman. With Assam as the reference point the paper would try to identify what social, economic and political work in establishing these standards and in what ways these structures benefit. From folk tales, folk dances, literature and socio-political institutions like the namghar all has their role to play in making women the object of beauty.

MIGRATORY NETWORK AND THE 'IN'FORMAL SOCIAL SECURITY: THE CASE OF MIGRANT DOMESTIC WORKERS

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Feminisation of work in the unorganized sector does not only call for the need for protection of labour but specially **the protection of women as the "informal sector is a larger source of employment for women than for men"** (Zuga, 2009). **There is a need to solidify "protection" for workers because "Industrial restructuring has intensified a pre-existing pattern of labor market flexibility and is extending these conditions of casualization and insecurity by dismantling the organized sector to categories of workers who through years of struggle and organization had become 'inflexible.'" (Chhachi, 1999). The women not just are the higher employed by the unorganized sector but they are also highly exploited as they seal the most labour intensive and lowly paid jobs within the varied sectors of the unorganized economy. The paper delves into the unorganized domestic sector and looks into women who majorly migrate to the urban ghettos for work as domestic help. The paper explores the various conditions under which these women work and thus their need for social protection. The paper the explores how these women face dire situations like invisibility of their own paid labour, dire work conditions which not affects their physical and mental well being. The paper then looks into looks into migratory networks to see how informal security nets and formed and thus a market of informal social security exists, which then in turn helps them in collectivizing.**

CAPITAL GROWTH LED DEVELOPMENT, PRESCRIPTION OF NEO LIBERALISM: INTERSECTIONAL ANALYSIS OF IMPLICATION ON WOMEN'S HEALTH IN RURAL INDIA

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Analysing the implications of ongoing global financial crisis, which has led the world towards a deep "systemic crisis", is one of the urgent calls of our time. Our paper addresses this call by researching globalization's impact on health of women in India. The paper reviews public health policies' approach towards women's health with an objective of understanding factors that prohibit poor women to access and/or attain a healthy state in the wake of globalization, a phenomenon that seemed very promising for the well-being of humankind, especially for the marginalized communities like poor women. The paper revisits the history of engendering public health in India with an objective to offer a comparative analysis of the impact of welfare vis-a-vis neoliberal state on women's health. The slashing of public expenditure in the health sector since the mid 1980s (Budget, Gol, 1986-1996) was part of the changing dynamics of the Indian economy which was going through a phase of transition from welfarism to liberalism. After economic liberalization and deregulation of labor by World Bank and IMF in 1980s, which is also known as the "lost decade of development", the Indian economy had to reduce cost from the public sector in order to incorporate "flexibility" in the system (Oxfam, 2001). This is also the phase where the groundwork is laid for greater internationalism and globalization of the Indian economy. In sum, the process of partial globalization, as described by Charles Gore (2000), was initiated in the country and the influence of the "Washington Consensus" was visible in this decade. Health sector, which was already in constrain, suffered more from the declining public expenditure.

BIHU HOLIDAYING: AGRARIAN STRUCTURE, LABOUR TIME AND THE FANTASY OF ASSAMESE WOMEN

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This paper tries to understand the multiple logic of reconstitutions of 'Bihu time' as a time of holidaying in the specific structure of capitalist labour time and the specific alignments through which Assamese sub national politics succeeded to resolve the dichotomy of two so called separate world. Shifting Bihu from a non-specific, often loose time frame to a particular, coherent, specific, time, emphasising schedules for each day created a specific order that succeeded to separate everyday from Bihu time.(the notion of Bandh, bihur karone sat din bondh) Though this separation was already in the commonsensical notions of public imagination for some time, the capitalist notion of holidaying emerged around 1920s and 30s as the specific strategy to restructure the 'women' in particular and the familial settings in general. The

nostalgic, somewhat diasporic representation of 'Assamese' nature as the pristine, uncontaminated territory, placing agrarian society within it, the village and its specific festivities as the reflection of those uncontaminated gestures, sub-national politics succeeded to fix the rupture between the 'familial' violation of festive time and the general cacophony of familial every day.

Though, the holiday is actually a production of metropolitan ecstasy, emerging out of the notion of capitalist labour time where the holidays are set to be the time for reproduction of labour, **placing both women's body and nature within the same touristic imagination, a new, familial fantasy of women's' body and nature emerged when Sub national politics had shifted from its** earlier strategy from invoking Bhogali Bihu as the popular urban festival to reordering the so called obscene Bohag Bihu as the national festival of Assam. In order to locate this naturalising strategy of the Assamese sub nationalism, the paper tries to unsettle the patriarchal strategies of sub-national politics at first hand, however, the paper also wants to trace the 'holiday' as the metaphor of capitalist intrusion in the so called isolated, non- modern agrarian structure and the violation it claimed in order to rebuild 'non-modern' from its own perspective.

UNDERSTANDING RESISTANCE MOVEMENTS

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This paper will provide general background on how globalisation affected women of all strata with focus on marginalised women in various locations both in economic and cultural spheres. Women are drawn into the project of communalisation of polity on one hand and have been reduced to becoming consumers catered by free market economy.

The neo-liberal economy has resulted into tearing away sections of tribal women from livelihood dependent on common property rights. Women have offered resistance to this violent change. The paper will trace important contributions of this resistance by sighting examples of women like Sharmila Irom, Dayamani Barla and Soni Sori.

The State is increasingly using military power to suppress these voices. The left, socialist and **autonomous women's movement faces challenge to support resistance movements on one hand** and to question State violence perpetrated on women leaders of these movements. The paper **will contextualise these challenges by tracing dual relationship women's movement has with state power.**

The disturbing question is whether women's movement now is able to offer effective support to women directly under line of fire. What strategies it has to evolve to attain that? What are other effective people's movements, which it can align? The paper will go into some of these aspects.

CHALLENGING THE PATRIARCHY: EMPOWERMENT AND THE MAHILA SAMAKHYA PROGRAMME IN ASSAM

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The Women's movement in India and the Mahila Samakhya programme became coterminous in journeying for a shared and equal public space. Both of them sought to define the state-society relationship in their own ways and also by highlighting the issue of women's agency and empowerment. However, the Mahila Samakhya programme is a state sponsored scheme conceived in the 1980s aiming at women's education and empowerment, and actively focuses on mobilising the poorest and marginalised groups. Assam is one of the nine states, and the only in North East India, where currently this programme is functioning. In light of this context, this paper seeks to highlight two fundamental questions. Firstly, if women are able to carve out a space for exerting their choice and challenging the patriarchal system through the Mahila Samakhya programme. The second, following as a corollary from the first, again asks whether empowerment aimed through such programmes sufficiently succeed in their set goals. This paper would therefore like to argue that the empowerment policies of the State are sometimes geared incongruously to adapt to socio-economic changes without questioning the deeply rooted gender inequality. This paper would trace a brief trajectory of the programme in Assam, the larger debate that surrounds it and then moving on to the pertinent question about the reach of such programmes.

A STUDY OF CROSS BORDER TRAFFICKED WOMEN, COUNTER TRAFFICKING PRACTICES AND ITS IMPLICATION ON MIGRATION POLICIES

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Every year millions of people migrate within and across national borders. Reasons such as poverty, social exclusion, and civil unrest drive them to migrate across borders. They move for a better living, but unfortunately these journeys for many (mostly women and children) end tragically as they fall in the hands of traffickers. Therefore trafficking is a global phenomenon, which involves the illegal transportation of individuals across borders and eventually holding them in bondage and recruiting and engaging them in slavery like practices. Sex industry has a very strong impetus on the crime of trafficking which has contributed to a form of it - 'sex trafficking' which has gross extent throughout the world.

Literature on sex trafficking attribute it to factors such as secondary status given to women in society, low education, unemployment, abuse within and outside family, prejudices against the girl child, the caste and class structure, urbanization, purchasing power of customers,

globalization, loose borders, corrupted authorities, flawed legal system. One can note here of factor such as globalization, porous borders that goes hand in hand which because of the former acceleration the latter became easy for people around the world. It is here that scholars argue - trade in women and children for sexual exploitation took new dimensions with the global market (Farr, 2005: 139). The business of sex trade has become organized and more co-ordinated with the advent of globalization of market economies which can be traced back to the period of 15th-16th century (Sengupta, 2001: 3137). It has been argued that globalization has led to the marginalization and victimization of rural people seeking to migrate for livelihood choices and more so in the case of women laying down a fertile ground for traffickers to use their vulnerability for sexual exploitation.

Therefore study on sex trafficking states that globalization has led to the increased commodification of women. It provides women at the doorstep for the mobile men (businesspersons, defence personals, tourist,) who need women for satisfying their sexual pleasure. **"This economic and electronic globalization has meant that women are increasingly commodities to be bought, sold, traded, and consumed. And not only in domestic markets. Women are also export commodities."** (Hawthorne, 2004: 251).

Therefore giving an account of globalization and its trigger in sex trafficking the present paper would analyze the concept of trafficking (a special reference to sex trafficking), cross border trafficked women, their security and position in the destination countries and the migration policies, which is having a negative impact on the agency of women. It would seek to critically analyze the discourse of sex trafficking and globalization, and its impact on porous borders, the 'illegally migrated trafficked women', and their situation in the destination countries.

GENDERING DEVELOPMENT INDUCED DISPLACEMENT IN THE NORTHEAST

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Development Induced Displacement has been a grave concern in the country including the Northeast. The development paradigm under Neo-Liberalism envisions only increasing wealth and income, industrial progress and massive economic growth counted in terms of the Gross National Product reducing everything to a commodity including land and human beings. Millions have been forcefully displaced in the name of development resulting in people being uprooted not only from their land but also society, culture and their entire sense of identity.

Many states in the North East have common property resources (CPR) a lot of which have been taken away by the state considering them as state property. Except for a few sixth schedule areas, most communities have been denied compensation. While monetary compensation have

failed to have any significant relevance for the tribal people whose entire life depends on land, very few have been resettled hence far is the goal of rehabilitation.

Displacement affects men and women differently of whom women are the worst sufferers, specially Tribal women. The subordination that women face in such displacement is twofold: while the male biases in the society help in perpetuating gender inequality in terms of resource allocation as well as silencing women's interests, **patriarchy in the state institutions and policies** deepen the inequalities. The adversities that Tribal women face increase with their shrinking role in the CPRs post the displacement scenario. The proposed paper will attempt to gender the development induced displacement in the context of the northeast so that these gaps can be addressed. Along with studying the impact of displacement on women in the Northeast, the paper will also locate the patriarchal background in which these processes get shaped by focusing on Assam, Manipur and Arunachal Pradesh.

WOMEN IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY: WAGHRI ITINERANT TRADERS IN SECOND HAND, CLOTH MARKET

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Within the ambit of critically viewing the women work force in the globalized South Asian economy, especially the informal women workers carving a niche in the urban spaces of the country, the paper looks specifically into the Waghri (NT) women traders practicing the trade of exchanging old clothes for new utensils in almost all the cities.

These women carrying bundles of old rags and stack of utensils can be spotted on the railway bridges, platforms or deserted alleys in the afternoons either sitting and sorting their collection or yelling to call out their customers. Their customers, again women, who patronize the spring cleaning of the house, are the main source of old clothes. The clothes further follow a chain of processing and finally end in the second hand clothes markets like *Chorbazzars* (flea markets) or weekly rural markets, in the form of up cycled *zari* cushions, chappals, and much more. The men handle the marketing of the old clothes and have deciphered several novel sources over a period of time, which the study looks into.

A community and Chindhiwalli women(as they call themselves) in particular, are involved in the trade traditionally since 4-5 generations now where it begins from door to door haggling for old clothes of the elite to operating the entire chain of second hand clothes market of the country. The trade linkages not only trace rural –urban linkages but also run beyond the interstate boundaries of the country. Several nomadic communities like Waghri of Gujarat, Kuchbandhiyas (NT) of Madhya Pradesh, Joshis (NT) of Maharashtra have adopted the trade practice based particularly on the ideas of barter between the dominant monetary exchange economy. The paper looks into specific socialization patterns adopted by the community to replicate these

gendered trade roles within the community and induce infringed upward mobility of the women workers.

EVERYDAY BIOGRAPHIES OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN NAGALAND

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What do everyday biographies of rape and trauma inform us about the larger of politics of forgetting and remembering violence against women in Northeast India? Secondly, what does the culture of impunity and the increasing cases of violence against women in the region reveal about the administration and governance? In this presentation, I will examine how rape survivors and the community they belong to – families, friends, and neighbors – perceive notions of justice and reparations of violence in Nagaland. This paper presents how militarized societies grapple with a political milieu that grants impunity to perpetrators, and the ongoing rights movements, particularly forums that address sexual violence interrogates the culture of impunity.

WOMEN'S SECURITY IN AN AGE OF NEOLIBERAL TAKEOVERS

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Considerable evidence suggests that Displacement and Resettlement has particularly pernicious **impacts on women's well-being**, despite frequent emphasis in corporate CSR programmes on **women's 'empowerment' through Self Help Groups**. For women in tribal societies, uprooting from familiar land, livelihood and communities often means an end to food security, which in the traditional economy often revolves around growing and selling food. Along with this comes a growing dependence on men, and the surrounding of new industries by illegal liquor shops, prostitution, and pornography, expose women to higher levels of violence and sexual abuse.

Rape has become a major issue in India, but trafficking, prostitution and pornography are still **little linked with growing levels of sexual violence**. Lydia Cacho's courageous work investigating trafficking in Mexico and other countries worldwide basically missed out India. Yet the pattern she shows, of a rapid increase in the trafficking of girls and women as part of an increase in overall illegal trade that goes hand in glove with an increase in legal trade, clearly also applies to India and neighbouring countries. Tribal women, like men, are migrating for work in ever-larger numbers, and evidence suggests that thousands of women and girls are entrapped into

prostitution. This goes along with the proliferation of pornography, and the well-attested fact that members of the security forces frequently figure among the perpetrators of rape.

These facts often build a picture of 'women as victims', when there is a need as never before for women's greater collective participation in policy issues, bringing a feminine perspective, with an implicit sense of the continuity of human life, into power structures that have been dominated too long by men.

GENDER, MIGRATION, LABOUR AND THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF ASSAMESE NATIONALISM

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Marxists critics of the nationalist discourse on migration have been successful in undermining its narratives of evil migrant outsiders invading the indigenous people, by raising pertinent **questions about the class character of Assam's agrarian structure and the urban-rural dynamic. At the same time, they remain guilty of reproducing an inherently patriarchal notion of 'the worker' that sees women's labour as only a sub-category of a broader notion of labour, rather than acknowledging the always-already gendering of labour.** In this short presentation, I would argue that the question of gender must be taken as constitutive of the relationship of labour, migration, nation, and further, that both nationalist as well as Marxist accounts of the question have colluded in repressing this question out of popular as well as disciplinary-intellectual discourse.

In doing this I would like to take up a few Bhupen Hazarika songs that have become quite popular over the years. This meagre selection, given the very specific aims of this presentation, is loosely held together by some thematic similarities that would be relevant to our discussion. First, each of them presents us with some complex and differentiated ways in which the axes of territory, community and gender are made to overlap within a particular nationalist ideological formation. Second, each of these songs—through their choice of lyrics, narrative themes, musical composition and choice of instrumentation and textures of voice—make an implicit claim to be heavily influenced by folk culture, and thereby as cultural expressions that speak to, if not reflect, the real nation.

MONEY COMES & GOES BUT THE LAND STAYS': UNDERSTANDING RURAL WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVE ON INCREASING LAND SALE IN WESTERN MAHARASHTRA, INDIA

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Land is a productive resource that facilitates exchanges in cash or kind. In rural India land continues to be a symbol of status, dignity, power and plays a significant role in shaping social and cultural identities.

In western Maharashtra the incidence of land sale is on the rise as the real estate prices have escalated in last few years. The traditional notion of land being 'mother' and something that cannot be sold is rapidly eroding with the mounting land prices. One can observe varied consequences of the influx of money earned through the land sale in the social, cultural and political spheres of a rural society.

Monetary benefits earned through land deals may not necessarily translate into better standard of living. It has been widely observed that money received in such a way is rarely invested for long term benefits. The changing socio-economic realities also pose challenges to the NGOs working in this region and they are compelled to adapt their approach and activities to the new scenario. Natural resource management initiatives are also adversely affected with the changing land ownership.

Overall a sense of discomfort is felt in the rural area as it is going through transition on account of wide occurrence of land sale and associated changes in the society. Though the women in rural families seldom have any say in the decision making regarding selling of the land, they often have to bear the brunt of these decisions.

The present study focuses on understanding how women in a rapidly changing rural society view the changes in their society in the context of increasing incidence of land sale. It is based on the doctoral fieldwork undertaken in Maval tehsil in western Maharashtra, India. This tehsil is located in between the major cities of Pune & Mumbai and has a high incidence of land sale and migration.

As rural society in the vicinity of major cities is undergoing rapid socio-economic and cultural changes, it is important to understand how the women view these changes and the impact on their lives as a result of them.

WOMEN'S STRUGGLE IN PROTECTION OF LAND RESOURCES – AN EXPERIENCE FROM KARUR DISTRICT IN TAMIL NADU

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Karur district is an important in central Tamil Nadu has been hub of handloom, power loom, paper mills, sugar and cement factory, asbestos factories, cotton mills and bus body construction industrial activities which provides employment for millions of informal and organized industrial sector. Primarily Karur is prominent for agricultural based industry which consumes huge amount of water for all sorts of production. Water is crucial resource for living things including human beings in and around the industrial town which is located on the bank of Cauvery and Amaravthy rivers. Among the land resources sand and water are basic inevitable source for sustainable life of living things. Particularly Sand is the base to absorb water and the water is the base to create livelihood options for villagers especially women who are closely associated with water. They are directly or indirectly depend on the river for their livelihood resources especially drinking water, irrigation, animal husbandry, and other peasant works. Sand mining is directly affects the surrounding people in different forms likely ground water depletion, water scarcity, agriculture and allied activities which are straightly affecting livelihood of people. This issue was first addressed and taken up by SWATE (Society of Women in Action for Total Empowerment) is **grass root women's movement which is located Veerarakkiam village in Karur district of Tamil Nadu** is to empower women socially, politically and economically by taking action to Promote gender justice and fight against oppression of women. This paper aims to explore the two **decadal women's experiences in protecting the land resources and their indomitable struggles** against the powerful sand mining group for their livelihood rights.

COME IN AND SEE MY HOUSE! MATRILINY, WOMEN'S CONTROL OVER PROPERTY AND THE VULNERABILITIES OF BUILDING THE DREAM HOUSE

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Matrilineal joint family property or *tharavads* in North Kerala, India disintegrated gradually over the twentieth century. What has remained after the partition of these jointly held properties is a broad consensus that daughters must inherit property, and in some cases inherit more than their brothers.

This paper will look at the case of the Thiyyas in north Kerala who have a history of matrilineal inheritance and who suffered considerable caste dis-privileges. It will argue that expanding globalised market have brought dramatic changes in property ownership and in residence both

through creating desires to 'fashion' one's own house and in a culture of loans now available. These have far reaching implications not only on the nature of women's residence but also on their control over property.

RAPE AS TORTURE: CONNECTING THE CONFLICT TO THE ROUTINE

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In this paper, I revisit significant feminist interventions on defining rape as torture and/or genocide in conflict/exceptional situations such as in the context of Cyprus, and Gujarat and explore the implication for routine rape cases. In *Cyprus v. Turkey* (1982), the European Commission classified rape as inhuman treatment not torture. In Gujarat (2002), Muslim women were raped and burnt by Hindu mobs led by right wing *Sangh Parivar* (BJP, *Bajrang Dal*, VHP) and police and state officials blatantly participated in these acts. In that context, feminist and human rights groups in India demanded that rapes in conflict situations (such as Gujarat) should be defined as genocide rather than as acts of assault by non-state actors. Theoretically this is significant because feminists have pointed to the political nature of rape that was often ignored in defining rape as ill treatment. In recent years there is more acceptance regarding the classification of rape as torture or genocide in the international context or conflict situation though the tendency to consider rape as primarily a private sexual act continues especially in the routine cases of rape.

GLOBALIZATION AND WOMEN'S LIVELIHOOD OF THE FISHING COMMUNITY OF DEEPOPOR BEEL

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Deepor Beel is the only Ramsar site of Assam. This large water-body is a great source of food and breeding ground for a variety of fish species, migratory birds, amphibians, reptiles, insects, micro and macrophytes, terrestrial weeds of ecological and economic importance. Deepor beel is the source of livelihood for the people (including women) specially of the keot fishing community who reside in the periphery including other indigenous communities of the wetland. During the past few decades, after the globalisation era, the Deepor Beel area has undergone rapid changes due to industrialization, constructions of roads, construction of broad-gauge railway line on the periphery of the beel, waste water from different parts of the city and the adjoining areas, allotment of the government vacant land to private party by Government settlement department, brick kilns, change in forest cover due to soil cutting in the adjoining reserved forests,

development projects, encroachment etc. resulting in an imbalance in the wetland eco-system. Consequently, various issues of livelihood and survival of the indigenous fishing community have surfaced up. A study was carried out to understand the ground realities and the perceptions of the local fishing people (with particular emphasis on women) about their changing livelihoods with the aims to document the array of livelihoods activities that were gender specific and how these had impact on women. The study was based on both primary and secondary data. Focus group discussion and interview method were used to collect the primary data. For the secondary sources of information, concerned government departments were consulted. Data were treated with relevant statistical and mathematical tools for a proper interpretation.

GLOBALIZATION AND MIGRATION OF TRIBAL GIRLS

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Yogendra Singh has pointed out that **"In my view, globalization is a unique process. It is a product of such developments in the field of science and technology which are entirely new to human history. And, these offer new opportunities to humankind as also pose many challenges. It is a fact, however, that several of its features taken individually did indeed exist in the past, such as international trade by sea and land routes, capitalism and imperialism, market and capital mobility and transfer of workforce from one country to another. But, devoid as these processes in the past were of the advantages of the modern technologies, their total impact upon society and its direction of change was qualitatively different. Therefore, the nature of challenges was also different. Hence, to understand its fuller implications, a new ideological paradigm is necessary. It must be of an interdisciplinary nature, because globalization is a multidimensional and multidirectional process. Its implications have to be understood and analyzed from a holistic perspective. Displacement, land alienation, deforestation, detribalization, fizzle in the local culture, alcoholism, declining status of tribal women, exploitation by middle men, ill health, imbalanced demography, tribal – non tribal tension, problems related to rehabilitation of those displaced and those which are an out come of development programmes are only a few of the costs incurred in the name of state – tribal development in Jharkhand. In the light of above fact, this paper will explore the globalization and migration of tribal girls to the Metros in the basis of case-studies of fifty tribal girls.**

GLOBALISATION AND INDIAN WOMEN: PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES

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Globalisation can be a major force for prosperity only if it is backed by adequate national policies and conducive social and economic environment. This paper will give an overview of what the forces of globalisation have in store for the women of India. A large group of working women of India is in the rural and unorganized sectors. Socially the majority of Indian women is still tradition bound and is in a disadvantageous position. Since globalization is opening up the Indian economy suddenly at a very high speed, without the required economic and social policies to provide the much required safety net, women who have been involved with production in the traditional ways, have to cope with numerous problems and yet try to avail of the opportunities which an open economy promises. The changing scenario will diversify the information needs of women at different levels.

This paper tries to give an overview of what is in store for women in India in this process of globalization. The new Structural Adjustment Programmes to usher in globalisation in traditional economies. Globalisation is a double edged process as far as women are concerned. On the one hand, majority of women in India and other developing countries find themselves stripped off the benefit of social security, government subsidy protection of labour rights and then safety nets. On the other hand there are possibilities of better education facilities and opportunities at the transnational sense which are very attractive to the privileged few. It is however necessary to understand that effective development requires full integration of women in the development process as agents of change as well as beneficiaries because Indian women can be utilized as development resources in many ways. In this paper I will explore all these issues.

WAYS OF BELONGING: GENDER AND LAND IN POST-1990S KERALA

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In the post-1990s context as multiple regions in the world are reconfigured to fit into the paradigms of free-market and economic liberalization, with the corresponding the creation of SEZ (Special Economic Zones) in which national laws are suspended, marginalized communities in India have staged sustained social movements to stake their claims to land and resist mass displacement. This paper will map political articulations by marginalized communities in Kerala, who either refuse to leave territories that they claim as their own or stake claims to land that

belong to the state or multinational corporations. These land struggles by dispossessed communities have systematically reconfigured the edifice of individuality, property and ownership. In a climate of increasing emphasis on a market driven consumer-citizen as the center of the globalizing nation state, these land struggles put forward a different imagination of political claims that is not tied to privacy and autonomy.

Through a study of print and electronic media coverage on land struggles in the last two decades in Kerala, I propose to examine how the conception of the liberal individual subject that is linked to property and ownership is re-envisioned by communities whose existence is tied to spaces they inhabit, but not necessarily own. I will explore the complex intersection and incommensurability between a language of rights and community-based politics. The questions I seek to answer will be the following: how does the refusal to move and the acts by groups of men, women and children who bodily occupy land produce a new vocabulary of politics? How is the question of agency reconfigured in these collective land struggles in the era of globalization? **How and why do marginalized women's bodies function as a highly charged site within these affective discourses of land and belonging?**

PLACING THE WOMEN'S QUESTION WITHIN THE LAND ACQUISITION DEBATE

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Land acquisition in India has been a fiercely contested process. Conversion of agricultural land for industrial purposes has met with concerted resistance from the people. In such cases, both men and women act as one cohesive unit in their protest against the State. However within the rural household, land is predominantly under male control despite legislations that grant women **rights to the land. When such unequal actors articulate a 'common goal' of rights to their land, it continues to be framed within existing patriarchal terms of land ownership. Within social movements over land, women's rights to land are not demanded though even their physical bodies become 'sites of resistance' for the common goal. I look at the premises of social justice that underlie these movements. They animate the developmental debate- what is development, whose development and at whose cost? Women's perceptions of the struggle for land, their contribution and the costs they incur are an often missed narrative in this discourse. The paper attempts to conceptually place the women's question within the discourse of contemporary rural social movements over land. This framework is then extended to analyse popular discourse in the form of news reportage. A preliminary content analysis of reportage reveals a narrative of 'women as victims of violence'. Paradoxically there is a silence over the question of women's rights to land. Does this then suggest that physical violence is recognizable and condemnable while gendered structural violence is not?**

GENDERED READING OF DEVELOPMENTAL INTRIGUES: A CASE STUDY ON THE HILL KARBIS OF ASSAM

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Without any feminist understanding, the social movements of post-colonial Assam claims that they have raised the issue of women question in their movements. But one would immediately get a sense that rather than violating the patriarchal structures these movements tries to naturalise gender biasness. With the ethnic pedagogy in hand, these movements glorify their **society in catchy sentences like 'gender is liberal in the tribal societies'**. Although being challenged already, scholars have not given proper attention to the changing nature of patriarchy in the advent of the neo liberalism and market economy in the so called tribal areas. The changing nature of land relationships due to these economic orders has also made changes in the gender relationship. This brings serious concern, whether these changes sensitize gender issues, liberates women or this is a reflection of the changing nature of patriarchy in these tribal societies.

With the rise of private property, the traditional authorities are (in the wider sense) withering away and modern arrangements are coming up in tribal societies. In such a juncture, the present paper is an empirical observation of the Karbis, an indigenous community of Assam, whether changes in economic relationship has brought about changes and shifts in patriarchal relationships. How the changing land relations affects gender relationships will be attended in the paper.

NEOLIBERAL DISCOURSE ON LAND REFORMS AND WOMEN'S LAND RIGHTS IN INDIA

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Neoliberal approach to land reforms can be distinguished from the approach of redistributive reforms on atleast three counts. One, it shifts focus on land instead of its user assuming that **ownership structure needs not to be disturbed. Only 'access' has to be facilitated and policies** should be oriented towards more efficient use of land. Two, these policies are defined non-confrontations for their escape of power structure. Three, market acts as central figure rather than state assuming that free markets themselves allocate resources efficiently. At the ground level these **policy prescriptions translate into replacement of 'ownership' through distribution of ceiling surplus by 'access' through tenancy, homestead land by agricultural land and land reforms by land management.**

From the point of view of women especially belonging to landless marginalized communities, these changes would also mean that they lose hope of getting ownership of a piece of agricultural land under distribution of ceiling surplus land programme. It would also entail alienation of their land in the **name of its 'efficient' usage by rich farmers and large corporations.** Advocates of neoliberal reforms are also stressing need for a paradigm shift from subsistence farming to market oriented commercial farming for which land reforms should legalise land leasing and promote system of land share company. Large chunk of women peasants belong to marginalized communities such as SCs and STs. A number of changes have been made recently in state land laws aimed at lifting protection given to these oppressed communities. From the standpoint of women belonging to landless classes, land reform is not just transfer of an economic asset in their favour the point but it also involves upsetting of the existing socio-political structure. Land reform through market skips this crucial element. In the backdrop of this **discourse, this paper attempts to look at issues relating to women's land rights in the Indian** state of Uttar Pradesh especially focusing on women belonging to marginalized communities. It tries to unravel dynamics of land ownership in the context of increasing dominance of neoliberal paradigm in land policy sphere.

ON SEXUAL EXCEPTIONALISM: NOTES ON THE RAPE LAW REFORM DEBATES IN 2013

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The recent rape law reform debates, and the enactment of the *Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013*, did not fully address the question of sexual exceptionalism. For instance, the reform debates did not engage with the emergent jurisprudence on rape as atrocity—and therefore, relegated the specific forms of sexual brutalization of dalit and tribal women to a special law on atrocity rather than inscribing these into the penal code. This form of exceptionalism whereby offences such as stripping and parading get inscribed onto a special law, instead of a general code, is based on a specific spatial and temporal reading of special laws. The laws, which name rape as atrocity intended to challenge structures of impunity, unlike emergency laws which institute impunity. Yet the law naming rape as atrocity has been hollowed out through a series of hyper-legalities, creating new oppositions, such as those between the documented and undocumented victim. While the debate on marital law engaged with the question of sexual exceptionalism produced by law, we did not witness a similar debate on the way in which the implementation of the law on rape as atrocity is hollowed out. Nor was it immediately apparent how the amendment of the general code would impact the law against atrocity. Thinking through rape as atrocity, in this paper I suggest how sexual exceptionalism, as a spatial, temporal and/or documentary practice haunts the rape law reform debates.

ECOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL DIMENSIONS IN DEVELOPMENT FOR WOMEN: A STUDY OF HIMACHAL PRADESH

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Peoples and communities maintaining the universality of their beliefs and the organising principles of their specific cultures are challenged in the face of the prevailing development paradigm. Such development has undermined the basis of the equilibrium (ecological and social) which had evolved over generations. A significant change in social relations from Gemeinschaft to Gesellschaft has resulted (Tönnies, 1957). In the perception of local communities living a more or less traditional lifestyle, nature and culture amalgamate into a reality where material, social and spiritual aspects merge into an encompassing view. In Himachal Pradesh a high rate of displacement has resulted as a result of development projects. Development as it is happening is undermining the interdependence among communities which constituted the basis for peaceful co-existence. It is increasing the penetration of market norms. A number of hydro power projects are coming up in the Sutlej, Beas and Yamuna basin. This in disregard of the fact that agricultural/ecological based cultures and communities have been flourishing in the valleys of the Sutlej, the Beas and the Yamuna over centuries. Not only do such development projects bring about disintegration of rich cultures leading to identity crisis and marginalization in addition to loss of livelihoods in the state of Himachal, they are also leading to frequent flooding.

The negative impacts of development are not gender neutral. Research conducted by my organization Jan Abhiyan Sanstha reveals that women have faced drudgery after displacement, in getting fuel, fodder, and water; they lost earnings from forest, agriculture, common property, and non-farm activities. This paper will discuss how JAS and other civil society organizations have been mobilizing communities specially women to prevent acquisition of rich agricultural land and loss of ecology and livelihoods. Also issues such as health, education, domestic violence and JAS efforts in getting indigenous knowledge of women acknowledged as a significant oral resource will be discussed.

CHANGING AGRARIAN STRUCTURE AND WOMEN: VOICES FROM FIELD

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An enquiry of women and their entitlement to land and land based resources has always been an issue of great debate in global academia. South Asia because of its rich socio cultural practices has a significant place in this global discourse. In the context of Northeast India this becomes all the more fascinating with the presence myriad inheritance patterns. While women in rest of

India have less access to land, women in matrilineal societies have some access to the same. But the extent of control becomes a contentious issue. This paper is a part of an ongoing research in a village in central Assam revolving around the issues of changing agrarian structure and livelihood patterns. Thereby an enquiry into women and her involvement in the same is a major part of the study. The village becomes an interesting site because it hosts different caste groups. And women across these caste groups have different levels of engagements with the resources. However, there is a shift in the traditional agrarian structure due to depletion of common property resources, male migration to other parts of the country and a pull towards non agricultural activities in general amongst the villagers. This has brought about change in **women's position in the economic structure. However, the impact varies across the upper and lower caste women.** The paper will be looking at women and her access to resources across different caste groups critically.

GENDER AS A SYMBOLIC RESOURCE: IMMIGRATION DISCOURSE AND NATIONALIST PROJECT IN TIMES OF NEO-LIBERAL GLOBALIZATION

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This paper will look at the phenomenon of large-scale **Russian women's, mostly with professionally skilled backgrounds, immigration to other countries immediately after the collapse of Soviet Union.** The impact of negative stereotyping of women in Russia on immigrant women is huge. It feeds into the existing stringent and exclusionary ideologies of anti-immigration laws and notions and serves to restrict the process of rehabilitation of these women into destination **country's cultures and work force. Globalisation has resulted in an increasing trend of movement of goods and people across national boundaries.** But a crucial aspect of this phenomenon is that while goods and commodities are forcing open national borders in search of newer markets, immigration policies are becoming more and more stringent restricting the movement of people, particularly labour, across the globe. Russian women who have gone abroad as migrants have not only been subjected to forced deskilling, they have been subjected to negative stereotyping **by a immigration discourse that labels them as fundamentally 'promiscuous'.** Conversely, trafficking of Russian women illegally to over 50 countries in the world has led to their stereotyping not only in Russia but also abroad. All Russian immigrant women have been targeted to some extent by a heavily sexualised immigration discourse, which makes them more vulnerable, easier to exploit and excluding them from jobs. The experience of Russian women **migrating outside has highlighted the ways in which the destination country's cultural anti-immigration discourse and Russia's own patriarchal nationalist casting of women in the traditional mould feeds into each other reinforcing the patriarchal control over women's bodies and sexuality.**

NEO-LIBERAL NATURAL RESOURCE POLICY IN INDIA AND WOMEN: A FEW ISSUES IN FORESTS, WATER AND LAND

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The current neo-liberal era witnesses a huge demand by global capital for natural resources and tropical biodiversity. These resources exist in two types of property relations: (a) As 'common property resources' usually tended, collected/harvested by women and adivasis (b) As 'state owned resources' which are purportedly being held in public trust for their conservation but in fact are 'fenced' and 'enclosed' to dispossess primary producers and gatherers. The process of annexation of common property resources through primitive accumulation, ever-present under capitalism, has accelerated and become more ruthless under neo-liberal imperialism. It has a highly devastating impact on women given their place in the patriarchal division of labour. The Paper will explore the analytical/ theoretical justification for these interventions by the state contained in World Bank and ADB etc. funded 'research', often carried out by off-shore and home-grown 'consultants' predicated on neo-Smithian 'environmental sustainability', 'resource use efficiency' and 'demand management'; the neo-Ricardian regional comparative advantage doctrine and anti-Keynesian fiscal conservatism. The paper will examine how these arguments have been used to effect changes in water policy and land acquisition in India. While the communitarian people's movements and women's struggles have been effective in highlighting the annexation of the commons, they unfortunately often suffer from extreme localism and issue based politics has resulted in an inability to correctly identify the cause as primitive accumulation under finance capital. However, increasingly today, they do raise demands and struggle for the democratisation of the community through land reforms, women's greater role in decision making etc. as a necessary concomitant of resisting the government's neo-liberal natural resource policies, to relate the fight for democratic ownership and control over the CPRs to the anti-imperialist movement.

IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION, INCREASING VULNERABILITY AND INSECURE GARMENT WORKERS: CASE STUDY OF BANGALORE

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Indian economy was tightly controlled, both in terms of domestic enterprises as well as in terms of international trade till 1990's. Stagnation, financial bankruptcy and adoption of structural adjustment programmes prompted the Indian government to embrace the policy of "economic liberalization". The 90ties saw the opening up of the Indian economy and resultant unprecedented growth of the sectors with export earnings of billions of dollars.

The present study is situated in the Bangalore.- the city which has been labeled as the "Electronics capital of India", and also hosts scores of garment factories predominantly for export purpose and represents one particularly positive showcase of the new opportunities for newly industrializing countries to benefit from recent trends in Economic Globalization. Bangalore's meteoric rise to a globally integrated location of modern service industries reflects the recent trends of economic globalization. This paper also tries to find, how globalization and resultant socio-economic condition increases the stress and security concerns of the women working in this sector. The vulnerability of the number of women employees of export intensive Garment industries have somewhat increased in the recent past. Steep rise of urban cost of living has compelled and made mandatory for women to seek employment outside the security of home. Our patriarchal social structure has pushed the women outside home without creating necessary infrastructure either at home or at the workplace. In this context, the concept of security Vis a Vis women requires a detail elaboration.

TRIBAL WOMEN'S DEVELOPMENT IN THE ERA OF NEW ECONOMIC REFORMS: A PERSPECTIVE OF BODOLAND ECONOMY, ASSAM

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The development initiative in Bodoland area is to the apex with the formation of B.T.A.D. (Bodoland Territorial Areas District). The Central Government sponsored schemes and policies are implementing through state government agencies in the Bodoland is in full swing to achieve their targeted goals. Everywhere, the Tribal women are the most disadvantaged and vulnerable group of the world. Though they do not suffer from social segregation or lower status, yet, the attainment of literacy rates, employment opportunities and better health status is far from the desired level. The tribals of Assam especially the Bodos are no exception. The provision of Sixth Schedule empowered Bodoland region with a special power to administer and control over the tribal lands and resources and the people there in. Women constitute almost an equal share in the tribal States of North East India as well as in B.T.A.D. of Assam.

In order to find out these changes in the tribal society, we particularly concentrate on the gender aspect and the study tries to focus the impact of the reform on the tribal women specifically in the study area. There has been enough indication of women coming out from subsistence agriculture and taking part in organised sector employment. The present study investigates certain areas of transformation in the lives of tribal women, their attainment of education and employment opportunities under the reform agenda in the study area. Having examined the traditional tribal society and the contemporary forces of transformation to tribal societies we formulate certain robust conclusion.

GENDER LAND RELATIONS IN NAGALAND: DILEMMA OF BALANCING TRADITION AND MODERNITY

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The use of the land underlines all aspects of Naga society. In contemporary Naga society regardless of the manifold social changes ushered in through the agency of modern polity, education, Christianization and economic development, the primordial structure of Naga society has shown little signs of fragility. Their relationship to land plays an essential role in the maintenance of traditional ethos and norms regulated and enforced by an unwritten customary law. The question of women and land rights has become pertinent to address today in light of the rapidly shifting social and economic base of society.

Women in Naga society have always played a pivotal role in the productive activities, but **land title and ancestral property is the exclusive preserve of Naga men. A women's right to land use is** transient to the extent that their access to a particular plot of land is never permanent. However, their traditional and indigenous knowledge system has evolved into a symbiotic relationship with their environment which sustained them for generations. This has made them natural managers of their resources without having ownership rights. All this was possible as long as the common community resources remained intact.

Given the contemporary focus on individual ownership as the basis of commercial exchanges, land is increasingly becoming commoditized in many parts of Nagaland which invites us to the question of gender relations vis-a-vis land rights, the emerging dynamics of livelihood security for most women still dependent on land, shifting patterns of resource management and the dilemma underlying it all- how to attain a semblance of balance between modernity and tradition without destroying the foundation of Naga society and culture. The proposed paper would therefore make an attempt to delve into the aforementioned questions within a sociological framework.

STATES OF EMERGENCY, SEXUAL VIOLENCE AND IMPUNITY

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States of emergency imposed by the post-colonial Indian state have not received the serious attention of social science scholars or feminist writers, even those who have otherwise been influenced by the women's movement in India. However, in 2004 the brutal rape and killing of Manorama in Imphal, followed by the nude demonstration by the Meira Paibis (a women's group

in Manipur) to protest this shameful act finally drew the attention of women across the country to gross acts of sexual violence by security personnel in the frontiers of the nation-state. I would like to examine how emergency provisions operate on the ground. I also wish to look at the **relationship between formal immunity provided by what are known informally as 'Black' laws and informal impunity that accompany an emergency regime.** My question in this presentation is: how is sexual violence in zones of conflict legally redressed, if at all? I will use my own experience of **fact-finding and reports produced by other women's fact-finding teams** in Jammu and Kashmir and in the North-Eastern states to analyze the workings of the laws on sexual violence especially in the context of the Armed Forces Special Powers Act. This black law is at the centre of the debate on sexual violence today especially after the Verma Committee **accepted, and endorsed, the position of women's groups on the need to try cases of sexual violence against women by security personnel in civil courts under the legal regime applicable to all its people regardless of where they are located.** The existing practice of trying such cases in military courts in effect denies women justice, is not transparent, and do not, in most cases, conform to fair trial standards thus denying women their constitutional rights of equality before law. It is therefore not acceptable to feminists in India.



SUB-THEME – 3:

**WOMEN IN URBAN INDIA:
DEBATING LABOUR/ EMPLOYMENT,
POVERTY AND VIOLENCE**

CITIES AND GENDERED CITIZENSHIP? EXAMPLE OF WOMEN CONSTRUCTION WORKERS

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Citizenship with changing socio-economic circumstances has come to acquire the status of an autonomous concept that can be used to understand social reality and social change. Dramatic social change has occurred with the growth of cities (Holston & Appadurai, 1996) and simultaneous growth of unorganized employment in the past decade (Harris, 2011). **The deplorable condition of unorganized workers is evident from the following words: 'They are the 'unfree' – bound by grinding poverty, exploitation, discrimination and constant flux. These 'unfree' people include 95% of all female workers and 89% of all male workers in India and together they contribute more than 60% of the country's gross domestic product' (Paromita Ghosh, 2009: 17).** The nature of citizenship thus would be inherently hierarchical and not universally egalitarian.

Cities like Bangalore have burgeoned with various sectors experiencing a boom. The construction industry is one of the largest among them. **Most of the workers employed in 'building construction work' are unorganized labourers. A large number of them are inter-state migrants.** The working and living conditions are extremely poor. Women construction workers are at an especially vulnerable position in these conditions. What does citizenship mean for women employed in the construction industry? Do women access social security benefits? Does the law protect the everyday lives of women construction workers? Do cities, the emerging sites for citizenship treat women workers differently?

Can the concept of citizenship be used to define or redefine the relationship of women construction workers with the state/ city as well as the employer? This paper seeks to understand if the growth of cities in the past decade and simultaneous increase in informalization of Indian economy have produced new form of citizenship for women. The paper would use experiences of women construction workers to understand the nature of citizenship that cities give rise to that section of the society which is constituted of several hierarchical features- class, gender, migration, insecure employment etc.

For investigating these searching questions, the paper would rely both on primary and secondary sources of knowledge; interactions with women construction workers in Bangalore, study of existing published or unpublished research works. This study is conducted with the expectation that it would lead to appropriate policy decisions and perhaps look at women unorganized employees as a section that requires targeted interventions.

SOCIAL EXCLUSION AND ITS REFLECTION IN THE LABOUR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN THE CONTEXT OF ODISHA

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Social exclusion is a multi-dimensional process of progressive social rupture, detaching groups and individual from social relations and institutions preventing them from full participation in the normal, normatively prescribed activities of the society in which they live. Women are socially excluded across the full range of social, economic and political opportunities. Social exclusion of women reflects disparity in literacy level, employment and occupational structure of the economy. Despite an **impressive economic growth rate of 9%, a large part of the India's** population remains extremely poor. Poverty in India is often linked to exclusion and **marginalization. Increasing women's labour force participation is key for both poverty reduction** and economic growth.

According to the National Commission on Labour, the majority of women have been employed on unskilled jobs or on such economic activities where more simple and traditional skills are required. Vocational guidance and training of girls have in fact, only been neglected in the economy primarily because the girls were not considered to be the bread winners in the traditional family structure. Consequently the majority of girls are educated without any career planning for them, or training in trades and occupations for which they have special aptitude (National Commission on Labour P: 381)

According to the study of ILO (2008) India has registered the highest ratio of women's un-employment. For every 100 men active in the labour market there are only 42 women. The low female employment to population ratio indicates the extent to which the economies are under-utilizing the productive potential of their working age population. Women who enter the labour market face greater risk of unemployment than men. The female unemployment rate was 5.8% compared with 4.8% for men in 2007.

In this paper an attempt has been made to highlight the type of social exclusion faced by women working in the labour market of Odisha. Irrespective of the categories of **workers (a) the State's** unemployment rate has always remained higher than the national rate.(b) the urban unemployment rate is higher than rural unemployment rate. In the 61th and 62nd rounds, the unemployment rate has generally shot up and the difference between the state and country widened, although the gap narrowed down in the 64th round.

CONSTITUTION OF 'NHAVI' / BARBER CASTE IDENTITY IN GLOBAL ECONOMY: ISSUES OF LABOUR, CASTE AND MARRIAGE

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Studies about how women encounter globalization in India focus on Dalit and Tribal women. Voices of the women in middle castes are rarely studied. Even within single caste studies OBCs are rare.

This study will analyze linkages between changing caste based labour in global economy and **constitution of caste identity on the site of 'Nhavi' / barber caste in Maharashtra, which is counted among the OBCs. In many Hindu religious rituals like marriage, *jawal* (first ritual tonsure of a baby), and death ceremony presence of 'Nhavi' is as essential as that of a Brahmin. That is why male of 'Nhavi' caste consider themselves no less than Brahmin (Joshi 1974, Nagarkar 1975).**

In the period of colonization Nhavi men along with their families started to move towards urban area for earning livelihood. Identity of Nhavi caste men was upgraded into shop-owners and landlords due to urbanization. The next generations explored opportunities outside caste based labour, enhancing educational attainment. This process dramatically changed the constitution of **the caste identity with Nhavi men's perceiving themselves as equals of Brahmins due to their standing in cosmopolitan society as educated and affluent men. This is resulting into more adherences to brahminical patriarchal norms within the family.**

This study seeks to analyze how Nhavi identity is constituted through marriage- especially practices around arranging marriages/ marriage rituals and conjugal expectations etc. This study **seeks to analyze the case of women of 'Nhavi' caste, who struggled and supported their families through different transitions. The present study will explore why educated 'Nhavi' women opt for endogamy. This paper will further try to explore how women by 'voluntarily' opting for endogamy indirectly strengthen patriarchy, even forfeiting their right over property or family resources. This generates a new form of patriarchy distinct from the older while retaining control of the patriarch.**

EXPERIENCING SEX 'WORK'-A STUDY OF MIGRANT SEX WORKERS IN GOA

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Till 2004 Goa had its own red light area based at Baina Beach in Vasco-da-Gama. It was not far from the railway station or bus stand at Madgaon making it accessible to tourists. The area of 0.9 km was home to about 4000 migrant sex workers according to a study conducted in 1997.

After the demolition by the BJP led State government citing health issues and criminal activities, the area was bulldozed and all those living there evacuated.

There are currently either street based or lodge based sex workers in Goa. The women interviewed for this study are lodge-based migrant sex workers. The absence of an accessible red light area has now made women working odd jobs and at visible sites presumed providers of sexual services even when they are not. Women working in the tourism industry are thus inadvertently often viewed as potential providers of sexual services.

The absence of a visible red light area ensures anonymity of the women. It prevents coercion or forced prostitution as is argued by the abolitionists.

The women do not ask for a visible/established red light area. They either ask to be compensated in any other work profile as in sex work or be allowed to practice in peace. Legalization is not on their minds. In their own understanding of decriminalization they insist they should not need to be afraid of the cops. They ask to be not discriminated against in shared public spaces. Their ideas are still evolving.

ATTITUDE OF URBAN WOMEN TOWARDS EMPOWERMENT: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY FROM GUWAHATI CITY

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Background of the study: Empowerment is a process of sharing, distribution or redistribution of power. It involves changes in socio-economic upliftment, political ideologies, traditional practice and the mindset of marginalized sections through common agreement. It is a complex issue with different interpretations in different contexts.

Women empowerment is a multidimensional active process which enables women to their full identity and powers in all spheres of life such as social, economic, political, decision making in the family etc.

The present study is based on an empirical work carried out by the investigator to assess the attitude of women residing in Guwahati City towards empowerment.

Method: Descriptive survey method was adopted in the study.

Samples: For the present study sixty (60) educated women were selected, out of which thirty (30) were working and the rest 30 were non-working residing in Guwahati city.

Tools used: A self-designed scale was constructed by the investigator which was named as 'Empowerment Attitude Scale (EAS)'. The EAS was designed by considering 29 items on two

dimensions, namely Social Awareness and Economic Independence. The reliability and validity of the scale was tested accordingly.

Statistical Technique used: Simple percentage, graphs and 't'-test were adopted for analysis.

Result: A positive attitude towards empowerment was found among the urban women. But significant differences were found between working and non-working women towards Social awareness and Economic independence.

Delimitation: The present study has been confined to educated working and non-working women of Guwahati city of Assam.

WOMEN AT THE CROSSROADS IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY: A PEEP INTO THE LIVES OF THE TRIBAL WOMEN VENDORS OF IMPHAL, MANIPUR

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Around the world, millions of women earn their livelihood through some sort of employment in the informal economy. Amongst those employed in this sector, interestingly in India alone women form about 94 percent of the workforce. However, despite their contribution to their individual families and the national income, they are denied recognition for their work.

Women's work within the homes as homemakers or even outside the house is not positively accounted but rather given a blind eye. It is usually taken for granted and remains unrecognized. Have we ever pondered upon the idea of "what would eventually happen if women stopped working in their own homes or outside the home? ". I think everything would go topsy-turvy. But unfortunately, even till today despite all the time, labor and hard work put in by women, issues raised on their behalf is often left mid way.

In India, women who are employed in the informal/ unorganized sector face a lot of challenges pertaining to their occupations such as work security, income security coupled with health issues and social security. In this article, the scholar attempts to bring in various aspects of informal economy while particularly focusing on tribal women vendors of Manipur. These women are self-employed and are engaged in selling various products like fruits, vegetables, meat, poultry and handicrafts etc. It will discuss the problems faced, need for social security, roles in their families, society, also highlighting their perceptions of their occupation. This article is based on a research study conducted by the scholar in Imphal, Manipur as part of her M.Phil dissertation.

ROLE CONFLICT AMONG URBAN WOMEN: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY ON THE WORKING WOMEN OF OIL INDIA LTD. DULIYAJAN, ASSAM

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The concept of gender specific roles and role conflict has been widely explored within the sociological discourse. Although a very well discussed and common issue, when it comes to women, the significance of this issue **doesn't yet seem to have fade away. Gender specific roles, burden of multiple roles and the role conflict arising out of them are still some of the major issues that affect women adversely and which both academicians and policy makers alike are relentlessly trying to find a solution to.** This issue of multiplicity of roles and role conflict is manifested even more drastically in the urban areas and among the working women. The reason for that seems to be very simple. As working women have to perform their gender specific roles as mothers and wives along with their jobs it is inevitable that they come face to face with conflicting roles. Although, as simple as it might seem to be, the actual picture of role conflict among working women is far more different and complex. It is not the number of roles that women have to perform but the conditions in which they have perform those leads to role conflict. Even though in an urban setup women enjoy a more liberal atmosphere and increasing mobility and equality with men; this does not stand true when it comes to creating a balance between gender specific roles and other roles women have to perform. It is the issue this paper has tarried to explore with a critical observation of the working women in Oil India Ltd., Duliyajan. The objective of this paper is to critically examine the various factors that play a **crucial part in making it difficult for these women to create the above mentioned 'balance' and leads to role conflicts.**

MIGRANT WOMEN WORKERS IN GUWAHATI: UNDERSTANDING LABOUR/EMPLOYMENT, POVERTY AND VIOLENCE

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"I am born as women. I have to work. If I don't work who'll look after my child" (A women worker's response to 'Why do you work?'). Census 2011 do provide data on the increase of urban population in India but it still neglects women's contribution to economic activities in urban space (especially in the unorganized sector)- an issue which was highlighted way back in 1974 in 'Towards Equality Report'. **An analysis of women's work from a feminist perspective shows the statistical invisibility of women's work is a reality mirroring the deep-rooted social bias against women that exists in society.** Census data is not helpful in providing qualitative data therefore primary studies are needed to contribute to the existing knowledge on women in informal sector in India. This article is an attempt to understand the prevalent issues related to migrant women workers in Guwahati- understanding their journey of migration, their struggle to

get employment, the process of forming part of the informal labour market, unequal wages, poverty, violence and so on. The paper is divided into four sections. The first section attempts to understand the stories of migration of the women workers in Guwahati- the reasons of migration, the social networks that helped them in the process of migration, gaining entry into Guwahati, finding a home and experience of the urban space. It is found that desertion, separation, widowhood and divorce, in absence of any economic security, can even push women from well-off families to migrate to Guwahati to discover a new way of life and form part of the **informal labour sector. The second section will focus on migrant women as 'workers' in the informal sector of Guwahati- their process of gaining employment, unequal wages and problems they face, double burden of work and their coping strategies in the place of destination. The third section will explore the issue of 'feminization of poverty', the economic position of the migrant women workers. This section discusses cases of female as breadwinners, female headed household and the reasons of poverty. The fourth section will unravel violence that the migrant women workers faced, the causes of violence and their coping strategies to stop violence. Migrant women workers are not always the passive victims of violence but do play an active role, at times, to teach lesson to the perpetrator of violence which is discussed in this section. Data was collected with the help of feminist ethnography to understand the experience of social reality by the migrant women workers in Guwahati. Conversation analysis is used to explore the various themes that come out of the data and try to establish link between the themes. The paper is an attempt to understand the migrant women workers in informal sector who daily battle for their survival in the urban space. The paper concludes with an examination of various policies that are available to the migrant women workers in Guwahati and their access to their rights as citizen of India.**

DOING DOMESTIC WORK IN THE GLOBAL ECONOMY: AT HOME AND FOR WAGES

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Large numbers of women are working for wages outside 'home' in the globalizing economy, though the primary domain of women's work is still considered to be restricted to the 'private sphere' of household and to the unpaid. Domestic work is not recognized as labour, but it is seen as 'Labour of Love'.

The choice of domain of work is not the free will of woman, but is primarily the result of the sexual division of labour which assigns house-keeping work to women. The element of **'invisibility' of women's productive work is a salient feature of women's work and also the reason for its under-enumeration and under evaluation.**

The official definition of work and worker reflect the dominant ideology of society, viewing women as non-workers. The definition of worker till the 1991 Census was persons involved in economic activities which should have relevance to the market. It thus, did not include non-market activities, invisibilizing those workers.

The number of female domestic workers in cities across India has been increasing rapidly in the post-liberalization India, leading to the feminization of the service (Neetha, 2007). Domestic work in itself has undergone tremendous changes. The preference for domestic work among poor women is documented in many studies. Poor women find it convenient to be employed as domestic labour in the surrounding residential areas. (Neetha, 2008).

Thus most of the studies focus either on paid domestic work or on unpaid domestic work at home. However in this paper I seek to analyze continuities and discontinuities between paid and unpaid domestic work, by focusing on the experiences of women involved in paid domestic work in the city of Pune. This may enable us to understand the changing nature of domestic work in the global economy.

PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN INFORMAL SECTOR :(WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO STREET VENDORS OF GANGTOK, EAST SIKKIM)

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The informal sector provides an employment opportunity for large number of urban poor in many countries, especially in developing countries. According to International Labour Organization (ILO) survey (2011) India has highest share of population in informal sector out of non-agricultural workers i.e. 84.2%. Street vendors are viewed as a problem for urban governance, on the same realm, street vendors provide items to average income-earning households in affordable rates. Vendorship is one of the significant categories of informal sector which attract large number of women due to its free entry and flexible hours.

In Sikkim compared with other mainstream states, women play a significant role in both social **and cultural affair, but Sikkim being a deeply entrenched patriarchal society, women's rights on land ownership** have remained a matter of concern. Gender discrimination forces rural women to enter into informal sector mainly adopting vendorship as instead source of livelihood. The paper aims to assess the participation of women vendors in informal sectors and the negotiation and dispute among different groups of woman vendors.

The study was conducted among the women vendors of Gangtok, East Sikkim, using interview schedules (semi structured interview and open ended interviews) and focused group discussion with the women and men vendors. In the market due to limited place allotted for vendors to vend their product and also due to absence of license system, power politics is largely seen where privileged group imposed their power over weaker section. Lack of knowledge for obtaining license, harassment from civic bodies and government representatives, hegemony of wholesalers and male vendors and household chores, inspite of these problems faced by women vendors they persist with their decision of continuing as a vendor.

A JOURNEY FROM MANUFACTURER TO TRADER: GENDER ASSESSMENT OF MAKING OF KOLHAPURI FOOTWEAR, A TRADITIONAL HANDICRAFT

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Indian Leather handicraft is pulling foreign exchange from all over the world however at regional level it is other way round. Traditional leather has been replaced by chemically processed leather and plastic. Scarcity of raw material as well as decrease in domestic demand have made poor artisans jobless and compared to well off artisans opt for trading of fashionable footwear instead of struggling for manufacturing of handmade Kolhapuri chappal. Present paper tries to study gender assessment of the transformation of traditional manufacturer to trader and its socio-economic impact on women in their community.

Technological interventions from Central Leather Research Institute and ASCENT, Bangalore based NGO with formation of Self Help Group of women has made them establish their brand of Kolhapuri chappal in International Leather Market leaving male artisans behind. Effect of backlash on the part of men has led to suicide of few artisans in Karnataka and increasing incidences of domestic violence in Maharashtra.

Manufacturing of the footwear requires participation of two communities namely tanners and cobblers. Tanning of buffalo hide and making footwear both are household ventures where contribution from all family members has been needed. All major decision making processes such as designing, purchasing of raw material and marketing are in hands of men. Though major part of manufacturing work is done by women; they are not even considered as artisans but assigned as un-skilled workers in the family of artisan.

This research is an output of public hearing and interviews of women in the families of artisans namely tanners and cobblers in and around Kolhapur. Some of them are working on piece rate bases with petty wages others are working as farm laborers in rural area and domestic workers in urban sector. Women in the families of newly turned traders have pushed into private sphere where they became house makers and lost their traditional skills.

WOMEN AT WORK IN LAW ENFORCEMENT ORGANIZATION

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Women employed in Law Enforcement Organization are on the rise in recent times due to various socio- economic conditions. The proposed paper seeks to study the conditions of these women at their work place. The paper rest on the arguments that though these organized sector(s) are employing women, are these women enjoying their enhanced status and working

at par with their male counterparts? Or are they getting themselves entangled in some extremely ambiguous circumstances? The paper shall attempt to focus on how these women face specific kind of vulnerability in their workplace during their day-to-day activities.

The paper is based on both primary and secondary data. The secondary data has been basically generated from different kinds of publications, e-materials etc. The primary data will be collected from field survey of the women engaged in law enforcing organisations in Guwahati, the capital city of Assam.

SECURITY FOR THE (IN) SECURED

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Globalisation and 26mphasized26on26 have led to an increase in employment of women in the 26mphasized26/informal sector of the economy, which is largely 26mphasized26on by long working hours, lack of proper organization, wages that are disproportionate to the time spent working, limited approach of laws enacted to protect the basic rights of a worker.

Women employed in the informal sector of India are a part of the reserve army of labour force : **the 'cheap and flexible labour force that industries employ to cut down on their costs and expel** from employment in response to changing levels of demand(Kabeer, 2000:5). The inclusion of women into the labor force has led to a reclaiming of the hitherto male dominated public sphere. However, these choices are still controlled by patriarchal authority: a patriarchal workspace that decides on the nature of work to be done, the wages paid for doing the same and, the patriarchal family that regulates how much and for how long a woman should work (Banerjee, 2011: 195).

This paper tries to explore the lives of five Muslim Female Headed Households belonging to two slums of North East Delhi. The Female Heads of these households work in informal sector jobs in jobs like tailoring, *beedi* and *chudi* making, working as ASHA nurses, or peeling plastic metal wires. These women face the brunt of being doubly socially excluded; the first comes around because of their belonging to economically weaker sections of the society and the poorest religious minority (Muslims) of the country; the second, of being a woman and working in a patriarchal, male dominated work force.

The questions that this paper would explore are the following: the ease/unease with which these Female Heads become a part of the informal workforce, of how they gain entry into the workforce, the experiences of working in a mixed environment, the difficulties faced in being a single woman and working in order to meet the needs of her family, the pressure of remarriage imposed by relatives and the adjustments made to meet the requirements of the workforce. It also looks into the ease of access to welfare schemes like education for their children, food security, health and access to credit markets.

GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE AS A DETERMINANT OF FEMALE LABOR FORCE PARTICIPATION IN INDIA

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Studies examining the structural shifts in the labor market in India have shown a considerable decline in the female labor force participation across States in India, despite a moderate rate of growth in the last decade and irrespective of age groups, education levels and regional divide. Apart from large variations in the rural-urban statistics with regard to the involvement of women, literature in this area of study has shown the prevalence of wide disparities across States. The widening gender gap in case of employment is also a stark indicator of the decreasing numbers. Several factors have been analyzed for a declining labor force participation rate (LFPR) among women, particularly the income and education effect. However, in light of recent cases of sexual harassment and abuse, it is essential to accommodate levels of violence across the States in terms of domestic violence, dowry harassment and other forms of gender-based atrocities widely prevalent in the societal setup.

Based on the data from National Family Health Survey (NFHS), National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) and the Census of India, this paper seeks to establish that in the current institutional and societal framework, violence against women is an essential determinant of the dwindling LFPR ratios. The paper has been structured so as to first introduce existing literature on the subject of gender-based disparities in employment and the determinants that have been included in these analyses and then explore the role of violence as a significant variable in the available research. Further, this paper extrapolates the relevance of this variable in the case of States in India and examines its significance in determining the LFPR amongst many other factors already accounted for in earlier studies. The motivation behind this study is to emphasize the growing need to restructure the societal and institutional framework in India so as to make it conducive for increasing participation of women in the labor force. The implications of this study will be a contribution in this regard.

FEMALE HEADED HOUSEHOLDS AND INDIAN LABOUR MARKET: EVIDENCE FROM SURVEY DATA

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One of the ways of making economic growth truly inclusive is to acknowledge women as economic agents with their direct contribution to the growth process. The objective of the present paper is to investigate the present status of households headed by female in rural and urban India, examine their demographic structure, their employment pattern and their

consumption expenditure pattern in comparison to the male headed households and to do the same exercise across various socio religious groups using unit level data of NSSO Employment and Unemployment during 2009-10. The study shows that in India the average amount of land owned by FHH is much lower than that of MHHs and nearly sixty percent of female head are not in labour force and are either attending education or are engaged in domestic duty. Higher percentage of women of tribal group from FHHs are engaged as wage worker. Women from the Muslim group has lower presence in the category of regular/salaried employee. A large section of SC, ST women both from MHHs and FHHs are working as casual worker. A small percentage of women from Hindu upper caste coming from MHHs as well as FHHs are working as casual workers compared to other socio-religious group. A significant portion of women of FHH compared to MHH are present in retail trade, tobacco manufacturing and building construction. Higher percentage of male members are engaged in self employment compared to female members indicating that the opportunity or capacity to self-employment is less for the FHHs. Analysing the above arguments the future policy with respect to development process need to be more inclusive in nature requiring larger capacity building and skill development for women of all section.

"NOT JUST A WORKER": THE IMPACT OF COLLECTIVIZATION OF INFORMAL ECONOMY WORKERS ON INTRA-HOUSEHOLD GENDER RELATIONS

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The paper I will be presenting reflects preliminary findings of my doctoral research which began in September 2012. My broader research is an attempt to engage with women in the informal economy in India, their membership to labour organizations and its consequent impact on gender relations within the home.

Though there is considerable literature on the impact of women joining labour organizations, this literature seldom extends its analysis into women's private domestic lives. In this paper in particular I focus on the narratives of three Dalit women wastepickers who are part of a trade union (of wastepickers) in Pune and I attempt to delineate how membership to this collective is an asset or impediment to change in gender relations within their homes. In addition I engage with their male spouses to understand factors that make men likely to resist intra-household change and circumstances under which men respond positively to this change.

I explore whether women's affiliation to a labour organization might translate into a greater capacity and willingness to bring about desired forms of change in division of labour, care responsibilities, control over resources and domestic violence within the home. I also engage with Dalit women's complicity in maintaining unequal intra-household gender relations. In cases where women have challenged power and inequality within the home I suggest pathways via which this change has been made possible. Three possible pathways of change are proposed; the first pathway focuses on the probable impact of material resources in determining women's intra-household bargaining power, the second and third pathways draw attention to possible

changes in women's identity, consciousness and sense of self due to the relational and cognitive resources they have access to.

Critical to these pathways is the role men play in facilitating or stalling these processes of change. There is a conspicuous absence in the theorization of masculine identities within the home and its effects on attempts by women to renegotiate unequal status, power and roles within the conjugal sphere. Through the narratives of Dalit men I attempt to understand how they perceive their wives involvement in the Union and the extent to which this has had an impact on their sense of masculinity and consequently on intra-household gender relations.

DISCRIMINATIONS WITHIN URBAN INFORMAL EMPLOYMENT: A FEMINIST INTERVENTION

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Feminist scholarship has been highlighting that over the last couple of decades, women are increasingly getting concentrated, in the lower end of the informal economy, i.e. home-based piece-rate work. In context to waged work, women have been losing grounds, except in rigidly **defined 'women's sectors' like the 'care work' sector**- domestic work, sex work, teaching, nursing etc. It is this ever expanding care sector that has the entire hall mark of a feminine occupation- low paid, constructed as semi/un-skilled, casualized, invisible, and exploitative and stigmatized.

My paper focuses on the health care workforce, particularly the nursing workforce, which operates as a triple-tier labour market, and takes the shape of a pyramid: increasing numbers but descending status, benefits, wages and job security. The deployment of different categories of workers across the industry (both public and private) is not uniform; it reflects individual organizational behavior that allows manipulation of labour processes that facilitate capitalist **exploitation. It results in a niche workforce of 'trained' nurses who are formally employed at the expense of a bulk volume of informally employed 'untrained' nurses and attendants. My paper** would look at how such a triple-tier labour market is produced and the politics that arise from these processes. This production, though a part of capitalist processes, is with the active agency, consent and complicity of a segment of labour force which results in exploitation of other segments of the labor force. While capitalism thrives on dividing the workforce on lines of class, caste, gender, and community, amongst other, I argue, that these divisive politics are produced with the consent, complicity and active agency of a segment of the workforce, usually located at the top of the pyramid to reproduce a differentiated and discriminatory labour market that benefits them, both materially and culturally.

A NEGLECTED FACE OF URBAN WORKING WOMEN IN INDIA: CASE STUDY – CLAY – BASED WORK IN KOLKATA

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*"Kumor parar gorur gari,
Bojhai kora kalsi hari
Gari chala bangshi badan,
Sange je jae bhagne madan"*

This is a very famous poetry on the potters in Bengali, which tells that a bullock-cart filled with clay products necessary for daily use are being carried by a man accompanied by another family male member. But there is no mention of the fact who made them or who helped the potters to make them. It is to be noted here that, these helping hands are mostly the women of the same families working as unpaid family helpers, without any protest and without any hope to get anything in return.

The paper would try to focus this section of the working women, who belongs to informal sector urban employment. They are under-focussed and under privileged. They are marginalized not only as being women but also as part of the informal economy and specifically as part of such an informal occupation which itself has been marginalized by the mainstream informal sector jobs. They are missing from any statistical data of the country. Not much movement ever took place for them; hardly any literatures are found, and organizations are working to uphold their cause. They are those women who work day and night mostly as helping hands to their husbands and fathers, and end up in earning either nothing or too meager to maintain their livelihood and fulfilling the basic needs. They are not only economically poor, but also socially.

The kinds of work that can be clubbed under clay based work are:

- Pot making
- Bhar making
- Decorative item making
- Model making
- Idol making

In Kolkata, we find all the above kinds of work are performed by the women of different communities and cultures and they reside in different pockets in Kolkata which are commonly known as Kumor-paras. **One such pocket named 'Kumartuli' where the original inhabitants of Kolkata reside and are famous worldwide for making idols is selected for the study.** A brief overview of the history, locality, nature of work men and women of the area are involved, their problems and achievements are focused in the paper. Special attention has been given on how the clay pottery sector runs with the extensive support and cooperation of the women, yet is not highlighted.

DISPARITY IN DECISION MAKING: A COMPARISON BETWEEN HOMEMAKERS AND PROFESSIONALS

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Our society is known for its patriarchal culture. The expected roles of men and women are defined in the religious texts. Due to globalization, there have been changes introduced in the society. Introduction of technology has enabled women to enter employment. Hence, there is a need to study the changing gender relations our society.

For the study there were 120 women interviewed which comprised of 60 women belonging to single – earning families and 60 women belonging to dual – earning families. Amongst the single – earning families, the husbands were working in the corporate sector and the wives were housewives. Amongst the dual – earning families, both husband and wife were employed in the corporate sector. An interview schedule was used as a tool to collect information from the respondents. The data was analyzed through SPSS.

Though majority number of women had the liberty to participate in the family decision-making, there decision was not regarded as final. An opportunity is given to express their views on the subject of disagreement. Their views were taken into consideration, but the final decision was taken by their husbands. There were a small percentage of families where such decisions were taken individually – either by the husband or the wife.

WOMEN LABOURERS IN THE SMALL TEA PLANTATIONS OF ASSAM: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SONITPUR DISTRICT

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The plantation industry all over the world mostly producing tea , coffee and rubber generally requires more labour than peasant agriculture. In most part of the world ,plantation labour while remaining one of the least paid occupational categories has invariably included women. The most notable features of tea industry is the large scale employment of women. Women constitute more than half of the labour force which is quite contrary to the other industries in the **organized sector** . **A plucker's job requires the application of skill in** addition to the physical exertion of standing in one position for many hours under the hot sun and even in the heavy rain. Despite of all , pluckers are not regarded as skilled workers by the tea industry and were given wages at the rate of unskilled manual labourers. In addition, women were being paid lesser wage than man by the planters . However, the remuneration act of 1976 has introduced the system of equal wage which gave some kind of justification to the women labourers .

Since the inception of tea industry in 1839, it remained confined to the hand of the multinationals . Against such a background, the inception of small tea plantations in Assam by the local youths has been hailed as a new beginning and the best way for solving the unemployment problem in the state. The small tea growers of Assam have employed a large number of women in their tea plantations. But it is of utmost important to look at the status of the women labourers because women have been always facing tremendous problems in every sphere of life . The paper intends to examine the type of work women are carrying and to examine whether our local people are following the discriminatory policy of the planters or rational to the issues of women labourers.

GENDER AND LABOUR IN AIRLINE INDUSTRY: CASE OF MAHARASHTRA GOVERNMENT'S SCHEME OF AIRHOSTESS TRAINING, 2006 FOR TRIBAL GIRLS

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Today, it is increasingly recognized that aviation is not just a mode of transportation for an elite group, but is crucial for development of trade and tourism. With the liberalization of the Indian aviation sector, aviation industry in India has undergone a rapid transformation. From being primarily a government owned industry, the Indian aviation industry is now dominated by privately-owned full service airlines and low cost carriers.

The participation of women in the global aviation market can be seen mostly in the hospitality sector. In the first section I would like to review briefly the work pattern and space of an airline industry and types of jobs to underline how they are gendered. Gender is seen to operate in the criteria applied to become an airhostess.

I will seek to explore the ways in which caste, class and gender operate in labour of airline industry, using case study of the Maharashtra state government's scheme for Airhostess training for tribal girls in 2006. However the experience of selection process brought into sharp focus the discrimination on basis of skin type, color, body type, appearance and accent, by which these girls were deemed unfit.

I will try to map how this 'failure' of tribal and dalit women despite the scheme was underlined as them 'lacking in merit'. The color, English accent and cultural capital that come from 'upper caste' middle class background are thus normalized as 'merit' and is only available to upper caste Indians as if they have earned it. Thus this paper will underline new forms of operation of caste bias and how it is one more ground on which violent exclusion is visible, through a review of this scheme and its 'failure' by using interviews of girls who were beneficiaries of the scheme.

LIVELIHOOD CHALLENGES OF WOMEN DOMESTIC WORKERS

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Domestic work is work performed in or for a household and includes cooking, cleaning, washing, gardening, being a chauffeur, taking care of children, the elderly and domestic pets. It remains a highly gendered activity. Throughout the world, the vast majority of domestic workers are women. Under the unorganized sector domestic work is one of the most important growing sectors which is consisting of large number of female workers as well as contributing more to the growth of informal economy. Due to rapid development of urbanization and industrialization need of domestic help is change as inevitable both urban, semi-urban areas. Simultaneously **participation of female in this sector is increasing in trend due to poverty and women's unskilled condition**. Also there is big challenge associated with this sector to accept as equal to other sectors like construction and textile because it confines within the domestic sphere. The nature and working style of this sector perceived as gender stigmatized perspective by the society and its various stakeholders through which the construction of public vs. private and Masculine vs. Feminine norms. This kind of gender insensitivity reflects in all the aspects to consider domestic work as work to value socio- economically on par with any other works. Prevailing Sex appropriateness and gender division in labour market made the condition to devalue the domestic work and pave way to derecognition. The way of societal attitude is worsening the domestic workers both in work place and their own households as less bargaining, voiceless and disempowered individuals. This paper attempts to explore livelihood challenges of domestic workers under globalisation context in Tiruchirappalli City Corporation which is one among the five corporation of Tamil Nadu state.

Patriarchy & Capitalism: Reinforcing Regressive Customs to Retain Women in Labour Market

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The textile industry has generally been viewed as an industry suitable for the employment of female workers. It is the largest employer next only to agriculture. It is particularly so, for the developing countries like India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan etc. In fact, this has been due to the **tradition of textile production (particularly spinning) as "women's work" in the pre-industrial household economy**, and later its classification as a light (rather than heavy) manufacturing industry (prior to advanced emphasized on and the rise of synthetic textile production), and **therefore seen as suitable for the "nimble hands" of female workers**. There is a widespread view

held by textile producers that women workers were both a more 'docile' and 'cheaper' alternative to male employment and were readily available as an expendable and/or untapped labour pool. As a result, there are number of schemes offered in 'different names and forms (including 'Sumangali or Subhamangala scheme' and 'Thrimagal Thirumana Thittam' [Marriage Assistance scheme]) commonly named as 'Camp Labour Scheme' (CLS) which is not for men but only for women especially for adolescent girls, which has gender implications. In fact the name of the schemes indicate and reinforce marriage for girls with dowry as often the adolescent girls are fascinated towards the lump sum guaranteed after three years under the "Sumangali Scheme".

Capitalism and Patriarchy go hand in hand in determining the working conditions of the women and girls. With the drive to accumulate profit and expand the scale of operation, mechanization and capital intensity is emphasized and applied, rendering the human resources unemployed. There has been a tendency to treat Human as Capital "Human Capital" by the manufacturers and hence, the labourers are treated as machines assigning long hours of work, inhuman working conditions, poor facilities or no basic facilities, lack of safety which push the human beings to leave the job, get stressed and leave the life also. This paper reviews the condition of Camp Labourers (CLs) from socialist feminist perspective. It explores the critical connection with 'Patriarchy and Capitalism' jointly reinforcing regressive customs to attract young adolescent labourers as CLs and thus exploiting them violation and deprivation of labour standards. It also considers the extent to which the gendering of textile work embraces characteristics of regressive customs to retain its workforce and to assess the long term impact of such schemes offered to adolescent girls.

ENGENDERING POLICING: WOMEN TRAFFIC POLICE CONSTABLES IN CONTEMPORARY DELHI

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The proposed paper is an ethnographic study of women constables managing traffic on the roads of Delhi, the capital of India. Most of them are from a rural background and their joining the police force is not just an employment opportunity but is also an opportunity to move out from the village/town and to be a part of the 'promising' urban space. The nature of the job is also significant as law enforcement has traditionally been regarded as a 'masculine' job and female enforcement agents have been exceptions rather than the norm. The increased visibility of women constables doing road duty alongside their male colleagues is a comparatively recent phenomenon and their induction happened in a planned way right before Delhi was to host the Commonwealth Games in 2010. It was thus a part of the strategy to project Delhi as a 'Global' city. This phenomenon itself has multiple implications for different people. Many structural and policy level adjustments within the police system have been made as employing women constables requires change in recruitment standards and modes of selection; training policy and infrastructure at training schools; strategies towards postings; the flexibility required for differential treatment like maternity leave among others.

Indian society especially in the North, having normatively practiced segregation of sexes both in the private and the public spheres, the exchange between and amongst colleagues from different genders also gets crucial. While for women it is the challenge of venturing into the **"forbidden" domain, for men, it is the loss** of the familiar since even their homosocial interactions acquire new dynamics in presence of women colleagues.

Doing road duty in an Indian city becomes formidable for a woman also because the public utilities are either non-existent or designed for male users. The police force itself has had a bad reputation as cases of custodial rapes and molestations are numerous. Working with such an agency has bearings on the notions of womanhood, chastity and domesticity as they exist in popular imagination. Even within the family, any assertion of independence might result in chastisement/worse punishment as the men in the family might feel emasculated by the role reversal/sharing of their status as bread earners.

Majority of these girls feel that it is difficult to cope with this job with familial responsibilities and are thus trying for other jobs and also trying for promotion in the same department suggesting that Bailyn (2003) rightly defined hiring and retention of women in police as a 'leaking pipeline'. For policing, these points include academy training, field training, while working in patrol, marriage, parenting, early retirement, or following an injury.

KEEPING THE FIRE BURNING: WOMEN, WORK AND MIGRATION

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Migration studies have mostly focused on male migration has consequently either overlooked **woman's role as economic agents or marginalized** her contribution to being associational migrants. Traditionally it has been believed that **women's migration is dependent on the** migration of male members and guided by familial decisions. Women migrating alone were conceived as single women like widows, run away girls, barren, deserted women, who do not have access to rural household resources. Recent studies have revealed a new trend where women (both married and unmarried) are moving out of their villages alone, leaving behind their families and homes, to work in the cities. The fact that most of these women find work as domestic labour which promises them a certain familiarity of task and security of the workplace perhaps eases the decision-making process. Moreover, studies have suggested that **women's** migration is not only influenced by economic needs, labor markets and individual skills, also by familial dynamics, cultural-social value systems and gender stereotypes.

The paper seeks to explore how women domestic workers who commute daily to different parts of the Kolkata city negotiate the space of the urban in their quest for economic sustenance. The paper seeks to traverse the tenuous divide between paid and unpaid domestic work in the **woman's journey from her domesticity to her domestic place of work**. Among other issues, the paper will attempt to examine the process of decision-making whereby women leave behind **committed roles of primary 'bread maker' to take up the seemingly unfamiliar role of primary 'bread winner'**. Her journey outside the home is marked by her experiences of inhabiting the

urban space, however temporarily, learning to professionalize her 'natural' domestic skills, forging new friendships, fighting new battles, striking a balance between her sense of freedom and double burden etc. In the midst of such diverse negotiations the paper asks: does the process of women's migration and her participation in the work force in any way destabilize gender, caste and class hierarchies and challenge given stereotypes around woman's social and domestic roles?

WOMEN HOME- BASED WORKERS IN DELHI: A SOCIAL-ECONOMIC PROFILE

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One of the most understudied areas in informal sector in developing countries is the area of home based manufacturing activities. Home based women workers comprise of a large proportion of the work force in our country today, particularly in urban cities like Delhi. The working and living conditions of home-based workers is perhaps the most vulnerable. Some of the basic features of the home based work are low wages, long erratic working hours, payment based on piece rate and lack of employee –employer's relationship.

The informal economy is often linked to the formal economy through employment and commercial relationships. For instance, many home-based workers (HBW) produce for the formal enterprises: through direct transactions or sub-contracting arrangements. This paper attempt to show how the formal sector is penetrating into the informal sector by this outwork system of HBW and also examine how the nature of formal sector has been changing in a way that the industries have been undergoing decentralization and home of workers is becoming place of work.

The employer enjoys tremendous advantages from home based piece rate system, such as no overhead costs and no need to invest in tools or machinery. There is also advantage of no trade unions and **no legislation defining the workers' rights, minimum wages and lastly no social security benefits** for workers. As a result the net remuneration of home-based workers may be less than indicated by piece rate that they are paid. This paper also focuses on how the work of HBW is undervalued, due to the piece rate system of payment. This piece rate mode of payment sets off the devaluation of their working hours. This mean that they are paid according to the number, size, and weight of item they produce not paid according to hours they spent on the production of items, (which is often below the minimum wages). They get only 10 %, 8% and 7% for their work whereas remaining 90 percent remain unpaid in almost all the manufacturing industries such as textile, paper and paper product, jewel and cosmetic etc. (Delhi survey)

This paper while discussing the social profile of home based workers of Delhi; examine the social causes which foster women to undertake home based work such as marital status, migration, low level of education. It will also examine the social barriers and other family related problems which compel women to work at home. It also shows the impact of home based work on the health of women workers.

This paper will focus on the economic profile and work related vulnerabilities of home such as long working hours, piece rate mode of payment, low income of family and indebt and also examines other work related problems like delay in payments, child labour, unpaid family work etc. The aim of this section is to highlight the vulnerabilities and exploitative working condition under which women are compelled to work.

OCCUPATIONAL STATUS OF WOMEN IN DARJEELING: A CASE STUDY

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The economic participation of women, i.e., their presence in the workforce is important as a step **towards enhancing country's economic development**. Increasing the occupational status of women has other positive impacts on family, society and nation. The present study deals with the occupational status of women in Darjeeling district in general and rural women of Kalimpong sub-district in particular. As the study area located in the rugged topography of the Himalayas, which is characterized by a variety of socio-cultural attributes, hence the occupational structure of people also reveals some unique and diversified features. The study is mainly based on secondary data and involves analysis of the proportion of women workers spatially and temporally. The study investigates the status of women work participation rate in the region along with gender gap in work participation in various economic activities. The hilly character of **the region also influences the women's occupational structure on the study area**. Based on analysis using some statistical techniques, the study reveals that there is a wide gap between work participation rate of male and female population.

WORK EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN WITH DISABILITIES IN MUMBAI SLUM

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Livelihood is one such aspect where the incapability of Persons with Disabilities (PWD) gets highlighted. PWDs continue to be excluded from mainstream thought and action on livelihoods. Globalization has also had a differential impact on employment of persons with disabilities. It opened up more avenues for them in technical jobs. But this has been restricted to people with disabilities in the urban context. Despite years of legislations, policies and action, persons with disabilities continue to be underrepresented in formal employment as well as in other forms of sustainable livelihood options. Gender influences the livelihood choices especially for women with

disabilities as they tend to face greater barriers and difficulties in accessing livelihood opportunities than men (ILO, 2008). They often face greater educational disadvantages due to **their special position within the family and society and society's negative attitudes restrict their mobility for independence**. Poor understanding of disabilities and lack of recognition of women with disabilities as individuals with capacity to work and be independent also leads to reduction in the kinds of livelihoods that are accessible to them.

This paper focuses on women with disabilities in M ward slum area of Mumbai. The objectives of this paper are to explore the work experiences and problems of women with disabilities in organized and unorganized sector, and to study the needs and concerns of women with disabilities regarding their work. It was found that majority of women with disabilities have many problems such as accessibility issue, stigma, discrimination, low salary, long work hour, insecurity of job, violence, lack of support, lack of training, exploitation from family members and employees and so on. It also found that the nature of the problems varies based on the type of disability.

DUALITY OF DOMESTIC WORKERS: WOMEN'S PREJUDICED LABOUR OR EMPLOYMENT?

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Domestic workers, in particular women domestic workers, are a constantly growing section of workers in the informal sector of urban India. In 2004-05, there were 3.05 million women domestic workers in urban India marking an increase by 222% from 1999-2000. This increase is owed to the trend and demographical pattern of women and girls migrating from their households in rural and/or tribal lands to work as domestic workers in the urban areas reiterating the aspect of feminization of poverty.

In this context, the paper would throw light on women and girls who belong to the North-east but have migrated to be employed as live-in or part-time domestic workers in other states of the country. The paper would explore a deeper understanding about the aspect of recognizing **'home' itself as a workplace because such recognition becomes imperative in the light of recognizing domestic helps as domestic 'workers' to undercut the duality of domestic work being considered as an employment avenue or a reproductive form of labour.**

The paper would then bring out the nature of the work conditions and the ways in which they **negotiate their 'way of life' in an 'unfamiliar' household. A focus on the difference of those domestic workers among the North- east who have not migrated on a voluntary basis, making them victims of trafficking from those who have voluntarily migrated, will be explored as well. Despite this difference in the nature of migration, the aspect of 'vulnerability' due to their distinctiveness of ethnicity, culture and language further subjects them to 'racial' stereotyping and isolation.**

Looking at this persistent vulnerability of such domestic workers, the paper would provide recommendations to aim at the sustainability and equity of the livelihoods of women engaged in domestic work who otherwise become victims in the paradoxical urban society.

'VALUABLES OUT OF PLACE': EMPLOYERS' HOME FROM DOMESTIC WORKERS' LENS

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Domestic workers' presence in the intimate space of home can make their employers feel vulnerable, and the existing literature on the issue observes that employers respond to their perceived vulnerabilities through a number of spatial practices in relation to domestic workers. The narratives of spatial practices in paid domestic work are pre-dominantly are of employers and not so much of the workers.

The paper is based on 20 in-depth qualitative interviews with female domestic workers collected over a period of four months in the city of Delhi, India. Drawing upon the narratives of female domestic workers about 'valuables' that go missing or are found 'out of place' in the employers' household space, this paper argues that 'valuables' are a source of worry not only for employers but also for the workers, particularly when they go missing or are found unattended. The valuables can evoke fear and make workers vulnerable to accusations of theft, and workers negotiate the space in these situations and otherwise through behavior which sometimes highlights their embodiment of the identification of the domestic worker as a potential 'thief' or by resisting this embodiment through various forms of disassociation. The paper attempts to deconstruct the power which produces the space of the home on a daily basis. It highlights how workers' practices are crucial to understand how the space of home is constructed also by these very practices, in conjunction with those of employers, despite the workers' "subordinate" position in the space.

The paper aims at posing some questions about how the intimate geography of the home is conceptualized in the context of domestic work and suggests that looking at the space also through the lens of workers' practices, particularly how they negotiate it, can enrich the existing understanding of the phenomenon of domestic work.

TRACING THE STRESS DYNAMICS IN THE LIVES OF SINGLE MIGRANT WOMEN DOMESTIC WORKERS – IN KOLKATA

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This paper has tried to look at the everyday struggle migrant women domestic workers face both in their domesticity as well as in their role as domestic worker, away from her family and social support system in an unfamiliar and sometimes hostile environment. The paper has tried to explore and understand the stress dynamics at workplace and in the family of the single migrant women domestic workers (SMWDW) at the backdrop of Kolkata. In West Bengal the flow of rural to urban migration for work is a very prominent feature of the unorganised sector. A city like Kolkata with a population of 13,114,700 in 2011 (Census of India, 2001) has an estimated 32.50 Lakh passengers (CMDA report, 2001) commuting daily to the city for work. A sizeable quantity of this work force is women and a large number of them work as domestic help in urban middle and upper class households. In this context the paper tried to posit the SMWDW against the discursive space of her lived experiences both at home and at work place. The main argument in the paper comes in the form of understanding the domesticity where the SMWDW is working as her 'workplace' and exploring her stress as a 'worker'. A woman domestic worker is seen as striving under manifold repression both in her workplace as well as in her family. These interactions take place in a space that can be intimate, loving, and private but can also take forms of humiliation, exploitation and abuse. The definition of work in their lives extend beyond the workplace, changing over time, place and with individual contexts. Through tracing the lived experiences of the woman domestic worker it becomes evident that they traverse through role overload and role conflicts, which in turn gives rise to stress and ill-being. In this regard the paper has focused on enumerating the relationship between multiple role demands, mental stress, focusing on workplace stress and familial stress and coping strategies of the SMWDWs. The paper meanders through narrations, life experiences from a mental health perspective focusing on stress as a state of mind, through analysing in-depth interviews in order to understand the stress experience and the coping and adaptation strategies through empathizing with her lived experiences.

WOMEN, WORK AND TOURISM: TOILING WITHOUT RIGHTS

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EQUATIONS

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One of the major trends in tourism is the continuous reiteration of tourism as a vehicle for women empowerment, mainly through employment generation. The UN World Tourism Organisation dedicated World Tourism Day 2007, to women, "Tourism Opens Doors for Women"

and followed it with its Global Report on Women in Tourism 2010 highlighting tourism's role in empowering women politically and economically. At the national level, the National Tourism Policy, 2002 identifies rural and ecotourism as a means to poverty reduction, creating new skills and enhancing participation of women in tourism. However, there is ignorance about the gender-blind framework embedded in the employment opportunities offered by tourism.

Exclusionary practices continue within the hospitality sector of the tourism industry. Opportunities offered by tourism are characterized with glass-ceiling, wage disparity, lack of **support for working mothers and lack of safety measures to ensure woman's right to work** are the common features associated with women working in tourism industry.

Women working in informal sector such as street vendors, artisans, sex workers, are not even recognized by the tourism industry. Treatment of them as encroachers causing frequent evictions and treating them as criminals not only violates their right to access public spaces but also breach their right to life. The initiatives taken by the government to promote handicrafts and handlooms fail to address very fundamental needs of artisans.

In context of these trends, the paper raises questions on if tourism offers a space for women to choose the employment opportunities or force them to opt as a survival strategy? Core to the issues is not only ensuring better working condition in the sector but the need to examine the claim made by the tourism industry as one of the major employer of women within the right-based framework.

WOMEN WORKER: A CASE STUDY OF FOOD PROCESSING INDUSTRY IN MANIPUR

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These present studies explore the problem faced by Manipuri women workers in the state's food processing industry. Although Manipuri women play a prominent role in the social, economic and political affairs of the state, we find that women workers in the food processing industries in Manipur generally play a submissive role vis-a-vis men workers in relation to division of labour, **skills and use of technology in the industry**. Even though women's role in the food processing industry is significant, they have not been given their due recognition or respect. Existing studies pointed to the inequalities related to jobs assigned to women workers. The imbalance curve of their work and the economic rewards accruing to them reveals the hidden inequalities at various levels. This constitutes one of the core features of the present study. The study was based on the field work conducted in eight food processing units in Manipur. From each unit, five female and five male workers was selected for in-depth semi-structured interviews to explore their experiences in engaging with machines or technology.

Cynthia Cockburn's work (1983, 1985) demonstrates how technical skills and artefacts can be constructed in ways which favour men over women in the paid labour force. These themes were

well rehearsed in labour process studies, in accounts of how powerful technological roles came to be marked as masculine during the course of industrialization and in studies of kitchen technology and domestic labour. Much of the feminist research on women and individual technologies has tended to be either techno-optimist or techno-pessimist, with the latter **portraying women as victims of men's technology (Berg 1997). In the selected units in Manipur,** as male workers are handling technical things at large, they play a dominant role over women in terms of wages and owners. These present works use these feminist perspectives of gender and technology in the food processing industry (Manipur) in relation to women workers. Where man controls sophisticated and technical machine in the food industry, women workers remain confined in unskilled work.

THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF URBAN MIGRANT SETTLEMENTS: WOMEN RESIDENTS OF WALUJ INDUSTRIAL AREA NEAR AURANGABAD

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Central and state governments in India, aiming to relocate industry away from congested areas like the Mumbai-Pune belt have set up industrial estates where a package of services and concessions is provided. The Government of Maharashtra in 1982 marked out such an industrial estate in Waluj near Aurangabad, then a town with a population of about 300,000. Land was taken over and plots demarcated for roads, factories and other facilities, with some land provided for workers to build houses in a planned residential colony. In fact, only a small minority of **"organised" workers could take advantage of this. The industries that sprang up on the basis of** government concessions themselves employed a large number of casual and contract workers --- and also spawned ancillary industries which mainly employed workers on a non-permanent basis. There was no planning for living space for these workers.

In a small project conducted by the Tarabai Shinde centre for Women's Studies in Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Aurangabad in 2011, we surveyed the settlements of urban migrants that have arisen in this belt over thirty years. They are divided along caste and class lines, and each colony has its own ethnographic character. We tried to sketch some features of the living conditions of women residing in these colonies.

The project was prompted by newspaper reports that there had been about a hundred cases of young married women living in this quarter of the city running away from their homes. The tone of the reports in the Marathi papers was highly moralistic, blaming the women for being seduced by the temptations of city life. Our survey found a very different reality, of isolation, socially fragmented neighbourhoods, deprivation and physical hardship. We sketched some of these features for three different settlements to outline an ethnography of these migrant settlements.

Studies of migration usually focus on the conditions of labour or perhaps on poverty, nutrition, the family life of migrants. We ask why they are prompted to migrate from village to city, whether it is distress migration or the search for better prospects. But here what we found interesting was the nature of the workers' settlements as communities, their ethnography and culture. Culture is not merely traditional songs and customs: the daily life of migrant communities really needs to be studied, now that migration and urbanisation have become such ubiquitous phenomena in India. A gendered perspective is of course vital to this. Though this project was of short duration, it threw up thought-provoking results.

The paper will present our findings and raise some questions arising from them.

Poverty and Violence

SEXUAL HARASSMENT OF WOMEN: EXPLORING URBAN SPACE AND EVERYDAY LIFE

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The recent incidents of rape and sexual assault against women in India have shocked the nation and provoked debate regarding social practices and law in India. Crime against women has been studied by many scholars in various fields. However there is a further need to understand sexual offences against women in all its dimensions by putting these incidents in a particular context. Study of relationships between crime such as sexual assault and other factors like demography, space, and culture of the society can provide sociological insight in understanding the nature and causes of crime and the possible ways of social control.

This paper is an attempt to explore sexual harassment against women in an urban social context. The focus is on understanding sexual harassment as it appears in everyday life of young women who are educated and are very much active in the public life. An attempt is made to observe urban spaces and conditions under which incidents of sexual harassments mostly appear. The theoretical framework used in this study is basically drawn from feminist analysis of crime and violence against women. Sociological theories on the nature of urban society as well as theoretical analysis of relationship between urban spaces and crime are also reviewed for the understanding of sexual harassment in urban context.

The method adopted for the study includes survey and interviews conducted among women pursuing graduation in two colleges of the Sivasagar district of Assam in the North East of India. The colleges where the study was conducted are situated in urban localities of the district and the respondents of the study are active participants of the urban way of life. The study is a part of an ongoing research for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy, under the department of Sociology, Dibrugarh University.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND THE RECENT ENACTMENTS- AN OVERVIEW

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In this paper an attempt has been made to evaluate some recent legislations and amendments made by the Parliament of India after the heinous gang rape case that was committed in December 2012 in Delhi. The author also draws reference to the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act, 2005. It is well known that women are subjected to violence at home. Specially, in the context of India, majority of such victims do not seek legal remedies.

India is a signatory to many Human Rights instruments that were adopted by the United Nations General Assembly from time to time. India has also signed and ratified many instruments which are specifically adopted for the benefit of women. In order to give effect to Article 11 of the CEDAW, the Parliament of India enacted the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. An analysis of the said Act will be made in the paper. The Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013 had been enacted to replace the Criminal Law (Amendment) Ordinance, 2013 promulgated by the President on February 3, 2013. The Act seeks to amend the Indian Penal Code, 1860, the Criminal Procedure Code, 1872 and the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012. As stated in the Statement of Objects and Reasons, these amendments are aimed at achieving various objectives which will be discussed in the paper.

The basic idea of the paper is that despite various laws, establishment of the National Commission for Women, pro-active role of the judiciary and specific protections given by the Constitution, the status of women remains at low ebb in India. Where does the problem lie? Is it a problem of awareness about such legislations? The basic reason for this is gender discrimination at the base of social roots. Law is only a tool to bring about changes in the existing scenario. However, other factors, like, attitudinal change in the mindset towards women is the need of the hour.

ETHICS OF THE BODY: EXAMINING THE ANTI SEX TRAFFICKING DISCOURSES

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Sex trafficking has in recent time, found place as a serious social problem in popular imagination. There are broadly speaking, two schools of feminist thought on sex trafficking-the first-this is the more dominant discourse which has been adopted by the government agencies, international multilateral agencies and many civil society organizations-views trafficking as affecting ignorant,

penury stricken women and girls who are sheer victims of a criminal process. The second discourse, on the other hand, argues that women are never pure victims; every relation is a power relation and there is possibility of agency even under severe constraints. They point out that the dominant discourse which also forms the basis of the major definitions of trafficking, conflate sex trafficking with voluntary sex work and assumes that trafficking affects women alone. The aim of this paper is to critically examine both the discourses on sex trafficking using the existing theoretical approaches towards the feminine body.

According to Butler, the feminine has no identity of her own; the woman is merely a receptacle of masculine identity. Hence, she is acceptable in patriarchal society as either the virgin who can be exchanged between two communities/clans/families which want to strengthen mutual ties while retaining their socio-cultural distinctiveness or as the mother who can no longer be exchanged as she has already been claimed by a single male. Swati Ghosh argues in *Somebody Whoring* that a sex worker is looked upon as a menace because she herself 'exchanges the use value' of her body. The paper will try to analyze the extend of somatophobia in the first anti sex-trafficking (and anti sex work) discourses-when the feminists belonging to the abolitionist school argued that sex work can never be voluntary because it entrenches access to the sexual body of the opposite sex as a male prerogative. They do not answer if it will be more acceptable if women are also given access to gender male bodies for sexual encounters in return of money? The second discourse on the other hand, in demanding the right to sexual self-determination for women, of which the right to engage in sex work is considered a part, do not analyze if a practice which strengthens the existing sexual division of labour, is actually emancipatory for women? This paper attempts to analyze how the body is represented in the fore-mentioned discourses to produce a critique of the anti sex trafficking conventions and laws both in India and at the international levels and also to examine the various government schemes to combat trafficking.

ENDANGERED GENDER: 'URBAN' WOMEN AND GENDER CONSCIOUSNESS IN NEOLIBERAL INDIA

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The widespread protests after the rape of a young woman in Delhi during December-January 2012-13 were analysed as signals of a mass awakening of gender consciousness in India by many commentators, especially among the urban metropolitan women. However the **incorporation of 'gender' as an agenda for electoral politics by mainstream political parties did not find an expression and still remains absent.** Against this backdrop, questions about the nature of solidarity on a national political scale for diverse Indian feminists, in a neoliberal climate, is crucial to address. In this paper, we specifically engage the issue of apoliticisation of **violence against women among urban Indian women. We use the term 'urban' broadly here to refer to it as a construct of identity rather than simply a spatial dynamic.**

Through a broad overview of feminist struggles in varying contexts across India, we contend that the subsumption of gender as a platform of political ideology under other debates and the absence of taking into account the intersectionality of various identities within the category of gender has prevented the full expression of political consolidation of feminist ideologies at the State level. In this paper, we broadly state two plausible and over-lapping reasons behind this – (i) the representation of women by the state and media as actors of social as opposed to political change marking issues of contesting gender as a social issue rather than a political issue; such representations determines the contours of the discourse particularly among urban Indian women. (ii) the emergence of neoliberal discourses of the ahistorical 'self' that has prevented the full political potential, the gender consciousness, of earlier and even ongoing feminist projects from being realized.

FEMINISM FROM THE MARGINS: DIALOGUES AROUND GENDER AND SUBJECTIVITY IN LADAKH

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As is true for most marginalised cultures, the exoticising, anthropological gaze of the male outsider dominates Ladakhi socio-economic and political narratives. Women's issues and subjectivities either go completely unrepresented or interpreted wrongly to the point of patronising tokenism and undue idealization.

Being woman-identified for the most part and having lived and worked in Ladakh, it interested us to approach notions and dialogues on gender against the changing material conditions and cultural discourses of the region - to identify the voice of 'woman' as subject in a contemporary, urbane Ladakh, as specific and distinct from the popularly projected voice of a homogenised community, located multiply on the fringes of the mainstream.

In this paper, we examine diverse women's experiences situated in and around a rapidly 'developing' town centre of Leh. Focusing on the private, the public and the political in turn, we have attempted to record aspirations / articulations of the newly emerging category of 'the modern woman in Ladakh', to recognise constructions and contradictions in identities of its membership (including those of our own), and to reflect on engagements with gender-based-**violence, negotiations of patriarchal spaces and struggle for women's rights** from such locations. In the process, we try to determine how the individual and community end up impacting and being impacted by larger socio-economic shifts and trends facing the Ladakhi home and market today.

Some of the larger questions the paper tries to raise are on what it means to be a 'feminist' in these fractured, removed realities, of the need and nature of feminist mobilisations in such

contexts and ultimately the challenge that they pose for the more mainstream women's movements and mobilisations in the country.

GENDERING TOILETS IN URBAN INDIA

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Women, especially in developing countries, have chronically encountered problems using public toilets: sparse toilets, higher utilization fees, longer queues, and lack of sanitary napkins and facilities for their disposal. The culmination of these **problems has been expressed by Mumbai's 'Right to Pee' campaign. The protest was against charging women more to use public toilets. As** the care taker could not know whether female users are urinating or excreting, he was justified in charging a higher price. Men, on the other hand, have continued to indulge in the privilege of **not paying at all when they urinate. In Paromita Vohra's documentary 'Q2P', she narrates how in** fact urinals are considered a profitable business as it allows local stores to advertise their products and entertainments while men urinate. In India then, women continue to suffer in concern to sanitation.

The World Bank's sanitation agenda focuses on policies such as Molotch's 'Potty Parity', which suggests expanding restroom area. But women still continue to face inconveniences as illustrated in the 'R2P' campaign. I argue that women in urban India are structurally disadvantaged while using public toilets; hence, policies such as 'Potty Parity' do not make as much an impact as expected. Through a historical analysis, I establish that toilets and their spaces are not pre-discursive. I borrow from Barbara Penner's and Olga Gershenson's works on the historical use of toilets by women all across the world: from how women would stand and urinate to how women were excluded from public spaces via conscious provisions of – rather the lack of- toilets. I reveal that contextualizing toilet usage provides a better understanding of why women suffer from toilet disadvantages. In order of a conclusion, I use Nancy Fraser's categories of transformative and adaptive agendas to suggest two sets of reforms that could address the plight of women with regard to sanitation.

"I WANT TO STOP THE INJUSTICE AND OUTRAGE FACED BY WOMEN": INVOLVING THE OTHER HALF OF GENDER TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN POOR URBAN COMMUNITIES

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Violence against women is underpinned by gender identity and the real or perceived fulfillment of **hegemonic masculinities: the expression of which can result in men's assumption of power and control**. Although one interpretation of male violence is that this is natural and rooted in biological differences, an alternative interpretation that male violence is caused by social factors offers the potential that it can be prevented.

To have an impact on the widespread acceptability and prevalence of violence against women, gender norms and attitudes must be transformed. Much of the burden for this change has been placed on changing the behaviour and attitudes of the female half of gender, through a wide **range of women's education and empowerment programmes that aim to enable women to develop strategies to protect them from abuse or enable them to deal with the consequences**. However, prevailing gender norms and the patriarchal social order will not be easy to change without the active involvement of the other half of gender: men and boys.

This paper examines the motivations and experiences of men who volunteered to be part of a gender violence prevention programme in low income urban communities in Pune. A qualitative analysis of interviews with 18 young men and their female relatives looks at what motivated their decision to take action to prevent violence against women in their communities and the impact this has had on their relationships with female members of their household and their attitudes towards women in the community.

The findings suggest that men's engagement is influenced by multiple factors, including the opportunity for more positive and supportive relationships and an escape from the negative influence of antisocial peer groups, increased opportunities for personal and social development and tangible involvement opportunities to support women in their community. Implications from this study for developing and expanding programmes that encourage men to take action against gender based violence in low income urban communities are discussed.

GEOGRAPHY OF RAPE CRIME IN INDIA: A SPATIAL ANALYSIS OF OFFICIAL DATA

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From womb to tomb, a woman is under the constant fear of violence. Women everywhere in the world have been subjected to various forms of violence. Rape is the most heinous and frequent form of violence against women. In India, with a relatively more severe taboo on sex and sex offences committed on women, one could well visualise the most drastic consequences of such crime on the victims. The Geography of rape crime in India is very peculiar. Though rape crime is widespread in all societies whether developed or underdeveloped, India has a very low reported rate of rape as compared to developed countries. However it is also a fact that there is a high variation in volume of rape from one state to another in India.

The discussion begins with an overview on status of women in Indian society, rape and related issues. The objective of this paper is to examine spatial pattern. In India, National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB) has provided data on different types of crime on an annual basis since 1953, **however data on rape has been provided since 1971. The NCRB publication 'Crime in India' provides data related to women specific crime under caption 'Crime against Women'. These are the data analysed in this paper.** For determining the spatial pattern and different levels of vulnerability, Standard Deviation (SD) technique has been used. Average Rate of rape crime is considered as a standard variable and SD is calculated by using formula. The level of vulnerability under deviation is grouped and finally comparative analysis is done to show spatial variation. The paper also analyzes the relation between rate of rape and socio-economic indicators of society. The paper is concluded by recommending some suggestions considering the spatial pattern of rape crime.

POVERTY, EMPLOYMENT AND VIOLENCE AMONG FEMALE MIGRANT WORKERS IN GUWAHATI

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Guwahati city is one of the fastest growing urban areas in terms of infrastructure (real estate and construction) in the entire North East India. According to 2011 Census, Guwahati has a total population of 968549 and it has witnessed a growth of 16.90% in the last decade. The city has been subjected to migration, inter and intra state through relocation, transfer, marriage, employment: be it daily wage earners or white collar jobs. There is an enormous body of floating population commuting for daily business from the neighbouring districts. The City has a mushrooming growth of residential complexes which offers employment opportunities to wage

labourers temporarily or permanently in the slums. An increasing trend of working women who **have migrated to Guwahati in the 1990's has boosted the need for domestic help, full or part** time as well as construction workers easily available and meagrely paid. This paper will analyse the economically weaker sections of women, married or unmarried with or without children with less or no education, nevertheless, actively contributing as construction, wage workers or domestic help in Guwahati; their role in the house hold decision making and their views and solution to tackle violence at home as well as at work site. The basic question will be- Are these women contributing anything to their family financially and do their roles continue to be invisibilised?

Gitesh (Separately attached)

WOMEN IN THE INFORMAL ECONOMY: WAGHRI ITINERANT TRADERS IN SECOND HAND CLOTH MARKET

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Within the ambit of critically viewing the women work force in the globalized South Asian economy, especially the informal women workers carving a niche in the urban spaces of the country, the paper looks specifically into the Waghri (NT) women traders practicing the trade of exchanging old clothes for new utensils in almost all the cities.

A community and Chindhiwalli women(as they call themselves) in particular, are involved in the trade traditionally since 4-5 generations now where it begins from door to door haggling for old clothes of the elite to operating the entire chain of second hand clothes market of the country. The women and the men of the community have carved out their traditional trade roles within the trade, which the study looks into in detail to decipher specific gendered division of trade roles. The trade linkages not only trace rural –urban linkages but also run beyond the interstate boundaries of the country. Several nomadic communities like Waghri of Gujarat, Kuchbandhiyas (NT) of Madhya Pradesh, Joshis (NT) of Maharashtra have adopted the trade practice based particularly on the ideas of barter between the dominant monetary exchange economy.

The women of the community can be spotted at the initial ends of the trade where they get involved in the maximum leg work and minimum economic returns, which is a phenomenon in congruence with almost all the informal trade occupations. The study observes that despite the women workers being skilled in the trade, factors like strategic entry of the men in the trade and specific socialization patterns adopted by the community to ensure replication of gendered trade roles, the women workers experience no upward mobility in the trade. It looks into the processes with which women are made to believe that their particular trade position is inferior to the one carried out by the men of the community and thus devaluing their core skilled working abilities. The study based on the Chindhiwallis of Mumbai, marks the double burdened working capacities of the women, challenging working conditions, and unhygienic work places, consistent health hazards, 'travelling' as an experience in itself, market uprooting instances as part of city

beautification processes, and thus documents their experiences of making ends meet as an unrecognized informal labor force in the competitive urban employment scenario. The Chindhiwallis continue to find recognition within the ambit of street vendors as a category and as significant contributors to the clothes recycling system of the country.

MEASURES TAKEN FOR REHABILITATION OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING, AND THEIR LIFE IN SHELTER HOMES

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Trafficking of women and children is one of the most heinous violations of human rights. It is often connected to organized crime, violence and corruption. Trafficking in people, especially women and children, for prostitution and forced labor is one of the fastest growing areas of criminal activity. Young women and children are lured and taken away from their native places and sold to brothels and industries where they are treated as slaves. They are given minimum food for survival and treated badly and sometimes violence is also used on them.

North-east has become a very common place from where traffickers find their victims. Due to the various reasons like ethnic-conflicts, floods and poverty, this region offers the traffickers an easy way to lure young women and children who are taken to be sold elsewhere. Through the attempts of government and non-government agencies, various rescue operations are launched and several victims of trafficking are saved. Most of these operations are taken up in other metro cities of the country and the salvaged victims are then sent to their respective states. After the rescue operations, the first step taken is to provide a shelter home for these victims, until they are sent back home. Some of the victims have to stay in the shelter homes for a longer time than others.

This paper will deal with the steps taken by the government in rehabilitating the victims of trafficking and the facilities provided to the victims in the shelter homes. It will also focus on the lives of the rescued victims in the shelter homes. What are the facilities that they could avail and whether the facilities provided are adequate for them. The study area will be Guwahati as it is the most advanced city in the north-eastern region.

DE-LABELLING THE 'BRAVEHEART': PROBING INTO THE POLITICS OF COGNIZING RAPE

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While the 16th December rape in Delhi has brought the topic of gender violence from the discussion rooms of gender rights and academic groups to the private spaces in the household of the common person, it has also brought with it a campaign for zero tolerance that dangerously tends to revolve more and more around the demand for public shaming or punishment for the perpetrators. Whereas the need for adopting a zero tolerance attitude and treating gender violence with grave seriousness is beyond question, this obsessive clamour for public justice and the reiteration of the gravity of the crime through metaphors of violating honour and outraging modesty makes one question if this growing consciousness of the middle class is at all steering towards a feminist politics. It is in this respect that this paper intends to intervene and interrogate the politics of the lens through which rape is being perceived in the middle class consciousness of the newly enraged citizen.

With reference to Germaine Greer's understanding of rape and the feminist understanding of ethical standpoint and restorative justice this paper seeks to probe into the way in which rape is being perceived in society and exceptionalized almost at the cost of other forms of gender assaults. This paper would look into the language of protest that has emerged against rape especially post the Delhi rape case, the Mumbai rape to the most recent Tehelka sexual assault and examine the way gender violence is cognized as an offence against the state, thereby perhaps in an unconscious way re-imposing notions of honour on the body of the woman.

वषय- सेक्स वर्क के बदलते स्वरूप में एचआईवी/एड्स और महिलाएं

ज्योति कुमारी

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वर्तमान समय में सेक्स वर्क की एक बड़ी नेटवर्क प्रणाली विकसित हो चुकी है, जिसमें सेक्स वर्क के बाजार और ग्राहक बदल चुके हैं। अन्य व्यावसायिक कार्यों के समान सेक्स वर्क में भी दक्षता (स्किल) और प्रतिस्पर्धा का समावेश हो चुका है। जहाँ अन्य व्यावसायिक कार्यों में प्रशिक्षण की

मान्य (वै लड) संस्थाएँ हैं, वहीं सेक्स वर्क में अमान्य (इनवै लड) रूप से संस्थागत प्रशिक्षण के प्रमाण मलते हैं, जिसमें सेक्स वर्क एक संगठित प्रक्रिया के रूप में रूपांतरित हो रहा है। इस प्रक्रिया में सेक्स वर्कर एचआईवी/एड्स की उत्पाद और उपभोक्ता दोनों बनती हैं। ऐसे में इस व्यवस्थित उद्योग में हिंसा के नए स्वरूप सामने आते हैं जिसके केंद्र में महिलाएँ हैं। देश का प्रतिष्ठित संस्थान नेशनल एड्स कंट्रोल आर्गनाइजेशन (NACO) ने एड्स के अध्ययन, निदान और उपचार के अंतर्गत कोर ग्रुप के रूप में सेक्स वर्कर की पहचान की है। परंतु यह मामला केवल सरकारी नहीं रह गया है बल्कि यह पूर्णतः कॉर्पोरेटाइज्ड हो चुका है। अतः सेक्स वर्क के बदलते हुए व्यावसायिक संरचना में उनके द्वारा किए गए कार्य को वश्लेषत करे तो उनमें निहित हिंसा के नए स्वरूप दिखाई पड़ते हैं।

प्रस्तुत प्रपत्र सेक्स वर्क की दक्षता और उसके कार्य में हिंसा के नए स्वरूप को तलाशेगा। साथ ही, इस व्यवसाय में HIV के खतरे की व्याप्ति और लाभ के द्वंद्वात्मक संबंधों को भी रेखांकित करने का प्रयास किया जाएगा।

THE ACID TEST OF BEING WOMEN- VITRIOLAGE

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Violence against women has diversified but has not stopped. According to Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women, violence against women means, “any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life” (1993). Men consider themselves superior to women and they impose their superiority through violence (Saravanan, 2000). Women are subjected to many forms of violence ranging from psychological harassment to physical violence including acid attacks.

A girl from a village who had simple dreams to live her life was shattered while she was in school all of 17 years. A boy, her neighbor (staying with her sister) started stalking. His continuous advances led to alterations in her behavior which got noticed by her family. When the reason was disclosed to her family the matter reached to the 'Pradhan' of the Panchayat leading to mutual settlement between two families. When the girl thought everything was under control as nothing happened for four years, with teary eyes she shares her life twisting incident. It was a Saturday afternoon, she came back from her aunt's home, her mother was cooking food and she

was talking with her father when that guy came and suddenly threw acid on her. (Account from an acid attack survivor)

Acid attacks have now become the expression of rage for those people who do not accept 'NO' from a girl. In recent time, vitriolage cases have seen an upswing in its numbers. The present paper will discuss about the lives of the survivors of acid attacks by taking few case studies so as to explain that life has not much changed after the Supreme Court ruling for regulation of acid sale and the compensation for them.

भोपाल में गरीब आदिवासी समुदाय में महिलाओं का जीवन

Keerti

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पछले कई सालों से देश की परिस्थितियों में कई गंभीर बदलाव आए हैं। व भन्न कारणों से लोगों का गाँव से पलायन हुआ है। कई अध्ययनों में पाया गया है क शहरी बस्तियों में रहने वाली आबादी का आधे से ज्यादा हिस्सा द लत और आदिवासी समूहों का है। यह पलायन ज्यादातर अपनी मर्जी से नहीं होता है। गरीबी, काम की कमी, जंगलों का राष्ट्रीयकरण, बांध बनाने, खनन एवं निजी कंपनियों द्वारा जमीन अधग्रहण जैसे कारण हैं जिनसे लोग अपने मूल आवास छोड़कर शहर में बसने के लए मजबूर हुए हैं। पछले तीन-चार दशकों में शहरी क्षेत्रों में गरीबी ज्यादा तेज और घनी हुई है। जिसमें सबसे ज्यादा खराब स्थिति द लत और आदिवा सयों की है।

ये लोग अपनी मेहनत से अपने जीवन को बेहतर बनाने की को शश करते हैं ले कन शहरी व्यवस्था उनकी मदद की बजाय उनके जीवन में मुसीबतें ही लाती है। सरकार जो सु वधाएँ उन्हें देने का दावा करती है उन्हें पाने के लए भी आदिवा सयों को सालों सघर्ष करना पड़ता है। ऐसे में शहरी द लत आदिवासी समुदाय में महिलाएँ चौतरफा उत्पीड़न का शकार हो रही हैं। गरीबी की मार बच्चों और महिलाओं पर ज्यादा पड़ती है। उनके अस्थायी घरों को कभी भी अतिक्रमण के नाम पर उजाड़ दिया जाता है, आधी रात को पु लस महिलाओं को पूछताछ के लए थानों में लेकर जाती है। महिला मजदूरों की काम की स्थितियाँ भी बहुत बुरी हैं। वे या तो कचरा बीनती हैं या फर सड़क व अन्य निर्माण कार्यों में मजदूरी करती हैं। कचरा बीनने वाली महिलाओं पर अक्सर चोरी के झूठे आरोप लगाए जाते हैं। गरीब और अनपढ़ होने के कारण पु लस छोटे-मोटे या झूठे मामलों में भी उन्हें जेल में डाल देती है। काम के दौरान ठेकेदार व शहर के वर्चस्वशाली लोग उनका यौन उत्पीड़न करते हैं।

बेहद गरीबी के कारण महिलाएँ अक्सर भूखी रहती हैं या कुछ भी खाकर गुजारा करती हैं। जिस कारण वे खून की कमी, कुपोषण व कई तरह की जानलेवा बीमारियों से उम्रभर घिरी रहती हैं। गरीबी के कारण बुनियादी सुवधाओं तक समुदाय की पहुँच न होने के कारण लकड़ी, पानी व जीने के लए अन्य साधन जुटाने के लए उन्हें रोज घंटों मेहनत करनी पड़ती है। जितना काम वे करती हैं उस मात्रा में उन्हें खाना और आराम नहीं मल पाता। महिलाओं से जुड़े सारे फैसले समुदाय की पंचायतें लेती हैं। उनके अ धकतर फैसले महिलाओं के वरोध में होते हैं। कोई महिला अगर उनके नियमों और फैसलों को नहीं मानती तो उसे मारापीटा जाता है और समाज से बहिष्कृत कर दिया जाता है। भोपाल शहर में ऐसे समुदाय तक सरकार द्वारा बनायी गई कोई भी योजना नहीं पहुँच पा रही है, जिस कारण समुदाय बदहली में धँसता चला जा रहा है। ऐसी स्थिति में महिलाओं का जीवन बेहद कठिन होता जा रहा है।

LIVING IN THE MARGINS: IMPACT OF INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT ON WOMEN—A CASE STUDY OF DIBRUGARH TOWN

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The present study aims to examine the displacement issue in the context of the universe selected for study (Dibrugarh town). The line of settlement (often illegal) along the river Brahmaputra in Dibrugarh has been an area fraught with settlement issues, health problems, violence, sexual exploitation and livelihood dilemma. Women in these arbitrary settlement pockets are particularly vulnerable in the said context as the dubious nature of their citizenship generates public mistrust and suspicion, political manipulation as well as administrative indifference of district level authorities. Also, this mixed segment of population has a sizeable chunk of internally displaced women. Dibrugarh town has riverside settlements of a heterogeneous nature. There are people displaced due to erosion of their land by the river who settled on the dyke. There is a group of indigenous entrepreneurs who make a living out of pottery. There is a large settlement of tea garden labourers who have been forced to relocate for livelihood compulsions as the tea gardens where they had been employed have been eroded by the river. This paper argues that the complex and layered problem of internal displacement as well as surreptitious settlement needs to be studied along gender lines as women are the worst sufferers in the context of dislocation and re-settlement in terms of insecurity, poverty and violence. The paper also hypothesizes that the change of livelihood bases and space should be taken into account when addressing the situation of internally displaced women and this change needs to be realized in the macro policy and programme making levels. In view of the above, the paper shall attempt to interrogate the selected sample area based on the parameters enlisted above. It shall interrogate the situation of women as object and subject of displacement and analyse the impact of the same in terms of positioning and empowerment/disempowerment

in the family and society. Finally, it shall be within the purview of the study to identify a cognizant paradigm that could facilitate the process of change and transformation.

शहरी महिलाओं के प्रति हिंसा का एक रूप : तेजाबी हमला

मनोज कुमार गुप्ता

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लगभग 80 के दशक के बाद से महिलाओं के प्रति हिंसा की घटनाएँ तेजी से बढ़ने लगी। घटनाओं के बढ़ने के साथ-साथ हिंसा का स्वरूप भी निरंतर वीभत्स होने लगा। आज तेजाब को भी महिला हिंसा के हथियार के रूप में तेजी से अपनाया जाने लगा है। वर्तमान में जब लड़कियाँ कैरियर, प्रेम और शादी जैसे मुद्दों पर स्वयं निर्णय लेने और नापसंदगी को जाहिर करने में अपनी झुंझक से बाहर आ रही हैं, तब शायद यह पुरुषवादी समाज को नागवार गुजर रहा है। वह चाहे बांद्रा टर्मिनल पर प्रीती राठी पर तेजाबी हमला हो या गाजियाबाद की निशा हो। अभी हाल में 18 जुलाई 2013 को देश की सर्वोच्च न्यायालय ने तेजाबी हमले से पीड़ित दिल्ली की एक लड़की लक्ष्मी द्वारा 2006 में दायर जनहित याचिका पर ऐतिहासिक फैसला सुनाते हुए आईपीसी में संशोधन कर धारा 326ए और 326बी के प्रावधान कए, ता क तेजाबी हमले जैसी घटनाओं को रोकने में मदद मिल सके। इतने प्रावधानों के बावजूद आए दिन तेजाबी हमले की घटनाएँ रुकने का नाम नहीं ले रही हैं। क्या इन नियम कानूनों के बना देने मात्र से ही हिंसा की घटनाएँ रोकी जा सकती हैं या इनके कुशल क्रयान्वयन हेतु ठोस कदम उठाने की जरूरत है? तेजाबी हमले की अधिकतर घटनाएँ शहरी क्षेत्रों में देखने को मिलती हैं, और इन घटनाओं के पीछे प्रेम एक बुनियादी कारण होता है। महिलाओं के लगातार भयावह होती जा रही इस दुनिया के बारे में गंभीरता से सोचने की जरूरत है। ऐसी घटनाओं को बार-बार दोहराया क्यों जा रहा है, अपराधी बेलगाम क्यों हुए जा रहे हैं? क्या कारण है क बलात्कार, हत्या और अब तेजाबी हमलों के देशव्यापी वरोध के बाद भी ऐसी घटनाएँ प्रकाश में आ रही हैं। इन संदर्भों को दृष्टिगत रखते हुए तथा महिलाओं के प्रति हिंसा के कारकों व कारणों के अध्ययन हेतु इस वर्ष 'शहरी महिलाओं के प्रति हिंसा का एक रूप : तेजाबी हमला' का चयन किया गया है।

DIS-ENTITLEMENT TO THE URBAN POOR: SHIFTS IN WOMEN MILL WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES' ACCESS TO THE ESI HOSPITALS AND MUNICIPAL SCHOOLS IN GIRANGAON, MUMBAI

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In the context of entitlements to the urban poor, this paper focuses on decline in the provision of public services. Workers and their families in Girangaon of Mumbai contributed to the growth and development of the industrial city of Bombay since its evolution as a trading city in the nineteenth century, but suffer disentanglement following the historic strike in the mid-80s. Public institutions that were set up in the city offering its services to the city's population, owed its existence to the struggles for entitlements by the workers.

The last decades of the 20th century see significant changes in state policy towards the welfare of its citizens reflected in shifts in provision of public health and educational services. The ESI hospitals that came into existence specifically to cater to the needs of these mill workers and their families, underwent momentous changes, paralleling the changes among public service institutions such as schools and hospitals in the period of structural adjustment from the early 1990s. Along with hospitals, municipal schools that specifically educated a generation of mill workers' children also underwent significant shifts.

This paper will seek to explore the experiences of women and daughters of mill workers families, some of whom also worked in the mills, while simultaneously commenting on the shifts in the approach of institutions such as the ESI hospitals and schools which were supposed to cater to the needs of workers in the city.

TAKING VIOLENCE SERIOUSLY? STUDY OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DOMESTIC VIOLENCE ACT IN FOUR STATES

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The paper is based on a study conducted by Trupti Panchal and me on behalf of Tata Institute of Social Sciences on the implementation of the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (hereinafter "the Act") commissioned by the Government of India.

The study conducted in four states- Maharashtra, Haryana, Orissa Tamil Nadu- looks at the process of implementation of the law apart from profiling the women who file cases under the Act. We look at the violence undergone and the type of reliefs sought and whether the same has any bearing on the court response.

The conclusions are that the implementation of the Act is much below expectations of the women. We found that women applicants allege gross and multiple forms of violence which has little bearing on the type of orders passed. Many of the women suffer years of violence before they file cases. Most of the applicants are young (18-30 years). Orders including interim orders are not passed in most of the cases under the study and when passed, are often breached. Courts are most comfortable granting monetary reliefs in the form of monthly maintenance. We found that residence orders were passed in very few cases. Timelines are not adhered to and most of the cases that we looked at were pending since over two years. The functionaries and mechanisms set up play limited role in the court process. However lawyers play an important part in the manner in which the law has been implemented. We found little regional variation in the type of orders passed.

GUWAHATI, THE CITY WHERE WOMEN FEAR TO STRIDE

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Urbanisation deeply transforms a societal environment through far reaching changes in population, occupations, the economy, various societal relationships along with their human values and norms. Due to influences of modernisation women are breaking away from the given traditional roles, and are increasingly participating in all walks of life. These changes of life-style of women and the social ethos raise some forms of contradiction between the traditional norms and the modern mindset.

Urbanisation does provide different types of opportunities to women in the form of greater mobility, opportunities to avail employment due to access to education, greater liberty and freedom compared to the rural counterparts. These at the same time, generate some specific type of problems, which are women-centric. It exposes women now to various forms of harassments including sexual harassment at her workplace and in public places.

Guwahati, the capital city of Assam, is a place where more than 70 percent women experience sexual harassment in public places in some form or the other. In this paper the experiences of the women, who are victims of sexual harassment in workplace and public places are illustrated in the form of narratives. Primary data was collected through a purposive sample survey of individual victims of sexual harassment across the Guwahati city. These in-depth interview based surveys of adult women were carried out to study how the processes of modernisation and changing human values contribute to violence against women outside her home. This research is

an attempt to understand the experiences, causes and solution as put forth by the victims to this grave problem.

SEX WORK IN ASSAM: A QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF SEXUAL LABOUR MARKET

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The study of sex work must begin with by considering various factors such as caste, class, religion and geographical location of a woman engaged in sex work. In this study, first, I plan to look at the nature of sex work that has been functioning in the city of Guwahati, Assam, for many years without any institutional setups such as the brothel system. Second, sex work as a form of informal labour and source of livelihood has been employing large number of women, particularly from lower Assam in a clandestine manner. Here, I plan to look at the factors which draw women towards sex work as a source of livelihood. Third objective of this study is to bring forth the amount of violence the sex worker faces which goes unnoticed and unrecognized even by the sex workers themselves during their work time.

Feminists from different camps have been constantly arguing about the nature of sex work, and its legalization, criminalization, and decriminalization. One camp of feminists considers sex work as a form of violence against women, and therefore argues for its abolishment. The other advocates sex work as any other form of labour, and hence wants it to be legalized. These camps have their own individual positions, but what needs to be understood is the agency that sex work provides to the sex workers as women, as bread earner of families, as head of a family under difficult situations. But one also cannot deny the fact that sex work involves high risk, danger and stigmatization of women in a society which is highly patriarchal. Therefore, the aim of carrying out this research is to generate awareness and create a better understanding of sex work, as a form of labour which involves high amount of risk and violence for women in a society where they are objectified and exploited.

MIGRATED WOMEN IN URBAN SPACES AND EVERYDAY NEGOTIATIONS WITH VIOLENCE: DEVELOPMENT PARADIGM OF BIG CITIES

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Last year's rape case in Delhi saw a huge set of protests on the streets of Delhi and in other parts of the country, and it was first time that the voice for women's safety brought many people on the streets. In this crowd there were several women who have migrated to Delhi either for

education or for work. Many of these migrated women stood with the crowd in solidarity but concerns of those women were not that visible in the Verma Committee recommendations.

Delhi as a city where several migrated women are staying either alone or with their families, has seen a number of cases where women from several other regions of India have been targeted and sexually assaulted. Rape of a North-eastern women employee in Gurgaon, Dhaula Kuan, rape case of a North-Eastern Delhi University Student, several cases of rapes of girls of migrant labour families (Gurgaon and Gudia case), statements given by Delhi Police to North-Eastern community to dress up properly and also the Tehalka tapes where women from North-East were represented as sex workers who cry rape after a bad deal on money are few examples of the adversity that women face in Delhi.

In this context, the paper will try to explore the range of violence that migrated women face in this city. This exercise is an attempt to focus on the linkages between unequal and unidirectional development of big cities, lack of accommodation in educational institutions and the denial of legitimate spaces to migrant workers/students and especially women, which exposes them to never ending negotiations with violence directly and indirectly. Although this work focuses on the cases from Delhi, such forms of negotiations can also be found in other metro and big cities.

VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN INDIAN CITIES: CHALLENGES AND PERSPECTIVE

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Violence against women is not a recent phenomenon. It is a global problem and not limited to a specific group of women in society. Violence has been adversely affecting lives and livelihood of women and violating their human rights in many ways. Violence against women is rooted in unequal relationships between men and women in society. It is widespread in all corners of the world and affects one third of all women in their life time, including a variety of forms, from domestic abuse and rape to child marriage and female circumcision. Women are victim of incest, rape and domestic violence that often lead to trauma, physical handicap or death. However the Violence against Women Act (VAWA) was the first major law to help government agencies and victim advocates to work together to fight domestic violence, sexual assault, and other types of violence against women. It created new punishments for certain crimes and started programs to prevent violence and help victims.

This paper is based on secondary data collected from different agencies. This paper analyses the trends and patterns of violence against women across Indian cities. The basic objective here is to understand the dynamics of the pattern and challenges of violence against women as well as efforts of individuals, society, institution and government to overcome with this problem. This

paper also recommends some of the measures to be adopted to deal with the menace of violence against women in Indian cities.

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE: A STUDY OF ASSAM

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Violence against women refers to violent acts that are primarily committed against women affecting them physically, psychologically, sexually and economically. Domestic violence is one of the most prevalent and hidden forms of violence against women and girls which cuts across racial, cultural, class, religious and regional boundaries. Domestic violence addresses the violence that takes place in the domestic sphere and among the members related through blood, intimacy or law. Domestic violence is prevalent in every society across the globe and Assamese society is not free from this evil. It is often claimed that Assamese women enjoy higher status than their counterparts in the rest of the country. It is also claimed that Assamese society is largely gender egalitarian. However, Assamese society is basically patriarchal in nature and women are not equal as claimed, rather subordinated and exploited. Domestic violence became **a public issue due to women's movements of 70s-80s**. However, in spite of involvement of strong **women's movement nationwide, very scant portion of academic work has been done in Assam** to understand gender. At this point, with the objective of understanding domestic violence I have carried out a study. I have collected court records of domestic violence cases from 1990 to 2010, and have done initial analysis. Analysis of my data showed existence of various forms of domestic violence including physical, sexual, psychological as also newly emerging forms of domestic violence. The study also explores the reasons of occurrence of domestic violence and adverse effects on victims as well as others including children, and involvement of victims with the legal system in the process of demanding and securing justice. My paper argues that Assamese women experience domestic violence of different types and occurrence of it opposes the common claim about higher status and equality enjoyed by Assamese women in comparison to their counterparts. Rapid increase of domestic violence in Assam needs serious understanding of the issue and attempts to curb it.

BENIGN PATRIARCHIES AND FEMALE AGENCY IN THE METROPOLIS

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The first sentence of Susie Tharu and Tejaswini Niranjana's paper titled 'Problems for a Contemporary Theory of Gender' goes, "Suddenly 'women' are everywhere." To borrow from the essay, it seems suddenly benign and sensitive men are everywhere, at least everywhere in the media post the 16th December, 2012 rape incident. Farhan Akhtar launched the MARD (Men

against Rape and Discrimination) campaign in March, 2013 to “instill gender equality and respect towards women...” Then there is the accomplished man marrying the dark woman with a daughter in a jewellery commercial (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P76E6b7SQs8>) while a friendly police officer pledges protection to a young woman on a scooty after she ties a rakhi on his hand (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kUY2XYa8w6Q>). The list can actually go on. All these campaigns have been widely feted as gender sensitive because they purportedly show the new man. The construction of this man in these campaigns hinges on a pan Indian identity base, **subsuming the specificities of class, caste, community and language. He is ‘modern’, ‘sensitive’ and ‘liberated’, all attributes used metonymously, but does not overstep the boundaries of ‘Indian tradition’.** This paper seeks to problematise masculinity as enacted out in these campaigns against the backdrop of notions of tradition and modernity (presented as binaries that need to strike a balance). Most importantly, this paper will probe its engagement with the discourse on gender violence. But in doing so, the focus will not be solely on the portrayal of men in these campaigns because this masculinity is enacted out on the site of female agency in urban spaces and hence its enactment on urban sites also needs focus. This soft masculinity facilitates and protects the new woman’s (also ‘modern’ and ‘liberated’ but within the bounds of ‘tradition’) agency upto the point where it does not transgress notions of ‘honour’, which Sanjay Srivastava calls “manageably hybrid modernity. So the paper will probe these notions of tradition and modernity, how these have they been refashioned in a neo-liberal landscape, how these notions constitute the new man and the new woman and how they influence the struggle against gender violence.

THE UNRULY MARGINS: REFLECTIONS ON GENDERED VIOLENCE IN PUBLIC IN MUMBAI

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This paper seeks to reflect on the ways in which multiple and intersecting forms of violence are enacted covertly and overtly in public space, focusing on the city of Mumbai. This paper is based on **collaborative fieldwork I have conducted on women’s access to public space in Mumbai** and my ongoing research on the location of young lower class men on the streets of Mumbai.

I approach this question through a gendered lens, and attempt to look at the ways in which violence has structured and punctuated narratives of the city itself located within the larger frame **of its aspirations to be a ‘global city’.**

In this paper I attempt to examine the violence inherent in the discourse of safety, a discourse increasingly articulated around the narratives of terror and terrorism. This discourse of safety **grounded in the “war on terror” allows for various kinds of violence to be perpetrated in the name of safety.** The narrative of violence is then individualized in the quest of maintaining this larger discourse where public space is also increasingly envisaged as a threatened space to be protected. So what do we call violence then?

Is the closing off of open public spaces, violence? How is it presented as an act of benevolence, progress and 'beautification'? Is the vilification of the poor and migrant men unvaryingly as perpetrators, violence? How is it presented as a logical, rational explanation for why women are not safe in city streets? Is the moral policing of public spaces an act of violence? How is it presented as an act of protecting the moral fibre of society, and the sensibilities of the elderly and the innocence of the young?

GENDERING DISPLACEMENT AND THE POLITICS OF RESISTANCE: THE CASE OF A REHABILITATION SITE IN KOLKATA

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In the majority of Indian cities, the nature of 'development' has taken a different turn since the 1990s. Development has been theorized in a different way both in terms of how it is perceived by urban people and how it is theorized in plan documents. Large scale mission plans have been implemented for the enhancement of urban infrastructure and also include components that are targeted at the needs of the urban poor. One of the crucial aspects of this shift in development is the increasing incidence of displacement. Development-induced displacement has resulted in the eviction of a large number of people, particularly, the people who live in informal settlements. I would contextualize my research in the broad area of urban development-induced displacement, the politics of resistance around it and the kinds of theorizations with regard to displacement and urban resistance in the Global South. The focus of this paper would be the specificities of urban resistance in a rehabilitation site from a gender perspective. The case study is the rehabilitation site at Nonadanga, part of the Asian Development Bank - financed Kolkata Environment Improvement Project being implemented to deal with the environmental issues affecting Kolkata and its people.

In my research I would look into urban displacement through personal narratives of men and women to understand how the acceptance and understanding of stereotypical gender roles are affected by displacement and rehabilitation. The second question is about access and control over assets (for instance, what share they actually have in terms of entitlements that result from the project) and how this feeds into the kinds of negotiations taking place inside and outside the home. The third dimension would be to understand the politics of resistance, whether it is everyday resistance, an overt form of resistance, resistance through any associational forms or other collective or individual forms that urban women are engaging with.

A PROBE INTO ACTIVISM OF PASCHIM BANGA GANATANTRIK MAHILA SAMITY FOR INFORMAL WOMEN WORKERS IN DURGAPUR

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The current era of economic liberalization in India is characterized by rapid growth of informal sector of economy. The flourishing of informal sector that offers livelihood to more than 90 percent of the poor, particularly women is attributed to rapid shrinkage of organized formal employment. By including within its ambit both the urban core and the periphery surrounding it, **informality is thriving on what Mike Davis terms "diffuse urbanism"**. In this context, the informal workers encounter unprecedented vulnerabilities and uncertainties. In response to these new challenges, a new pattern of labour activism against neo-liberalism has emerged, popularly known as new social movements. As Gail Omvedt observes, these new social movements redefine politics by pursuing nonviolent course of action distinct from trade unions, draws upon the toiling section as their support base in their struggle against the state on one-point issue. This emergent politics of assertion signifies a paradigmatic shift in labor activism that broadens the spectrum of democratic politics.

Contrary to non-political trend of activism, institutionalized pattern of labor activism led by the trade unions is dominant path to labour welfare in Durgapur in Burdwan district of W.B. Under economic liberalization, W.B Government is rejuvenating this steel city as a zone of industrial informality and hence, generating multiple informal jobs for both men and women. In this context, this paper wishes to critically explore the functioning of **women's wing of CPIM in Bengal** namely, Paschim Banga Ganatantrik Mahila Samity (PBGMS) in mobilizing informal women workers in Durgapur to fight for their rights, free from patriarchal patronage of its parent body/union. Its modus operandi implies adoption of a strategy of **co-opting women's demands** within general labour interests as well as subordination to general political issues. Therefore, PBGMS succumbs to patriarchal party diktat. This politics of co-optation pursued by politically active women **not only neutralizes efforts for autonomous women's struggle but reinforces** patronizing patriarchal role of the trade union/party. Most importantly, this politics of co-optation poses challenge to the democratic zeal and endeavours of politics of assertion.

"UNHEARD VOICES: A STUDY ON THE JOURNEY OF "OTHER HALF" FROM YAMUNA PUSHTA TO BAWANA, DELHI

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Cities which showcase multistoried buildings, world class infrastructure, exploding markets also contain pollution, long and heavy traffic, crowding of people, unemployment, poverty, slums, crimes and shortage of basic amenities. On one hand we have policy makers, city planners,

architects who term cities as machines of growth, and on the other hand, we have the voiceless poor who build and maintain the cities while themselves being hugely exploited. This study was attempted to explore the life of the displaced women (other half) who were evicted from Yamuna Pushta and relocated and resettled in Bawana. The people who were evicted were mostly left to fend for themselves with no alternatives and choices. This paper tries to capture and document the experiences, the pain, the unheard voices of urban poor women who faced this process of exclusion.

WOMEN AT WORK IN THE INFORMAL SECTOR OF INDIA UNDER NEOLIBERALISM: UNORGANISED WORKFORCE AND CASUAL LABOUR

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The doctrine of neoliberalism encouraged the free market enterprises, unfettered by government interference and minimised the role of the state by denying broad range of labour rights. During the 1990s, globalisation of the economy under neo liberal policies contributed to the informalisation of the workforce in many industries and countries. The majority of female workers are engaged in the informal sector, which are often poorly paying and highly insecure jobs. This paper explains how the informal sector and temporary employment has become predominant in the urban economy. It specifically focuses on experiences of migrant women workers.

Informality and mobility of labour are closely interrelated with each other. This paper initially **explains migrant women's** decision of moving outside their rural setting and then describes their experiences of living in the destination and working in the informal sector, with high exposure to vulnerability, structural discrimination, exploitation and abuses. The paper primarily draws on case studies of experiences of women construction workers in and around Hyderabad. It argues that in the era of globalisation and neo liberalism, the expanded entry of women into urban construction work **is not necessarily a sign of improvement of women's opportunities, livelihood security and position in labour market, economy and society.** It is a strategy for acquiring cheap and flexible labour, and a *permanent casualisation* of the workforce.

The paper shows that the state has failed to provide social justice or to enforce laws to any successful extent, and particularly highlights the non-implementation of the 1996 law for Building and Construction Workers. Loopholes exist both in the law and in the system that help employers to escape responsibility. The paper argues that existing national laws should be reviewed to see if they protect migrants and citizens equally and that trade unions need to develop a more coherent view as regards what economic, legal and administrative policies governments should adopt in relation to migrant workers in the informal sector. It describes how women workers have themselves got organised around issues that normally do not figure in **workers' demand charters.**

Slum kshetra mein mahilaon ke jivan mein hinsa ka swaroop

Gitesh Geet

(Abstract not found)





SUB-THEME – 4:

**PLURALITIES: CASTE, INCLUSION
AND INTERSECTIONALITIES**

WOMEN, CULTURE AND RESISTANCE: NOTES ABOUT DALIT WORKING LIVES IN AN INDUSTRIAL TOWNSHIP IN MUMBAI

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This paper emerges out of the conviction that dalit cultural practices in urban workplaces have not been adequately discussed. It is an attempt at exploring the lifeworld of dalit working women in an industrial township in Mumbai. The paper is based on fieldwork within a Public Sector Undertaking that manufactures fertilizers.

Dalit women workers discussed here belong to the Bhangi community and are part of the sanitation staff at the company township located in Chembur, an eastern suburb of Mumbai. Most of them have been on long term contracts with the company for over twenty years, and belong to the age group of 40-55. As Company policy does not allow the residence of contract workers in the township, they travel medium and long distances ranging from 10 to 30 kilometers to reach their workplace everyday. Though a significant part of their lives are spent away from the township, the festival of the 'gaon devi' celebrated in the month of Aashaadh (roughly third week of June to third week of July) acts as a rallying point for all the workers of the sanitation division to come together.

I focus here on this festival and the ritual sacrifice led by female members of the sanitation staff of this industrial township, and argue that it instills in them claims of a 'space' within their workplace.

How do dalit women workers, in this instance, respond to the pulls and pressures of diverse cultural trends that have gained significance in Mumbai over the years, those belonging to both the Brahminical canon and the Ambedkarite tradition? To what extent are these responses gendered? These are some of the questions this paper attempts to engage with.

GENDER, CASTE AND SEXUALITY: UNDERSTANDING THE ISSUE OF LAND ALIENATION

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There has been a spate of debates over land acquisition and alienation projects recently which is projected as insular from HIV/AIDS. Besides this, it is discussed separately not only from the issue of gender but also relative subtle intersections such as sexuality and caste. On this subject,

bipolar perspectives - such as liberal perspective which aim to boost economy via infrastructure development projects and in turn claim to invest surpluses into social welfare and Marxist perspective which promulgate that bourgeoisie get benefit at the cost of dispossession and alienation of marginalized communities - predominate. However, in this contested perspective, caste and sexuality does not get sufficient attention if not completely neglected. Even though, these works represent the voice of subalterns or proletariats like *dalits*, *adivasis* [first inhabitants], farmers etc, one does not come across the issue of performing communities or former *Devasasis* and how this process affected them differently. This is not just the matter of adding another group on displacement or merely another unit of analysis. Rather it implies enriching and making sense of displacement differently or understanding it through different lens. The current paper aimed to engage with the issue of land alienation in the context of women from *Kalavanthulus* [a former **Devadasi** communities] of coastal Andhra Pradesh. It **raised questions: "What shape does it take when it is entangled with the issue of morality and HIV/AIDS discourse? In what way their experience is different from other marginalized communities. How does sexuality meddle here? Whether there is a politics in casting them as "other" in the matter of sexuality and at the same time not recognizing their marginality especially by the left academia in the land acquisition discourse. How does land acquisition process doubly affect Devadasis and performing communities? Whether the experience of land dispossession of Devadasi community is any way different or similar from the women from Dalit communities?"** . Based on the ethnographic accounts in East Godavari, I describe the issue of land alienation and struggle among *Kalavanthulus* as part of infrastructure development initiative of the state. Secondly, I attempted to show the power-relations in sexuality not just at macro-level but also in micro milieu like in conjugal relationships. In this connection, I depict the multiple and complex affinity of women from *Kalavanthulu* community with the propertied classes or dominant castes of the region.

INTERSECTIONALITY OF CASTE AND GENDER AS ILLUSTRATED BY THE DEVADASI SYSTEM

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It is almost one year after the tragic gang rape of the Delhi girl. Middle class India seems to have re-awakened its moral conscience. Yet the analysis of the Indian social scenario demonstrates that there is a need for a more holistic approach to providing safety for Indian women .In this the Dalit woman is not merely one example of one marginalized subgroup but her unique identity and experience can teach those who advocate for justice a more practical paradigm .I hope to demonstrate in this paper by looking at the intersectionality of caste and gender and with specific focus on the Devadasi system.

The concept of intersectionality is readily being used in the feminist movements. If used within a social justice model, intersectionality can be extremely useful and empowering. There has been very little research done on the intersectionality of caste and gender.

Gender and caste inequalities are deeply rooted in our culture. Globalization has brought prosperity for a few while it increased the gap between the rich and the poor. The fact that Caste based discrimination still remains prevalent despite affirmative action and laws against it require understanding the intersectional approach.

The Devadasi system illustrates this further. Today's Devadasis mostly live in the states of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. In Andhra Pradesh she is known by the term Joginni. Her multiple realities are that she faces discrimination from within her caste and within her family as well as from other castes. She faces discrimination as a woman. She is a poor sex worker. Yes she participates in religious festivals but most of the time she struggles to make a living. Sex work is the only economically viable option for livelihood. She is often the main and significant breadwinner in her family. Her unique set of experiences needs to be considered if truly attempting to strive for a just and developed society. How to truly bring an end to this system will be the further work of my paper

CONNECTION BETWEEN LANGUAGE, CASTE AND GENDER: DENOTIFIED COMMUNITY

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The interaction between caste, gender and language and especially power attached to it is broadly the topic of this paper. On the one hand, language has been seen as means of communication but it is also tool dominance for upper cast/class. I am trying to build my argument on the basis of fieldwork I have done on Denotified Tribes in Maharashtra. 'DNT' community are not in mainstream. They want to come mainstream but they feel insecure. At that time they are struggling to carry their identity for language. Also through that how women are preservers of the identity of their community. This I will map by review of activists of women of the Vadar (VJNT) community. Women have responsibility as carriers of their culture in terms of language. Gender as a category plays an important role in maintaining the language and culture of different sub-castes and there by maintain difference and hierarchy. Mainly when men **and family also are migrating for work to other places, women's role is very important within** community. Women are the carrier of caste system, language and other practices, because in the practice of modernization these communities are still struggling for their caste and language as an identity. When these communities migrate for livelihood they struggle with new places, new cultures, and new languages. The logic of exclusion can be contested by recovering a space for the language of caste on its own terms in the public space.

Ambedkar saw the two issues as so intrinsically linked that the language of recovering the **women's questions from its relegation to the private. He points to** the inadequacy of language that speaks of caste in other terms, namely the idea of pollution. He argues that the absence of intermarriage of endogamy is the one characteristic that can be called the essence of caste. (Ambedkar1992).

MORE THAN JUST 'MAKING VISIBLE': EXPLORING DALIT WOMEN'S WRITING IN BENGAL

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This essay comes out of my experience as a Sociology student, located in urban, middle class, upper caste household, never really discussing "caste" as a social issue in Bengal. I got introduced to my caste identity when I was doing a course on "Caste and Gender: Through Memory Studies".

As a result of 30 years long rule by the CPI (M), the caste issue in West Bengal remained 'invisible'. However, as Anjan Ghosh (2001) pointed out, practices of untouchability expressed itself through everyday practices like spatial segregation in schools etc.

The Dalit Literature Movement in Bengal was consolidated in 1994 with a quarterly Dalit magazine called "Chaturtha Dunia". This magazine, which is published by Bengali Dalit Literature Organization, also has a bookstall in Kolkata.

It is important to locate the double exclusion of Dalit women in feminist rewriting of social history of Bengal and in the Dalit Literature Movement. Anthologies like "Women Writing in India" have well documented authors like Rasasundori Devi, Mahashweta Devi etc. However Dalit women writing in Bengali were mostly ignored by those who were recovering women's voices from history.

Similarly, in the first translated collection of short stories from Bengali Dalit Literature, Dalit women writers are absent. However the anthology on "100 years of Dalit Literature in Bengal" includes few Bengali Dalit women writers.

As underlined by scholars like Rege (2006), Dalit women writing changes the way we understand both the women's movement and the Dalit movement in Maharashtra.

Taking this point forward, my paper will try to understand the caste and gender question in Bengal and to make feminist recovery of women's voices caste sensitive. I will try to explore their writings from essays by Dalit women writers, published in the special issue of Chaturtha

Duniya on Dalit women. I selected this because the magazine is one of the first and most influential articulations coming from the Dalit Literature Movement.

PROCESSES OF IDENTITY FORMATION AMONG THE VALMIKIS: FOCUS ON GENDER

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The caste system in India operates by dividing society into hierarchical social groups where assignment of rights is determined by birth, with the hierarchy being defined on the basis of 'purity' and impurity'. **Inequality is at the core of the caste system.**

This paper looks at the constitution of Valmiki/ Bhangi community as caste group from the occupational group. Within the Hindu caste system Valmiki community has been marked as 'untouchable' community. 'Bhangi' is a term used to denote those 'untouchables' who clean latrines and remove night soil. **As a consequence Bhangis are treated as 'untouchable' even by the other erstwhile 'untouchable' castes in the Hindu society.**

As Prashad (2001) argues because of colonisation and urbanisation, occupation based group take shape as a caste based group. Therefore, the creation of village and urbanisation are prominent contexts for the formulation of the scavenger as the Bhangi caste. Thus, there is a need to see how the occupation based group becomes closed caste group and the role stigma played in this process.

However, the community has tried to recreate their identity by marking themselves as 'Valmikis', claiming sage Valmiki as their ancestor. This process was also linked to attempts by Hindu reformist groups to 'include' the Bhangis within the fold in colonial India. **However, this category** has also come to mark the politicised identity of the Valmikis in the present juncture, where religion, economic status, culture and labour play an important role in the formulation of this identity.

On this background the paper seeks to explore through secondary historical and contemporary sources, as well as interviews with prominent leaders of the community at the local level, the complex process of identity formation for the Valmikis, sometimes as a caste-based group, sometimes as an occupation-based group. Labour and cultural practices of women have been central to the formation of Valmiki identity. This paper therefore will try and delineate how, why and when these distinctions are sought to be made and the ways in which gender figures in these processes of identity formation.

WOMEN WRITING ON EDUCATION IN COLONIAL MAHARASHTRA: ISSUES OF CASTE CLASS AND GENDER

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The issue of education for all has still not been achieved in India. Indian society suffers from substantial inequalities in education, employment and income based on caste and gender. In the 19th century women were almost completely excluded from formal education.

In this paper I will try to map what were the different perspectives of educated women towards **education in general and women's education in particular during colonial period. In colonial India, women were denied the opportunity of education, except for a few women of the upper caste and classes, who challenged patriarchal society, such as Pandita Ramabai, Anandibai Joshi, Saraladevi, Hemalata Sen.**

In this paper, focusing on women's writing in Maharashtra I will map what do they write on education question, specifically the issue of women's education. I will look at writing of women from middle class social reform movement, from anti-caste movements, s atyashodhak and ambedkarite movements of and women from caste organizations.

My research questions:

- how they looked at provision of household education for women?
- How they looked at the caste wise education for women?
- How did women look at the importance of education in their life?

The writing will be read to explore these questions theoretically and empirically. I will try to argue how caste and gender played an important role in system of education.

(title missing)

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In Tamil Nadu Dalit women are subjugated to work and descent based discrimination and caste atrocities due to the Brahmanical social values. They are forced to do menial jobs in inhuman conditions. They neither inherit property nor have scope for productive employment. The state also prefers them for cleaning and sweeping. Being unorganized workers they do not have the protection of labour legislations. Manifestation of caste discrimination is visible even in government schemes. In MGNREGA the dalit women are given hard labour. They do not have **property rights. It's a life long poverty hunger and malnutrition for them. They live in very unhygienic secluded places, separated from main village and in urban slums.**

The National land reform does not aim at land distribution to dalit women but takes away the lands from them. Neo-liberalization policies, WTO and AOA perpetuate food insecurity for dalit women. Government has brought out BRAI bill in support of the giant MNCs like Monsanto which promotes GMO food. Dalit women fall prey to MFI loans resulting in suicides. The land grab, livelihood erosion and food insecurity lead to hunger and malnutrition among dalit women.

In TamilNadu dalit women are forced into religious prostitution called Mathammas. Economic vulnerability forces them to opt for sex work. Mathammas, sex workers are facing humiliation, living with economic vulnerability living with decriminalization and stigmatization. They do not hold family cards, voter IDs and are deprived of being citizens.

The inter-caste marriages among dalits are vehemently protested which lead to caste riots, honour killings and khap panchayat. During caste –riots, dalit women face violence, they are raped and their belongings are looted. After the riots the burden is on dalit women to rebuild the household economy. The state stands ally with the perpetrators.

Current strategies show some progress but are insufficient and need revamping. The state should play an active role in formulating and ensuring implementation of the progressive policies especially land distribution to dalit women with productive resources such as land, water, seed, credits, and other resources.

ONE SPACE, MANY STORIES: CONGRESS HOUSE AREA OF BOMBAY/MUMBAI THROUGH THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

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This paper explores the lives of *tawaifs*, *baijis* or courtesans (used interchangeably) in Bombay, during the twentieth century, with a particular focus around the Congress House area in Grant Road. The *tawaifs' kothas* (salons), below the Kennedy Bridge, are interestingly in the vicinity of Congress House, which was the hub of Indian nationalist struggle in Bombay from the 1920 onwards. These two places have come into existence almost simultaneously and have coexisted for many decades. However, there have been various efforts, during the last decades of twentieth century, to remove the presence of *tawaifs* from this space, through heightened interest of the real estate players in urban renewal and increased surveillance by the police or **the moral crusaders, which happens to be the Citizen's Forum of the neighbourhood.** Given this contemporary situation, the attempt is to historicize *mujra* performances in the city and its presence in the nationalist hub of Bombay, exploring the contentious terrain of caste, gender, sexuality, nationalism and urban gentrification.

The questions that this paper attempts to explore are: (i) what is the nature of *spatial relations* between the *tawaifs' kothas* (N.B. Compound) and the Congress House in Bombay; and how this has been produced and/or contested through the twentieth century? (ii) What is the kind of *self-definition* asserted by the *tawaifs*, *baijis*, or courtesans, from historically marginalised communities, involved in the performance of *mujra* at the Compound in Grant Road? Thus, I reflect on the transformations of the space inhabited by the courtesans—with the continued devaluing, dismantling and restructuring of the space, and the increased stigmatisation, criminalisation and marginalisation of the women—reading into the newer modalities of constraints and newer sites of injury and injustice.

The methodological approach of this study constitutes overlaps between anthropological and historical methods; mainly oral narratives and life histories of courtesans and musicians staying and/or performing at the Compound, as well as interviews with classical musicians and vocalists, cine musicians and singers, activists, residents of Congress House and members of the **Neighbourhood Citizens' Forum (PNCF)**.

Can a freedom that impedes Dalit women's progress be called 'freedom'?

The conference of women's movements from 9th to 12th September held at Calcutta brought out new questions, issues and perspectives. The first such conference of autonomous women's groups was held in Mumbai in 1980 – to share opinions, build friendships, to support each other's struggles in various fields, to formulate future plans and strategies for strengthening the movement politically. At the fifth conference held at Tirupathi, issues of lower caste women came into the agenda. Similarly, issues of lesbian women humanized the politics of sexuality.

The Calcutta conference was attended by several new, hitherto not seen, women's groups mobilized along their professions and work thus making new sessions necessary. Sessions were held along the following lines - caste, gender, marginalized sexualities, women of religious minorities, women under state violence, sex workers, migrant women, problems of agricultural labourers, violence against women in the family and outside, disabled women etc.

It was good to see the large-scale mobilization of Dalit women's groups. One can imagine the size of this group by the space allotted to them – that is the plenary space. Among the people who attended the session were: sanitary workers, fourth class municipality workers, domestic workers, joginis, maammas, sex workers, devadasis, agricultural labourers, bar dancers, construction workers, migrant workers. These women, who were in large numbers, are engaged in labour which is forced on them and looked down upon by the society. Till now, one only saw Dalit women being organized by upper caste women. Now, with the rise of Dalit women leaders, such a situation seems to be on the decline. In such a context, it has become necessary to search for new questions, new discussions and new meanings.

In the session on Dalit women, many spoke about the relations between the Dalit movements, caste and gender movements and caste relations in the women's groups were discussed. More importantly, the questions raised by sex workers, devadasis and bar dancers led to new discussions and a different perspective.

The sex workers demanded: recognize our profession as work; we are selling only the sexual service but not our bodies; our rights should figure in the realm of human rights as we live and work in violent conditions; we should be given all the rights that the other workers have; even if society may take its time to recognise us, women's movements should recognize these rights. They asserted that they have established their organization to resist and oppose the violence, harassment of the police and the other goons in the society. They noted that their struggle is not easy but complex. These were some of the issues placed before the conference.

The session on caste and gender was attended by more than fifty devadasis. The leader of the devadasi sangham spoke in defence of their profession, "we are able to eat three meals a day, wear good clothes because of this profession, we don't think that this profession is demeaning. We are happy. Some people want to destroy this profession thinking that it is a social evil. If we found this profession difficult and intolerable, we would have begun the struggle to destroy it". This led to a huge discussion.

The bar dancers attended the conference under the banner of 'Bar Dal'. There are seventy five thousand bar dancers in Maharashtra alone. Speaking about their issues they said that their profession is looked down upon, treated with disrespect in the society. The government has also banned their work. They informed that they won the case against the government ban in the High court with the support of the bar owners and that the government has now appealed to the Supreme Court.

During the cultural programmes in the evening, the bar dancers gave a performance. In the course of the performance, some of the women went up the stage to give money to the bar dancers who were performing. Dalit women raised an objection to this performance questioning the culture that was being reinforced on the stage. Their objections were as following - why Dalit women alone should sacrifice their lives to this culture of pleasing others; that this profession of bar dancers, aimed at pleasing people flush with money is an instrument of the new global market; and that this work is insecure and demeaning which will obstruct the progress of the Dalit women.

In fact, almost all the women in the Bar-dal are Dalits. To this argument the bar dancers retorted, "Are we not human beings? Can't we choose the profession that we like? Who are you to call this profession demeaning and disrespectful? Don't we have individual freedom?" With this, even the issues of sex workers and devadasis also exploded.

The opinions of the bar dancers may appear to be democratic at first glance. But before they became bar dancers, they were dalit women. One should think about why they alone choose this profession. One should understand the politics of caste involved here. Every issue in our society is built on the foundations of caste. Whereas the practices of jogins and devadasis are built on the rural caste practices, in the cities, it is influenced by values of global consumerism and markets. Here, Dalit women are being used as instruments of pleasure and entertainment. One should question how only women of lower caste enter this profession.

While all the privileges of respect, security and opportunity in society are cornered by the upper castes, Dalits and Dalit women get pushed into the dangerous, insecure and disrespectful areas of work. Adding insult to injury, these professions are glamourised to keep the Dalits from coming out. How can we defend the politics that glamourises these areas of work in the name of individual freedom? Such a glamourisation prevents the Dalits from recognizing their own true identity.

Some upper-caste feminists from the autonomous women's groups support the Bar Dal issues. Such a support is surprising considering that they also pressed for rehabilitation packages for sex workers in the past, arguing that such work is demeaning for women. Do these women's groups now think that their earlier stand was a mistake?

Dalit women do recognize the importance of individual freedom. But we argue that political awareness should be developed about those 'freedoms' that hinder our progress and self-respect. We are demanding creation of secure conditions of work for Dalit women even while questioning the conditions that are pushing Dalit women into such insecure and dangerous areas of work. But a few upper caste feminists are defending/encouraging this work of Dalit women without taking cognisance of their

DOUBLE OPPRESSION: THE CASE OF DALIT WOMEN IN PANCHAYATS

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Reservation for women through 50% quota in Panchayats was seen as a landmark achievement. Also panchayats are expected to play a key role in inclusion of the SCs for enhancing democracy, and the participation of these disadvantaged castes in the decision making process is supposed **to empower them as well. Mere representation won't fetch us much as the case of Dalit women** is worse because they face double oppression. They have to deal with the caste based atrocities on one hand and a patriarchal society on the other. The influence of patriarchy can be seen when women come up as proxy candidates. The issues of caste can be seen when dalit females are troubled and humiliated in their workings. Interestingly Prevention of Atrocities Act (PoA) can be used against Dalit women candidates. The formal representation of women thus need not be an indicator of their true participation in panchayats. According to Jayshree Mangubhai (lawyer and human rights activist) the "*political representation* through quotas has not led to *effective political participation* for the majority of Dalit women. The main obstacle is the multiple discrimination these women face arising from the entrenched caste hierarchy, chronic poverty **and patriarchy...Political participation through quotas, therefore, in the absence of other measures, has potential to lead to a situation where caste and gender hierarchies are reinforced, and Dalit women are deterred from effective political participation in future".** I am here not referring to the quantity but the quality of inclusion of Dalit women in panchayats. Numbers matter, of course, but when it comes to the issue of Dalit women we need to go beyond numbers. Participation for Dalit women then should be about entering the public domain with a sense of dignity and respect—no one should be humiliated in the process. Therefore it is not the issue of being victimised alone but also one of agency, transformation and survival.

DALIT WOMEN LITTERATEURS AND MARATHI DALIT LITERATURE: A STUDY OF ITS ROLE AND CONTRIBUTIONS

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The theme of Dalit women is of a crucial importance in the contemporary Indian situation, particularly in the context of globalization and changing dynamics at national and international levels. Many scholars have argued that Dalit women constitute a lower segment in Indian society and suffer from dual disadvantages. First, of being Dalits i.e. socio-economically and culturally marginalized group and second, being women share the gender-based inequalities and **subordination. Further, it is being argued that the Dalit women are 'thrice alienated'** by class, patriarchy and caste.

Dalit literature emerged as rebellion in the established Marathi literature. This Dalit literature as a genre is the first development, not only in Marathi but in any Indian language of a literature drawing its inspiration from the life and experiences of the lowly and submerged segments of Indian society and its struggle for securing basic human rights. Dalit literature has created a Dalit consciousness among the Dalits. The role of Dalit women litterateurs is considered as significant in Dalit literature in many ways. Dalit women writers sketched the realistic and authentic accounts of life conditions of the Dalit women, her suppression, humiliation, sufferings, dilemmas and exploitation.

In this paper I will focus on the role and contribution of Dalit women to the Marathi Dalit literature. I will take the wok of some of the eminent Marathi Dalit women writers such as Urmila Pawar, Jyoti Lanjewar, Sharmila Rege, Kumud Pawade, Pradya Daya Pawar, Heera Bansode, Babytai Kamble and some others, and will attempt to stress their role and contribution in literature. The paper will also attempt to find out what is the importance of Dalit women's writings and how different issues of Dalit women dealt in these writings?

THE DALIT 'SHE' IN THE WORLD OF PATRIARCHY: SPECIAL REFERENCE TO P.SIVAKAMI NOVELS

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The paper tries to focus its discussions on the Dalit narratives, which , when emerged, indeed shook the mainstream literary culture, as it laid bare not the fictionalized world, rather the actualized scenario, where one can witness the most inhuman treatments of the upper class, to the lower strata of Indian population. The paper also tries to elucidate the emergence of the most silenced voices for ages through the dalit women writers, whose writings outpoured the anger, humiliation not only against casteism but also to the patriarchy, both within and outside the communities.

The writers like Mahasweta Devi, Bama, Urmila Pawar, P.Sivakami, Meena Kandasamy set their foot forward to upheld the lowest ranker of the Patriarchal Indian Democratic Society and gain them their civil and human rights. The writers enunciate equally as a dalit, as well as a woman, challenging the critical perspectives of the readers. paper has given special attention to P. Sivakami and her works. Her novels are groundbreaking in a way that they stripped off very uncomfortable yet painful realities of Indian society where Dalit Women are gripped and tamed forcefully through physical as well as mental exploitations. She not only attacks the patriarchy of higher caste, but her own community as well, which is even harsher and inflicts mental wounds **along with its physical counterparts. P. Sivakami's writings are undoubtedly more than** testimonio as they are more a search to collective identity rather individual identity. The paper also argues that the internal as well as external contradictions faced by dalit women who are at constant conflict with dalit men against the little power and space left out are indeed true

scenario. The inherent contradictions within oppressed classes and gender hierarchies are not a problem of dalit alone; it is also a mainstream problem. The paper seeks this connection as well.

CASTE, GENDER AND EMBODIMENT: A STUDY OF VILLAGE LEVEL HEALTH PROGRAMMES

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In contemporary developmental discourse the Indian state is engaged in using the liberatory language of “community participation”, “democratic decentralization” at the village level. Further, these vocabularies have become convenient tools in the hands of liberalization paradigm in shifting away the state’s welfare responsibilities towards communities. In this context, the state promoted volunteerism becomes a key leverage for drawing women to the centre of community welfare in the name of women’s empowerment. The ASHA (Accredited social health activist), Anganwadi workers assume the role of community welfare workers in this whole discourse. These state sponsored community workers are appointed through village community (gram sabha). Such an exercise of state sponsored volunteerism would mean bringing state agency into the hands of community. This whole process is based on the state’s (mis)recognition of community as monolithic category. Further, although women are visualized as a suitable category for welfare work of the community, the question arises does women’s caste marked gendered body become a deciding factor for being a suitable state volunteer? Does caste identity of these women volunteers play any role in determining how they are going to dispense the state services among different caste groups?

Drawing on an ethnography conducted in Boudh district of Odisha state during 2006-07 the paper explores the complex interplay of gender and caste in reproducing changing forms of political subjectivity, in the state practices. It examines how the state approach towards village community as a unity has resulted in formulation of upper and middle caste alliance in segregating the stigmatized dalit body. Even when the dalits are incorporated into village community, they are incorporated being marked as stigmatized embodied beings. Further, the paper argues the upper caste community workers’ concerns in maintaining their own bodily purity and the purity of the upper caste sections of the village during the delivery of state service makes it superficially possible for them to provide service equitably among all caste groups. Dichotomizing their roles and practices in terms of public/private and state/familial responsibility, helps the upper caste community workers to justify the contradictions in their roles.

EXCLUSION FROM THE SUPPLEMENTARY NUTRITION PROGRAMME (SNP) AND VILLAGE LIFE: EXPERIENCES OF 'DALIT' WOMEN IN A VILLAGE OF GUJARAT

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'Dalits' in India continue to remain one of the most subjugated and exploited groups of people, with 'Dalit' women facing multiple discriminations. NHS-3 reveals that 'Dalits' form a large percentage of the almost 3/4th of the target population not utilizing Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS). This study attempts to identify and understand 'Dalit' experiences of their exclusion from ICDS and community life.

The study was part of one of the four short ethnographies in four villages of Gujarat on exclusion and self exclusion from the Supplementary Nutrition Programme (SNP). Apart from participant observation, the study involved in-depth interviews with mothers, Anganwadi Workers (AWWs), Anganwadi Helpers (AWHs) and other stakeholders in the village.

'Dalit' women in the village belonged to families having no land or cattle. They opined that 'Dalit' identity was still considered 'impure' and 'dirty' by the village population. Their participation in 'Gram Sabha' was discouraged by arranging meetings at night and in unlit rooms. They had poor access to constructed toilets, water, approach roads and other resources, either due to discriminatory resource distribution, purposeful encroachment of streets or their physical segregation. Their participation in SNP was influenced by poor infrastructure and substandard services of an AWC run especially for 'Dalit' children. While 'Dalit' women, aspiring for a better future for their children, appreciated the role an AWC played in child growth and development, many felt that a 'special' AWC, with a 'Dalit' AWW and a 'Dalit' AWH for 'Dalit' children epitomised social exclusion.

'Dalit' women continue to face critical denial of rights on the basis of their caste and gender identity. If sociocultural reasons of exclusion from SNP are not effectively addressed 'Dalit' children will continue to constitute a larger share of the State's under-nourished children and amplify existing social inequalities, implying severe well-being and economic productivity consequences for the next generation.

SUBALTERN WOMEN AND THE POLITICS OF REPRESENTATION: A STUDY OF 'SATI MA'

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The sect of *Kartavaja* arose in colonial Bengal in the eighteenth century. An offshoot of Baul culture, it is also regarded as the marginalized people's response to Raja Rammohan Roy's movement of Brahmo Samaj. This sect has in its centre a concept of feminine power embodied in the legendary character of 'Sati Ma'. Members of this sect comprising mostly of lower caste people like the *sadgopes* worship 'Sati Ma'- the woman with immense supernatural power specially in the field of fertility and reproduction. Still worshipped in the 21st century by a vast number of people, "Sati ma" was once relegated to the status of 'devi' by the sect members and later extended to people outside the sect. The time of the emergence of 'Kartavajas' and 'Sati Ma' is that of Renaissance Bengal, a vibrant period as far as women's movement, empowerment and enlightenment in colonial India was concerned. But this woman 'sati ma', the subaltern and indigenous version of femininity and power, remained marginalized in the narrative of renaissance literature. She was never included in the predominant idea of empowerment of women. The present paper proposes to study how 'kartavaja' and their legendary woman 'Sati Ma' has been represented in the narrative of the literature of Bengal renaissance and explore the politics of that representation to find out how the western influenced individualist and liberal scholarship and the scholarship of the upper caste intelligentsia marginalized and trivialised this alternate version of feminine power.

MEDIA HEGEMONY-THE ISSUES OF DALIT WOMEN ADDRESSED IN INDIAN MASS MEDIA

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The present study examines the media hegemony and Indian mass media in addressing the social evil of caste system and the socio-economic and educational status of Dalit women in modern India. The ruling classes who control the economic structures and institutions of society also control the primary ideological institutions of society such as media institutions. Indian mass media is a major social force, because the basic organizing principles and procedures for social activities are influenced by this mass media. The most neglected community of Indian Dalits have become sorely disappointed at the discovery that the Indian mass media, which professes to be progressive, tends to reflect the inequalities of the longer social system. The issues of Dalits are quite ubiquitous, but that are rarely documented with less focus and in-depth coverage in Indian mass media. The murder, rape and harassment of Dalit women is justified as minor offence by the upper caste controlled Indian mass media. The harsh reality of the

suppression, struggle and torture faced by Dalit women in everyday lives is miserable. Dalit women in the Indian social system are placed at the absolute bottom in the hierarchy. As a result of this Dalit women are living in inhuman conditions, violations of her human rights, discrimination denying the opportunities, choices and freedom in all spheres of life. . The issues of oppression and exploitation of Dalit women were not addressed properly by the Indian ruling class. The present study is in the nature of a theoretical framework on media hegemony, the face of Indian mass media and how it addresses the issues of the social evil of the caste system and its effects on Dalit women.

बे ड़या समुदाय: जाति, यौनिकता और राष्ट्र-राज्य के पी ड़त

BEDIYA COMMUNITY: VICTIM OF CASTE SYSTEM, SEXUALITY AND POLITICS OF NATION-STATE

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बे ड़या समुदाय एक ऐसा समुदाय है जिसकी पहचान यौनिकता के आधार पर की जाती है। कसी भी समुदाय क अस्मिता की निर्मति के लए यह आवश्यक है क उस समुदाय की उत्पत्ति और वकास यानि सामूहिक स्मृति (इतिहास) का होना। बे ड़या समुदाय के संदर्भ में, इतिहास में इसके कोई प्रमाण साक्ष्य तो नहीं मलते हैं ले कन 'गजेटियर ऑफ सेन्ट्रल प्रो वर्सेज 1870' में बे ड़यों के बारे में जिक्र मलता है। इसके अलावा कसी और गजेटियर में कुछ भी लखा हुआ नहीं मलता है। 'गजेटियर ऑफ सेन्ट्रल प्रो वर्सेज 1870' में उन्हें एक घुमंतू अपरा धक जनजाति(Criminal Tribe) के तौर पर देखा गया है। कालांतर में यह 'आपरा धक' और घुमंतू समुदाय कस तरह से यौनिक अस्मिता व कार्य वाले समुदाय में तब्दील हुआ इसके बारे में साक्ष्य या सैद्धांतिक प्रमाण कम अटकलें ज्यादा मलती हैं। वर्तमान में इस समुदाय की यौनिकता ही अस्मिता से जुडती है। मुख्य धारा की संस्कृति में इसकी यौनिकता ही वशेष पहचान बन गयी है। यहाँ तक क इसके परम्परागत और सांस्कृतिक कार्य भी यौनिकता पर ही आ श्रत हैं और पूरी आजी वका भी इसी पर आ श्रत है। बे ड़या समुदाय के परम्परागत और सांस्कृतिक कार्य 'राई नृत्य' और 'बधाई नृत्य' है। यह मुख्य तौर पर उत्तर प्रदेश, मध्यप्रदेश, राजस्थान और बिहार में पाए जाते हैं। बिहार में बे ड़या समुदाय को अनुसू चत जनजाति के तौर पर श्रेणीगत कया गया है, ले कन उत्तर प्रदेश और मध्यप्रदेश में इन्हें अनुसू चत जाति में श्रेणीगत कया गया है। बे ड़या ऐसा समुदाय है जो मुख्य धारा में सामाजीकरण के तौर पर(बे ड़या समुदाय) स्वयं को उच्च-जाति/श्रेणी के नजदीक मानते हैं

कन्तु सामाजिक स्थिति में इनकी पहचान इनके यौन आचरण से निर्धारित होती है। गौर करने की बात यह है क यह काम ही जो इनकी पहचान बनाता है। वह स्वयं ही नीची जाति की धारणा में ही अंतर्निहित हो जाती है। भारत (राज्य) इन्हें जनजाति नहीं मानता बल्कि इन्हें अनुसूचित जाति की श्रेणी में रखता है। राज्य के नियम व अवबोध और हमारे सामाजिक सांस्कृतिक बोध में इतना बड़ा फर्क क्यों है? शोध प्रपत्र मुख्य तौर पर निम्न बातों पर केंद्रित है-

- जातिगत अस्मिताई पहचान और यौन कर्म समुदाय की अस्मिता से जुड़ता है ले कन कौन सी सामाजिक संरचना है जो यौनिकता के इस उपक्रम को वैधता प्रदान करती है?
- इस समुदाय का प्रमुख वरोधाभास यह बन जाता है क इसकी पहचान राज्य की नज़रों में भन्न- भन्न बनती है अर्थात नैसर्गिकता से दूर एवं कृत्रिम ठहरती है। दूसरा यह क वेश्यावृत्ति की छव में इसे पेश करना, इनके सांस्कृतिक कर्म का सार्वजानीकरण करना है।
- ऐतिहासिक रूप से यौन कर्म और कामों की सांस्कृतिक निर्मिति में उच्च एवं पुरुषवादी मूल्यों (High caste patriarchal value) का व्यापक असर है।
- समुदाय की अस्मिता ही यौनिक(sexual) है परंतु मुख्य धारा में यह समुदाय यौनिक समुदायों के रूप में प्रकट नहीं होता है।

जाति और यौनिकता के संबंध यहाँ प्रचलित सद्घांतों के हिसाब से यह समस्यामूलक है।

DALIT LITERATURE AND DALIT WOMEN WRITERS

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The present paper seeks to analyse how Dalit women shaped Dalit literature as 'indomitable' and 'revolutionary.'

Discerning accurately the psychology of Indian social system, Dalit women writers have shown not just indifference to the ideal values which have proved to be worn out and worthless from a cultural point of view, but instead of muffling the misery of neglected women, they have given women the courage to overcome it. There are Dalit poetesses who endow women with courage and strength, and prepare them for battle in society. The poetry of Meena Gajabhiye, Kunda Gaykawad, Asha Thorat etc. is reflective. Dalit poetesses have broken the existing framework and have brought to Marathi Literature and the psyche of the society, for the first time, an awareness of a different sorrow.

In the development and shaping of every man, woman has a very major and important share. She comes in the form of wife, beloved, mother, etc. But in the in the autobiographies of dalit men, nowhere there is a mention of her different identities, of her capability, her inner and outer conflicts. On the other hand autobiographies of Dalit women have done justice to Dalit men and patriarchal society too. Kumud Pawade, Shantabai Kamble ,Bebitai Kamble, Mukta Sarvagouda in all of their autobiographies, while narrating how they fought with the circumstances, they have given an inspiring message to the society.

Dalit autobiographies discover the past along with the present and penetrate into the future. From this point of view, through the literary output of Dalit women is scanty, it is precious. That is why Dalit literature got worldwide publicity in India and abroad, translations were undertaken and University level recognition was accorded. This leap is very great and validates the differentness of Dalit literature.

MARRIAGE, VIOLENCE AND SEXUALITY: UNDERSTANDING DALIT WOMEN'S AGENCY AND VOICE IN RURAL TAMIL NADU-

Nitya Rao

The literature on Dalit women largely deals with issues of violence and oppression based on intersections of class, caste and gender. **Women's bodies, sexuality and reproductive choices are** linked to class power and the ideological hegemony of the caste-gender nexus in India, with marriage and sexual relations playing crucial roles in maintaining caste boundaries. Often the ways in which women manipulate their multiple, interlinked identities as women, Dalits, workers and home-makers to resist control over their bodies (labour and sexuality), negotiate conjugal loyalty and love, and construct a sense of selfhood is missed in the analyses. Based on research **in rural Tamil Nadu, I analyse in this paper Dalit women's narratives that reflect multiple** concerns and dilemmas about marital choice and violence, generating in the process a deeper understanding of agency, voice and gender relations, as fluid, dynamic, and intersecting in response to changing experiences, positionalities and subjectivities.

CULTURAL CONFLICT AND DEVELOPMENT: A CASE STUDY OF DALIT WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN BHANDARA

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In Maharashtra, Dalit atrocities have various economic, political as well as cultural dimensions. Cultural Conflict between high-caste Hindus and Dalit Buddhists is emerged as the major factor of Dalit atrocities in East Vidarbha of Maharashtra. The Khairlanji Dalit Massacre of 2006 gave boost to this cultural conflict and local Dalit women groups opened their search of new identity. Local women are organising themselves under the roof of an Action Committees for agitations

against this massacre which evolved as Parivartan Mahila Sanghatana (PMS) and Sambodhi Mahila Sangh (SMS). This case study, based on qualitative research design explores the strategies and perception adopted by these organisations to mobilise the Dalit women for creating a conscious and developing neo-Dalit Buddhist Woman Identity. Thirty two unstructured interviews of office bearers as well as activists of these organisations and five focus-group interviews of stake holders are the subject domain of this study.

PMS and SMS spontaneously emerged out of some lower middle class educated housewives of Dalit families in the turmoil of Khairlanji Agitations. These groups initiated their activities for **structuring Buddhist Cultural Identity by mobilising 'Parivarik Sangoshth'** (family conferences) and prepared to Dalit Women for adopting new *Buddhists Cultural Symbols* after retraction of the dominant Hindu culture as a part of their agitations. So, as result of their efforts, the Dalit Women of this region denied Hindu traditions, viz. wearing *Mangalsutra* and bangles as well as applying vermilion as the symbols of married women and adopted white beads as an ornament as a new *discovered* Buddhists tradition. Though, these cultural changes emerged as a backlash against Hindu dominance, indirectly they refute masculine cultural traditions. They discovered some new traditions as the mark of their Dalit Buddhist identity. Though, these women started these movements as a part of their cultural identity, these activities create interest in reading books, usage of English language and eloquence among their children, especially among daughters. Dalit young women of this region starts to entered into politics and service sectors like insurance in large numbers.

WOMEN PERCEPTIONS ON EDUCATION IN COLONIAL MAHARASHTRA

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The Indian reformers carried out reforms to transform Indian society to be "modern" instead of age old "traditional" society which was always criticized by the British government. And for this modernization process the most important tool used by these reformers was education. In this modernizing process of Indian reformers, no doubt the concern was given to education but it was limited to the upper caste community women.

Women's education was identified as a key instrument of liberation from oppressive structures of Hindu caste-patriarchy as well as of reconstruction of a new social order by social reformers in colonial Maharashtra though it remained confined to the upper class women.

But the question arises, though social reformers took up the cause of women's education, how far the women's views about their education were taken into consideration? Therefore the present paper attempts to analyze a views or perception of Maharashtrian women about their own education, what kind of education did they desire? What kind of curriculum did they choose for them? Were they going according to the saying of social reformers or they stood individually on their education?

SEX WORK AND ITS RELATION WITH CASTE: UNRESOLVED DEBATES WITHIN FEMINIST POLITICS-

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India has witnessed an implicit relationship between traditional sex work and the caste structure. The modern framework treats sex work primarily in terms of trafficking and thus overlooks the embedded caste based framework that naturalizes sex work to many communities which primarily belong to the dalit section of the society. May it be Devdasis, Jogteens, Murlis, **Kalavanteens of Maharashtra, all were brought under the stigmatized identity of 'prostitutes'** under the colonial legal framework overlooking the questions of livelihood, caste exploitation, and sexuality. Following the Victorian morality the national and social reform movements including those particularly representing the assertion of dalit and women identity lobbied with the colonial powers to deny the category of labour to this section of society. Movements for Dalit rights has not been homogeneous in their response on the issues of sex work and nor has been **the women's movement in India.**

This paper attempts to explore this issue based on the fieldwork among sex workers in Sangali, Miraj, Sholapur, Barshi and karhad in Satara. The paper would unfold the intricate relations between caste structure, patriarchies and gender issues focussing on sexuality, labour and identity politics by decoding the recorded life-histories of sex workers during field work with SANGRAM and especially VAMP. These women voice their resistance of labelling them under stigmatized identity, denial of their agency and question the representation of their rights under the banner of any single community or identity of womanhood.

This paper raises the following questions: How feminist politics addresses the issues that these **sex workers who, neither fit into the framework of 'ideal' womanhood or even 'victimhood', raise** against caste patriarchies and modernity which impose stigma and denial of livelihood on their lives? Would Dalit Politics introspect on their stands on sexuality and agency of women within the community to provide space to these sex-workers to assert their rights under dalit liberation without leaving their profession? How does Dalit feminism would understand the intersectionality of caste, gender and sexuality to provide framework for the struggles of sex-workers?

THE MARGINAL WOMEN: REFLECTIONS ON DALIT FEMINIST WRITINGS IN CONTEMPORARY WEST BENGAL

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The paper intends to engage in a theoretical discussion on the questions of 'caste', 'gender' and 'resistance' through a reading of Dalit feminist writings and literary movement in contemporary West Bengal. The Dalit could not successfully emerge as a distinct political subject in the formal-institutionalized domain of activities in West Bengal due to the so far unchallenged hegemony of the urban, upper caste *bhadralok* in all avenues of public life.

Such a curious absence of the caste question in West Bengal I think is not only problematic but unsustainable. Organized Dalit literary movement through initiatives like *Chaturtha Duniya* (The Fourth World), Dalit Mirror, Dalit Sahitya, and so forth, although a much latter phenomenon of its kind compared to the other states of India, has started to challenge not only the *bhadralok* aesthetics of literature, and also their erstwhile hegemony in politics and society. In 2007, one of the leading journals in India published an article titled: 'Is there Dalit Writing in Bangla?'¹. The answer was positive. The paper wants to take the aforementioned question a step further: 'Is there Dalit Feminist Writing in Bangla?' The answer in this case too, as the paper shall show, is positive. Then how are Dalit women participating in the contemporary literary movement in West Bengal? The paper intends to delve in the wide body of Dalit feminist writings in order to engage with their stories of victimhood – their narratives of caste-discrimination in their quotidian lives, the post-partition struggles as refugees and unequal treatment vis-à-vis rehabilitation and relief, and obviously their tales of suffering amidst the shackles of patriarchy. How are the Dalit feminist writers in contemporary West Bengal interrogating and contesting not only the overall *bhadralok* hegemony in the state, but also the forces of patriarchy within their own communities? The paper aims to listen to the small voices of history of these marginalized women in West Bengal.

GENDER AND CASTE INTERSECTIONALITY A STUDY OF TOILET CLEANER BALMIKI WOMEN IN NORTH DELHI

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India is a unique country for its caste system in the world. The caste and gender which play major role in maintain the inequalities in Indian society are highly influential factors for social discrimination against a big marginalized group such as Dalits. 'Caste' is a major factor because of which they have to bear the stigma of social exclusion which influences not only their labouring possibilities but also access to productive resources such as land and capital. Further, historically they were deprived of education. To understand the impact of caste on community

level we need to understand the vicious circle of caste which leads the restriction on education for Dalits children in Indian villages since centuries and this poor attainment of education further leads the poor jobs market for them and less paid jobs along with economic discrimination.

On the occupational level the lower caste community especially Balmikis and chuhra have been engaged in the lower kinds of jobs such as scavenging and manual scavenging. Even with in the lower caste the gender is one of the components which are vulnerable at employment level. The lower to lowest kind of jobs is only available for lower caste women and that is the reason that this particular lower caste women were historically engaged in manual scavenging, in recent times are doing the toilet cleaning work at household level .

The lower caste women have been deprived to their basic rights due to caste, class and on the basis of gender of lower strata, these three main factors which did not allow to these poor lower caste women to get out from these degrading work such as cleaning the latrine and waste etc. So basically how caste plays a major role in maintaining the hierarchy in employment level can be explored through the 'caste and patriarchal' lenses.

AN ARTIST DRAGGED DOWN BY CASTE AND PATRIARCHY: A READING OF AARPAR LAYIT PRANANTIK

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The Indian caste – disorder and patriarchy, the two sides of the same coin have not only degraded huge sections of humanity but also crippled its creativity. These forces have given India two faces – Dalit and non-Dalit. Patriarchy, the natural offspring of the caste- disorder, with its terror, made the female gender of the declared degraded section of our society pitifully miserable. The faceless and voiceless Dalit woman, under such hostile social milieu, had to bargain with all her humanity and creative ability for a stigmatized life. Confirmation to the ideology and physical submission to the passion of the oppressor, under such time-temper, for the Dalit woman remains the only hideout for survival. The miserable survival of such women then appears revolutionary. Not allowing extinguishing the desire for dignified existence and searching for an alternative ideology to defend the assaults of oppressions go on simultaneously.

The paper attempts to map the strength and endurance of the Dalit woman protagonist, Withaa Bhau Maang Narayangaonkar, a Tamashaa artist, under the havoc of discrimination of caste and patriarchy in the poem Aarpar Layit Pranantik (Through Rhythmic Intense). The biographical poem in Marathi by Pradnya Pawar exposes the destructive ramifications of these forces on Dalit woman in particular and women in general belonging to all clime and culture on the globe. The life and struggle of Withaa the artist against these oppressive forces, has the ability to nurture a fighting spirit among the Dalit women in particular and woman in general. The poem not only questions the validity of the established religion, polity, economy, caste, class and mainstream

feminism but also hints at an ideology of liberation that can accommodate the good of all barring all man-made hollow divisions.

LIVELIHOOD OR EXPLOITATION: FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES ON FEMALE ARTISTS IN TAMASHA-

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The need to form a separate platform for women is discussed by various forums and agitations formed by Dalit women. They lay the foundation on the thought that Dalit women in India share triple burden and structural oppression, class-being poor, gender-being woman and caste-being Dalit. The unheard voices of Dalit women within and outside the community make them to form their own separate and independent platforms. They assert that the structural oppression faced by Dalit women makes it difficult for a Non Dalit to get full view of their context and to do justice to their perspectives.

Building on this context this paper considers the debates on the profession of Tamasha. Tamasha, a well-known folk art of Maharashtra, carried on since the 16th century, has components like Plot and Songs but is famous for erotic dancing by female artists. This art form was formed, stabilized and carried on by a few lower-caste communities like *Mahar*, *Matang* and *Kolhatis*. **The elements of 'eroticism' in the dancing of these female artists** who belong to lower-caste communities raise a concern that can be divided into two camps. One against the doing this art regarded as a kind of caste-based exploitation carried on for centuries and forced performance of sexual labour lower-caste women and the need for discontinuation of such caste-based traditional exploitative profession. The second camp sees this profession as a source of livelihood for women and urges to look at it not from a moralist view but as an income-generation means for women, who being earning members of the family.

There is lack of literature around the lives of female artists in Tamasha. Hence the feminist discussions around the studies of caste-based profession of prostitution on *Bedia* community, *Nautanki* performers in north India, debates related to ban on dance bars and tradition of *Devdasi* in south India will be analyzed and parallels are drawn to see these debates in the context of female artists in Tamasha.

This paper also looks into the interventions suggested by the Dalit Women groups to rescue and rehabilitate women after giving up this profession.

ANY MURDER IS A MURDER: HONOUR KILLINGS THROUGH A DALIT FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

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Media has reported certain instances of honour killings in certain parts of the country and including Delhi. The very term honour killing is an oxymoron, one which accepts that a murder motivated by a misplaced sense of pride is somehow in a different category from a common killing. The Supreme Court in its latest directive that such killings are barbaric and feudal and as such punishable by death is right in spirit. The fragile honour of the family or community, if the ghastly khap panchayat verdicts in Haryana are anything to go by, is offended and the **punishment is nothing less than death for the 'deemed' offender, most often a young man or woman whose only crime is to have fallen in love.** In some cases the man who allured the woman to transgress marital norms also meets the tragic end.

The fact that the police have opened shelters for young couples on the run from the wrath of families and communities should go some way in allowing young people to decide on the course of their own lives without the restraints placed on them by an oppressive and feudal social order. The law on murder is applicable in all instances and no khap or community should be allowed to get away with citing outdated feudal norms.

The present research paper attempts to understand the question of honour killings through a **Dalit feminist perspective, analyzing dalit women's subordination in the public and the private** by centering gender and caste. I am looking at how young men from lower castes and women are victims of honour killing.

The concept of choice in marriage is problematic for patriarchy, when this choice is inter-caste or **religious, it leads to criminalization of love with 'punishments' as severe as death.** Especially when a lower caste man marries a woman from an upper caste, he and his family, community have to face the public and collective power of the upper castes. Inter-caste marriages are a political project for the annihilation of caste, therefore it is important to look at the ways in which the inter-caste marriages are being opposed by force.

INTERSECTIONS IN THE MATRIX OF CASTE AND GENDER: DR BABASAHEB AMBEDKAR, THE MAKER OF MODERN INDIA

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In the second half of the 19th century debates arose over caste identity which intersected with the narratives of sexual violence and sexual reproduction of caste socio-cultural practices led to

the segregation of women through the withdrawing of their labour and physical presence from public space. There was a severe critique of the interdependence of sexual compulsion and sexual servitude through evil practice like the "Devdasi" system and the material deprivation of the Dalit communities. Anupama Rao writes in "The Caste Question: Dalits and the Politics of Modern India":

The contradictory effects of the social reform of gender by caste radicals can be explained by the fact that Dalit and non-Brahmin political subjects increasingly involved the politicization of Dalit and lower caste men through the reform of family and female subjects {Rao, 2009, P54}

Dr. Ambedkar attacked the root cause of women's subordination the caste system. He looked at women as equal partners, tried to remove them from the burden of victimization and gave them agency. He firmly held the belief that the superimposition of endogamy on exogamy means the creation of caste (Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar, 1989, Vol, p.9).

Dalit activism under Dr. Ambedkar's leadership was taking new forms to fight stigmatization and exclusion. Disparate and localized challenges to the caste order led to an explicit demand for civil rights. This paper will offer a historical and sociological critique of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar's lifelong effort to find a language into which Dalit deprivation could be translated. It will aim at an analysis of Dr. Ambedkar's efforts of casting the Dalit as a universal historical subject and how he struggled to invest Dalit women with human dignity and political legitimacy.

REPRESENTATION OF THE MARGINALISED IN CONTEMPORARY INDIAN WOMEN'S POETRY IN ENGLISH

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Women's poetry in India post Independence has largely been middle class, and autobiographical, focusing on problems faced by women, either in marriage, or in living alone. It is only in the 1990s that we find a politically committed voice such as Imtiaz Dharker's taking up larger social causes. This trend is furthered by poets such as Meena Kandasamy, Nitoo Das, Nabina Das, Uddipana Goswami, Anindita Sengupta, Sweta Srivastava Vikram and so on. Spivak in 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' argues that the elite, white woman cannot speak for the coloured woman who is marginalised. According to her, the marginalised never speaks but is only spoken about. In the light of this perhaps one can question whether poets who are English-educated and are currently residing in metropolitan cities in either India or abroad can ever adequately represent the reality of the subaltern woman.

The most vociferous voice that speaks about marginalised women is Kandasamy's, the angry young woman obsessed with Dr Ambedkar's dream of caste annihilation. Nabina Das writes about women back home in Assam, who wait for their brothers, husbands and lovers to return

from the war as in 'Waiting on the News'. Anindita Sengupta's 'The Nizam's wives' shows four girls as just four ordinary children who aged early, and who were frightened at being released from purdah. Nitoo Das, in 'Matsyagandha', portrays the daughter of a fisherwoman, who is demeaned for the 'fish-smell' that always accompanies her. The poem shows her retaliating against Parashar, the patriarchal figure of authority. Uddipana Goswami in 'Manufacturing Memories', delves into the life of her grandmother who has lived through times of war and brought up children through those dark periods, when her husband who was in the army had gone off to war. Other women poets like Reetika Vazirani in 'What the fisher girl said in defense of her absence', or Srilata K. in 'Gomati' write of the fisher woman who is sexually abused. Neelanjana Banerjee's 'Gouri' talks about a village girl bringing the cows home, Gayatri Majumdar in 'Versova Beach' shows the "beauty in hunger and struggle" as she depicts a woman searching for crabs and perfect shells early in the morning. Tishani Doshi writes about missing children on Marina beach, and the abandoned girl child outside the steps of the convent. Thus, marginalized figures and communities seem to find increasing depiction in the work of the poets of the younger generation, although the question of whether they adequately know the reality they represent or are qualified to speak of it is one that demands resolution.

CASTE BASED DISCRIMINATION AND ITS IMPACT ON THE HEALTH OF DALIT WOMEN

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The Constitution of India not only guarantees equality, liberty, fraternity, justice and basic human rights as Fundamental Rights but also prohibits the practice of untouchability in any form. Yet it is seen that despite these provisions in the Constitution caste based discrimination continue to adversely affect not only Indians, but in all 260 million people globally.

Reports reveal caste and its ensuing discrimination continue to exist and tend to stay with the South Asian Diaspora. These are despite the fact that people have left their home countries and proclaim themselves to be highly educated.

Due to low rank in the caste hierarchy Dalits have to face educational discrimination, economic disenfranchisement, physical abuse, discrimination in medical care, religious discrimination and violence targeting their women.

Dalit women, who are vulnerably positioned at the bottom of India's gender, caste, class hierarchies, it is said experience the worst outcome of 'severely imbalanced social, economic and political power equation in terms of endemic caste-class-gender discrimination and violence'. Her already poverty stricken, poor state of health further deteriorates with every act of violence directed against her. More detrimental to her health, are the 'psychological effects' of violence

which are often overlooked. The paper attempts to show that sound mental health is important for any kind of work, productive or unproductive. But repeated incidents of caste based violence wreak disastrous effects both on physical as well as the mental health of the Dalit women which deters her from giving in her best. But it may also be pointed out that caste hierarchy and caste consciousness have been socially internalized through centuries by both the dominant powers and the dalits alike despite innumerable humiliations and indignities suffered by the latter, and it is for the same reason that 'dehumanizing' caste system still continue to exist in Indian society.

UNRAVELING FEMINIST POSITIONS ON SEX WORK

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This paper explores the debates on the category of sex worker in India. It is set with in the existing national and international debates on sex work. It focuses on the nature of those debates that reproduce that category. It analyses the ways in which such ideas determine the field of assertions and oppression. Some of the key premises on sex work emphasize on the autonomy and nature of labour .It is also contended that forms of sexual labour reconstruct the social stigma associated with those communities involved in that work. Mainstream feminist and dalit positions on sex work are analysed here to extend the questions related to justice. Religious groups have generated critiques and justifications to normalize this form of work. Caste and class in India determine this discourse in an age that witnesses withering of social movements. Radical feminists treat sex work as a product of capitalism. Civil societal gaze on those sections of people who involve in such labour operates with the logic of appropriation and patronage. Thus this paper is to map dalit feminist critiques on the relations of caste gendered reproduction of labour as a response to the aforementioned developments.

HONOUR AND SHAME: RECONCEPTUALISING THE STATE RESPONSE TO RAPE FROM A CASTE-PATRIARCHY PERSPECTIVE

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Following the gangrape of a 23-year-old student in Delhi in December 2012, social, political and legal debates have taken on many hues that have managed to bring India's rape culture into focus. Much of the anger has been directed towards the state and there have been calls for changes to the way rape and sexual assault has been dealt with in our legal system. There has also been close scrutiny of the remarks of state actors themselves.

Proclamations of how rape is “worse than death” merit a closer examination of how rape has been understood and articulated in our present context. The state response to rape can be categorised in many ways, encompassing a number of institutions. However, this paper is going to focus mostly on how rape has been articulated and understood within the legal and criminal justice system.

I attempt to argue that within the legal setting and the criminal justice system of India, rape is not seen so much as a violation of bodily integrity as much as loss of honour or shame. The paper also attempts to understand the notion of shame and honour as a construct of a caste-patriarchy system. The complex intersection of caste and patriarchy needs to be focused on not only to understand and address the issue of rape against Dalit women but to explore the control of sexuality that all women continue to face. I shall argue that certain populations, by virtue of not being located within a Brahminical setting, are seen as naturally lacking virtue- such as Dalit women and Muslim women and are not given justice within the legal system, highlighting the fact that the state and the legal machinery remains that of the upper caste Hindu nation-state.

I argue that such an understanding of the association of shame and honour with caste-patriarchy needs to be addressed by the feminist movement to re-imagine the state response to rape and achieve larger understanding and imagining of sexual violence itself. Thus, an analysis of rape laws from a caste-patriarchy perspective is needed to raise questions of citizenship within the Hindu nation. More importantly, it will help break the silence that surrounds rape, a silence meant to protect the “honour” of the community and allow women to seek justice.

BREAKING BRAHMINICAL VALUES TO UNDERSTAND INTERSECTIONALITY-

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Coming from a middle class brahminical family which forces all its women to learn music to be able to sing in front of the groom, it was music that led me into understanding intersectionality of issues. **My first salary earning job was with a women’s rights organisation as documentalist. That experience of working in women’s rights organisation** opened my eyes to the issues of women and violence, sexual autonomy, the understanding of what is domestic violence and **specially women’s labour. At an age when I could not even understand my relationship with my girl friend who was a dalith and who committed suicide, I was only thinking of how women had to encounter violence in all forms at every step. From there my journey was towards contract workers of corporation and their rights, trans people’s rights, street and slum children’s rights, to slum women’s right** to land and Dalith women.

Search for a guru who could help me discover music in a manner that went beyond performance and search for politics which could bring in some kind of link to all my work experience with different communities went hand in hand. Initially I thought that violence is the main connecting

thread for all these issues. Through my work I was also trying to understand the law. This opened my eyes to how the very system of heteropatriarchal, brahminical, capitalist, globalised system had many layers of marginalization, exclusion, oppression, and violation of rights including violence which are everyday experience of many common people.

This paper explores further of how various middle class notions are set up as barriers for understanding intersectionality of labour, caste, gender and sexuality. This paper is mainly based on experiential understanding while working in the ground reality in the issues of gender, sexuality, labour, caste, morality issues, and so on.

DALIT WOMEN AND FORMS OF ACTIVISM IN THE ERA OF GLOBALISATION

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At a very basic level globalization has changed the ways of how we look at the social order and complexities within it. It has led to the emergence of new public spheres most known of which is the cyber space and has also been the seedbed of transnational activism. The present paper is an attempt to outline two interlinked themes in this regard. The first one is to understand the new issues which have come up post 1990s in India with reference to dalit women in particular. **The rise and further consolidation of religious identity along with the 'shrinking' of welfare state** has made dalit women more vulnerable to exploitation and discrimination leading to her further marginalization. On the other hand, we witness a renewed form of energy and activism as collectives of dalit women have organized themselves both at the national and international levels. All India Dalit **Women's Forum**, **National Federation of Dalit Women** and All India Dalit **Women's Forum** were found in 1994, 1995 and 1996 respectively. **Again, at the global level, the UN World Conference on 'Against Racism' held in Durban, South Africa in 2001 provided an opportunity to National Federation of Dalit Women to contextualise the Dalit (mainly Dalit women) oppression similar to racism. National Campaign on Dalit Human Rights and National Federation of Dalit Women's Conference on 'Violence Against Dalit Women' (2006) adopted 'Delhi Declaration'. Another issue of prime importance in this regard is the emergence of the transnational dalit feminist activism which is not only struggling for gender justice for themselves but also is highlighting the crucial issues of survival and dignity. Such a form of transnational activism has given an impetus to the identity and plight of the dalit women at the global level. However, such an activism has been critiqued on the basis of a narrow sense of nationhood which states that 'washing linen in public' has damaged the 'pride' of India and given an ample opportunity to the 'neo-colonial forces' to once again see India in poor light. The present paper will address such and other related issues.**

IS SANSKRIT 'MASTER'S TOOL?': CHALLENGING GENDER HEGEMONY

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Sanskrit is known as the adornment of India. This has been my favorite subject since I started to learn it in school. When I was doing my MA in Gender, Culture and Development Studies, I did a small research in the broad area of Sanskrit language and texts. In this paper I will try to examine how Sanskrit has become a hegemonizing tool historically and then I will also see **whether this 'master's tool' can enable us to dismantle the 'master's house'**- the bramhanical, patriarchal hegemony.

Sanskrit has always been limited to the hegemonic groups, though some texts from the same language, which were composed in the society based on Varna system, had challenged caste and gender discrimination. In this paper, first I will explain how Sanskrit was/is influenced by caste and gender inequalities. I will analyze this through caste and gender perspective. In the colonial period nationalist had glorified ancient Vedic period and Vedic culture. They also equated **'Indian culture and its glory'** with Sanskrit. Sanskrit remained hegemonic even in post independence India. Drawing from Dr. A.H. Salunkhe's work I will explain how in different historical junctures women from different Varna were consciously excluded from the language and the knowledge field of Sanskrit.

So can this language of hegemony be used to challenge the hegemonic system? There are several feminist attempts to read Sanskrit texts or to reinterpret those for the emancipation of **the women/'oppressed'** e.g. Uma Chakravarti, Ananya Vajpeyi. I will see in this paper how such attempts are made at the regional level in Maharashtra. Sanskrit is influenced by upper castes till today. Scholars coming from non-brahman/ anti-caste movements like Dr. A.H.Salunkhe- who is a Sanskrit scholar from Satyashodhak tradition- show how one can use the language of hegemony also to challenge the hegemony. I will try to examine contemporary Varna system and agency of women in the epic from caste and gender perspective.

HINDU CODE BILL: BRIDGE BETWEEN EXCLUSION AND INCLUSION OF WOMEN IN INDIA

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Social exclusion is a process by which individuals or households experience alienation of either of resources or of social links with the wider community or society. A broader framework of the

understanding of social exclusion suggests that it is the process that excludes individuals, groups and aggregates from full participation in the society in which they live.

Sen(2000) holds that exclusion from social relations can lead to other deprivations that further limit our living opportunities. It can thus be constitutively a part of capability deprivation as well as instrumentally a cause of diverse capabilities failures.

In India, exclusion is based on caste and patriarchal systems. Inequality is the organising principle of the caste-based hierarchy, which discriminates and has kept numerous groups outside the gamut of Hindu social life.

Since the dawn of independence the government of India as well as the state governments introduced a number of policies and programmes for the empowerment of the Dalits, backward classes, tribes, religious minorities and women.

The aim of this paper is to focus on Ambedkar's Hindu Code Bill, displays the relational features of gender exclusion in India and the socio-legal programme incorporated in the bill envisages inclusion of woman , which constitutes nearly half of the population of the country. Ambedkar was the first to link caste with gender inequities. Ambedkar was fully aware of the sufferings and marginalization of women.

The Hindu Code Bill mainly focused on four aspects:-

- The abolition of castes as a necessary requirement for a valid marriage.
- The prescription of monogamy.
- Right to divorce.
- Right to property to woman.

As long as the customs and traditions that we follow are on the side of inequality that results in gender exclusion in combination with several forms of exclusion, the laws that are on the side of equality are meaningless.

Hence, it is the responsibility of the civil society, especially the educational sections, to create social and moral consciousness and build a humane society.

DALIT WOMEN'S WORK, ENTITLEMENTS, ACCESS TO RESOURCES: REDEFINING VIOLENCE CASE STUDY – CHANCHAL AND HER SISTER- TWO DALIT GIRLS WHO SURVIVED ACID ATTACK

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Chanchal a talented Dalit girl wanted to be a computer engineer.

Anil, Ghanshyam, Baadal and Raj had been harassing Chanchal Paswan, age 18+ and her sister, age 15. When she refused to give in to their demands and boldly opposed continuous sexual harassment, they brutally threw acid on her on 21/10/12. Their parents rushed them to Patna Medical College and Hospital (PMCH).

PMCH doctors delayed proper treatment, worsening the wound deeper.

Police registered a case under Prevention of Atrocities (Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribes) Act. Police did not mention the names of the accused in the case. After a pressure built on them by social organizations, the four perpetrators were arrested by the police. The paswan family still waits for her speedy trial.

Actions taken by Parivartan Jan Andolan/ Parivartan Kendra

Parivartan Kendra studied the matter carefully, prepared an application addressing the IG weaker section, engaged in advocacy with the police, worked with PMCH to get proper medical care for Chanchal, ensured publicity, made an online petition for Chanchal on change.org website demanding complete rehabilitation and justice to Chanchal and her sister which has got 60,000 signatures, took Chanchal & her family to Safdarjung Hospital, New Delhi as they wished better treatment, requested National Commission for Protection Of Child Rights to take up the matter . A complaint is registered with NCPDR. People on behalf of Parivartan Kendra met the DM and requested them for fast tracking the case. The case is fast tracked after a regular follow up with the DM Patna. With the help of Video Volunteers and change.org, Parivartan Kendra also raised some monetary help for Chanchal. Parivartan Kendra has submitted an application to National Commission for Scheduled Caste for justice and complete rehabilitation to Chanchal and her sister.

Our demands- There should be regulation on purchase and sale of acid. There should be a special legislation and guidelines for rehabilitation and justice for acid attack survivors.

CONSTRUCTED WOMANHOOD: RELIGIOUS REFORMISM AND CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM WOMEN IN KERALA

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The proposed paper aims to problematize the gender discourses around the category of 'Muslim women' in Kerala by looking at the promotion of education and religious revivalism among them in the of material as well as non-material or economic and social benefits that they have gained through Gulf-migration and Kerala Model of Development. The study mainly analyzes how the reformist and revivalist movements among Kerala Muslims have confined Muslim women to narrowly defined roles, relegating them to political and economic inferiority in the public sphere. From the late nineteenth century onwards, scholars and reformers have engaged with the question of the role of Muslim women in society and public life. Higher education was considered as essential if women were to gain some independence vis-à-vis men. Indeed, higher education was often thought to be the mechanism that would prepare women, in an orderly and rational manner, for participation in the public sphere. However, recent scholarship recognizes the fact that, though women's access to higher education has increased worldwide, the promise of equality has, by and large, not been realized.

In the context of India, Gail Minault acknowledges that Muslim women were even more isolated from social and cultural change than were their men, and even more invisible to history than other Indian women. In her attempt to portray Indian Muslim women in their historical context and in the quest to characterize the invisible Muslim women, she pursues many strategies, such as: as an issue, as symbols of the reformers', as an object of men's programmes, and through insider's perception.

Some scholars alleged that the Islamic text and tradition itself represented the women as inferior to men. Contrary to the misinterpretations of *Quran*, it considered female life is basically valuable and the Quranic verses the creation of female is attributed, along with that of male, to a single soul from which the other is created as its mate (Quran: 81:9, 4:1). It also states that women have rights similar to the men (ibid: 2:228). However the strict theological doctrine propounded by *Ulema*, rather than religious texts, effectively sidelined Muslims women from the public sphere.

The vivid presence of religious reform and revivalism, the material as well as non-material gains from the Gulf migration, and the residual impact of Kerala Model of Development have essentially shaped the socio-religious situation of Muslim women in contemporary Kerala. As in the general case of Muslim women, the number of women being educated and the amount of education women receive have both expanded markedly since the formation of Kerala state. The enrolment of girls in primary school has increased more than twofold and there has been drastic increase at the secondary and tertiary levels. Despite all these changes, Muslim women remain underrepresented at all social spheres, when compared to men. They constitute only a mere 5.9 per cent of the total workforce in the state. This study aims to problematize this 'under-

representation' of Kerala Muslim women, focusing on its causes, impacts, and their significance to both societies and to women's lives.

- **Ranu Tomar - Title (Khabar Lahariya : A Feminist Critique of Mainstream Hindi Print Media) – Paper not found**





SUB-THEME – 5:

**PLURALITIES: ETHNICITY,
LANGUAGE AND GENDER**

LANGUAGE OF EXCLUSION: VISIBALISING DEPRIVATIONS FACED BY GIRLS AND WOMEN IN THE URBAN CONTEXT BECAUSE OF GENDERED DISCRIMINATIONS OF LANGUAGE

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Language is a critical part of one's identity. In India, marked as it is by the contradictory pulls between the imperative to maintain traditional identities and the aspirations to modernity spurred by the current model of development, language serves both as a site of intense struggle and a tool of exclusion. As a marker of identity, language works as a sharp locator of one's position in social hierarchies; caste, class, ethnicity, region and religion can all be identified by one's usage, or non-usage, of language. With newer categories of exclusion being created by the dominant paradigm of neo-liberal forces, language is one of the graphs along which those already disadvantaged, experience further shifts towards the margins.

Women and girls are at the margins of every social category they belong to. As with other tools of discrimination, language creates experience of deprivation for women and girls, that are difficult to define more so because these experiences are usually relegated to the private realm.

This paper seeks to explore how women and girls living in the slums of Mumbai and nearby peri-urban areas experience exclusions related to language. These women and girls suffer multiple marginalisations of gender, class, ethnicity, which is often compounded by their migrated and semi-legal status. They are at the margins of the urban poor, with many having to carry the burden of upholding their cultural markers while contending with the glass ceiling of heightened consumerism that engulf them in the urban surroundings. This paper looks at how language plays a crucial role in women and girls' access education, self-expression and participation in public life. The gender divide in the access to education, employment, technology and internet is partly constructed by gendered discriminations in access to and usage of language. This paper relies on women's own voices to highlight the discriminations and their implications.

PLURALISM, DEMOCRACY AND EQUALITY IN THE PEACE PROCESSES IN ASSAM

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Assam, considered as the gateway to the north-east, is connected to mainland India by a narrow strip of land on its western side. For centuries, the region has witnessed waves of migration from the Indian sub-continent as well as from the Far East, making it a zone of high cultural fusion and assimilation. Naturally enough, its population consists of different ethnic, religious, linguistic and tribal groups living together in the region for generation. Today, Assam's demography includes the Aryanised Hindus, the Plains Tribal and the gradually increasing number of Assamese Muslims.

In recent decades Assam has experienced intense social and political conflict, which has brought issues of ethnicity and identity to the fore. Like in any war-like situation, riot or communal violence, women in Assam have seriously been affected by the conflict and the resultant shift in the perception of 'Self' and 'Other'. Spatial communities like neighbourhood have changed which was the principal domain of women's interaction and conversations. Due to this shrinking of immediate public spheres, women's voices are curtailed or configured by the dominant narrative. Assam's uniquely diverse composition and culture has also contributed to the subordination of women's narratives. Interestingly, lack of script and presence of several local dialects have acted as an impediment on the way of expressing their 'world view' and how they perceive conflict and peace in the region.

Besides highlighting these dimensions, the paper will focus on the forward and backward linkages between the changing micro social realities and the macro politico-juridical scenario as peace has been reduced to a security issue by the state. The peace initiatives have been paternalistic all throughout. It has been parochial and the voices of especially Tribal (both Plain and Hill) and Muslim and other community women (mostly Bihari and Nepali) are almost non-existent. While their number is increasing, pluralism, diversity and equality find little reflection in the peace process.

LINGUISTIC ECOLOGY IN A SOCIAL MOVEMENT: A STUDY OF NARMADA BACHAO ANDOLAN

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This paper aims to sail the twin boats of examining how the language of ecology operates in a social movement as well as whether the activists in the movement reflect on the ecology of languages within the eco-system and habitat that is under threat of submergence. By looking at the oral repertoire of songs and slogans of this social movement, we try and see the stylistic choices by leadership of this movement in constructing an anti-dam, ecological and political discourse.

This paper also tries to revisit the urban women leaders in the movement and reflects on how they succeeded in preserving the linguistic plurality and ecology in manifold ways compared to their male counterparts. Finally, it also explores whether it was a conscious choice to reach the supporters through a communication strategy that was mainly shaped by male activists making Hindi and English their first choices, while the burden of taking the communication about the movement to affected populace largely fell upon women activists. To this end, the paper engages with fresh material that brings to us the voices of affected people through oral history and long narratives (translated and published in English in the 25th anniversary of the movement in 2010).

The paper closes with an examination of the counter-narrative of those who are trying to build not just the large dam, but also a discourse that anoints it with legitimacy and acceptability in the face of sustained resistance, by engaging with pro-dam writings and articulations that

emerged right from early 1990s, first in Gujarat and by late 1990s in Madhya Pradesh as well. In particular, we will consider the issue of the violence that discursive acts which employ hate speech in order to manufacture consent for the large dam.

महिला हिंदी उपन्यासों में स्त्री प्रतिरोध

कीर्ति शर्मा

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सृष्टि की प्रारंभिक अवस्था एवं सभ्यता के विकास के आरंभ में से स्त्री एवं पुरुष की भूमिका समान थी परंतु आगे चलकर शारीरिक व शक्ति एवं पतृसत्तात्मक व्यवस्था के वाहक परिवार ने समाज में इस प्रकार उसका सामाजिकरण किया कि वह पुरुष से पीछे हो गई। यह पछड़ापन हमें आज लगभग सभ्यता संस्कृति के सभी क्षेत्रों में दिखाई देता है। साहित्य के क्षेत्र में भी महिलाओं का पदार्पण पुरुषों के बाद ही हुआ। बीसवीं शताब्दी के प्रारंभ में यह माना जाता था कि साहित्य के क्षेत्र में महिलाओं का प्रवेश सर्वप्रथम यूरोप में ही हुआ था। किंतु भारतीय इतिहास में हुई आधुनिक खोजों से यह स्पष्ट होता है कि संस्कृत साहित्य में महिलाओं का प्रवेश पंद्रह सौ ईसा पूर्व से एक हजार के मध्य हुआ था। ऋग्वेद में घोषा, लोपा, मुद्रा, वश्ववारा आदि स्त्रियों के नाम आए हैं, जो पर्याप्त शक्ति थीं तथा जिन्होंने मंत्रों की रचना भी की थी।

हिंदी साहित्य का आदिकालीन परिवेश बहुत ही धुंधला एवं अस्पष्ट था। भक्तिकाल में महिलाओं की उपस्थिति हमें स्पष्ट रूप से दिखाई देती है। भक्तिकाल के संतकाव्य धारा में 'बावरी साहिबा' का उल्लेख मिलता है। वह बावरी पंथ की प्रमुख संत थीं। भक्तिकाल में ही हमें मीराबाई का उल्लेख मिलता है। मीरा का काव्य उन वरल उदाहरणों में से है जहाँ रचनाकार का जीवन व काव्य एक-दूसरे से घुल-मिल गए हैं। रीतिकाल में चरणदास की दो शय्याओं 'दयाबाई' एवं 'सहजोबाई' का जिक्र हुआ है। रीतिकालीन कृष्ण भक्त कवियों में नागरीदास की बहन 'सुंदरी कुंवरिबाई' का भी विशेष स्थान है।

इस प्रकार हम देखते हैं कि काव्य के क्षेत्र में महिलाओं ने अपना महत्वपूर्ण स्थान भक्ति एवं रीतिकाल में प्राप्त कर लिया था। आधुनिक काल में हिंदी-गद्य की वृद्धि वृद्धाओं यथा- नाटक, कहानी, उपन्यास आदि में हमें महिलाओं की सशक्त उपस्थिति दिखाई देती है। आधुनिक काल में

कहानी वधा में ही महिलाओं की सर्वप्रथम उपस्थिति दर्ज हुई थी। कहानी के बाद उपन्यास में और संभवतः उपन्यास के बाद नाटक में लेखिकाओं का पदार्पण हुआ।

हिंदी की पहली महिला कहानीकार- 'राजेंद्र बाला घोष' है जो बंग महिला के नाम से प्रसिद्ध हैं। इनकी प्रथम कहानी 'दुलाईवाली' सन 1907 ई. में 'सरस्वती पत्रिका' में प्रकाशित हुई थी। 'शवरानी देवी' की प्रथम कहानी 'साहस' इसी समय प्रकाशित हुई। इन महिला कहानीकारों ने आगे आने वाली लेखिकाओं के लिए जो पृष्ठभूमि निर्मित की थी उसी पृष्ठभूमि पर यशोदादेवी ने अपना पहला उपन्यास 'वीरपत्नी' लिखा। इसके उपरांत श्रीमती ब्रह्मकुमारी भगवान देवी दूबे का 'सौंदर्य कुमारी' (1914), श्रीमती हुक्मा देवी का 'गूढ प्रकाश भाव' (1919) श्रीमती लीलावती देवी का 'सती दमयंती' एवं 'सती सावत्री' तथा रुक्मिणी देवी का 'मेम और साहब' (1919) प्रकाशित हुआ। इन प्रारम्भिक महिला उपन्यासकारों ने जिस परंपरा की शुरुआत 20वीं सदी के प्रारंभ में की थी वह आज इक्कीसवीं सदी के प्रारंभ में अपनी मजबूत आधारभूमि पर दृढ़ता से स्थित दिखाई दे रही है। इस सतत और लंबे उपन्यास लेखन के इतिहास का अध्ययन हमारे लिए स्त्री और समाज की महत्वपूर्ण जानकारी देगा।

**NARRATIVE OF PLURAL SELF, DOUBLE MARGINALISATION AND TWOFOLD
OPPRESSION OF INDIAN WOMEN IN DIASPORA: A STUDY OF WOMEN WRITERS OF
INDIAN DIASPORA**

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The existence of Indian diaspora and the diasporic community in different parts of the world is the outcome of colonization, indentured labour, Kangani and Mistry system in history, and migration and globalisation in contemporary times. Often western observers view the Indian community as a monolithic entity bound by a common tradition and culture. Similar idea is reflected in the context of Indian diasporic women who are generally perceived as a homogenous category: brown, oriental mysterious object of sex, passively submitting to patriarchy. This undifferentiated female identity has been challenged by many Indian Diasporic women writers whose writings form the postcolonial and third world feminist canon.

Postcolonial or third world feminism is far-reaching and variable. It investigates the representation of women in the former colonies and western locations. As it is far reaching and variable we find variety of fields to concentrate, some on the construction of gender and ethnic identity while other concentrate on the representation of women in the postcolonial discourse with particular reference to the work of women writers.

The present paper focuses on the work of Diasporic Indian women writers who extrapolate on the issues of plural or multiple identities, gender stereotype and power structures which further constructs gender, and gender stereotypes in the Diasporic Indian community. Sexual, ethnic, cultural and linguistic marginalisation are some of the crucial issues addressed by Indian-diasporic women writers and forms the major theme of their encryption. **Sunetra Gupta's** *The Glassblower's Breath* (1993), **Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's** *Arranged Marriage* (1997), **Bharati Mukherjee's** *Desirable Daughters* (2002) and **Manju Kapur's** *The Immigrant*, (2009), will be analysed in the light of the theme of plural identity, gender stereotypes, gendered ideology, ethnic, linguistic and cultural marginalisation of Indian diasporic women.

EXCLUSIVE INCLUSIVITY: THE DYNAMICS OF LANGUAGE AND POWER

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At a recent conference, I had the opportunity to revisit an old conflict. It was of the distance between 'Activists' and 'Academics' who work along the seemingly parallel streams of 'Practice' and 'Theory'. However cliched, this remains a matter of concern because what I witnessed was essentially a breakdown of communication between two groups which, in the larger sense, work towards similar goals. With no solution in sight, this paper attempts to look beyond the often repeated cliches of the 'elitist academic' and the 'down-to-earth activist'.

This binary is puzzling because feminism as a set of beliefs and values rose from among the ranks of women who fought battles in all spheres, not just the public or private, the academia or the 'field'. Are these just constructs or do they reflect the inequalities in our society? How do these notions affect the ways in which we relate to each other on shared platforms, for example at this very conference? Can we look at each other as allies or are we in separate camps with divergent interests? How can we envision a pluralistic ethos if we do not resolve the problems we face in talking to each other. How can you and I have a dialogue if we do not speak the same language? Are there ways in which we can negotiate the difference? What are the prerequisites for a dialogue between groups divided along not one but several axes and allegiances?

For dialogue to be possible, it is important to be aware of the unequal power relations in society. In India, caste, class and differential access to quality education has created a group that is more 'listened to' than 'talked to'. And the un-privileged often just 'talked about'. How do we situate these issues in a globalised climate, where communication seems to be the last of our worries? How do we bridge this gap so that we can have a conversation?

A BEGINNING OR AN END? EXPLORING THE POLICY OF 33% RESERVATION FOR WOMEN IN ELECTORAL POLITICS

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"Ah, but why do the Naga women need 33% reservation? We have never treated them badly. Naga society is an equal society. It has always been an equal society. We do not discriminate", replied a prominent public (male) figure in the Naga Civil Sphere in answer to my query concerning the policy of 33% reservation for women in municipal elections in Nagaland. **The gentleman's response is a fine example of the egalitarianism associated with 'tribal' societies,** completely drowning the subtle forms of gender inequality embedded within the culture, tradition and social structure of those societies, the Nagas being no exception. This illusion is buttressed by Article 371 (A) of the Indian Constitution, which provides that no Act of the Indian parliament with respect to the religious or social practices of the Nagas; their customary law and procedure; administration of civil and criminal justice involving decisions according to Naga customary law; or ownership and transfer of land and its resources, shall apply to the State of Nagaland unless the Legislative Assembly of Nagaland by a resolution decides so.

Embedded within this problematic, the policy of 33 % reservation for women in the state, has met with social and cultural roadblocks and political and legal hurdles, and is today one of the most contested issues in Naga public domain. The ambivalence of the various civil society bodies on the issue, further accentuates the complexities. One therefore witnesses sharp division within the Naga civil society whereby the apex bodies of the various tribes (primarily **headed by men) expressed strong opposition to women's organisations fighting for women's** reservation. This is exemplified by the *Ao Senden* (apex body of Ao tribe) which in its General Conference on February 17, 2012 adopted the Resolution against the implementation of the policy in Ao areas justifying their resolve within the larger framework of Naga customary laws and practices.

NEGOTIATING THROUGH LANGUAGE: EXPERIENCES OF THE ANGLO-INDIAN WOMEN IN KOLKATA

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English is the language of the Anglo-Indian community in Kolkata. The community is a marginal, ethnic minority probably the only surviving racial- linguistic minority community in India. This paper seeks to understand how Anglo-Indian women negotiate with the demands of the non-English speaking Bengali neighbourhood in their everyday life. The arguments used in this paper are based on the findings of a survey and ethnographic field data collected through my research on the community.

The Anglo-Indian community was born out of sexual union between the British-Portuguese men in India and the Indian women. The community has survived the colonial past and is part of the Indian population recognized by the Constitution by way of allotting two seats to members of the community in the Parliament and State Legislative Assembly. The community lives in various parts of the country with a noteworthy population in West Bengal specially concentrating in Kolkata and railway towns. The community had fought hard with the central government in 1960s against the Official Language Bill and settled when the government ultimately was forced to withdraw the Bill and accept English to be the medium of instruction in schools set by the Anglo-Indians and thereby accepting English as the mother-tongue of this minority community. Such Anglo-Indian schools still survive in Kolkata where there is an Anglo-Indian representation in administration, teaching and students population.

The Anglo-Indian community in Kolkata and its women are a part of these schools and the use of English as their language is considered to be the only appropriate medium of instruction for these schools. This paper would illuminate on the insistence of the Anglo-Indian women with the language and the schools that were built from initiatives of the members of the community.

IS SANSKRIT THE 'MASTER'S TOOL?': CHALLENGING GENDER HEGEMONY

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Sanskrit has always been limited to the hegemonic groups, though some texts from the same **language had challenged caste and gender discrimination. Sanskrit, glorified as the 'language of God', was never seen as the language of ordinary people. In this paper, I will show how Sanskrit** was/is influenced by caste and gender inequalities. How particular social groups were consciously kept away from the language and its field of knowledge. Scholars like Kumkum Roy, and S. Anand have shown through their work that Sanskrit was largely used in rituals, religious events, literature and also politics but women. The shudras and ati-shudras were always kept alienated.

During the colonial period, nationalists in India glorified ancient Vedic period and Vedic culture, **equating 'Indian culture and its glory' with Sanskrit. So Sanskrit remained hegemonic even in post independence India. Drawing from Dr. A.H. Salunkhe's work, I will show how at different historical junctures, women from different Varna were consciously excluded from the language and the knowledge field of Sanskrit.**

Can this language of hegemony be used to challenge the hegemonic system? In what way can **Sanskrit serve as a 'Master's Tool' for resistance? In this paper, I will explore how such attempts** are made at the regional level in Maharashtra. Sanskrit is influenced by upper castes till today. Dharmashastras, Smrutigranthas, composed in the same language, justified and rooted the Varna system in society. Scholars coming from non-brahman/ anti-caste movements like Dr. A.H.Salunkhe- a Sanskrit scholar from Satyashodhak tradition- show how one can use the **language of hegemony to challenge the hegemony. I will examine Sanskrit as 'Master's Tool' by** looking at the work of Dr. Salunkhe on the Mahabharata, which though asserts hegemony can

also be reread to explore women's agency. I will try to examine contemporary Varna system and agency of women in the epic from caste and gender perspective.



शोध – आलेख शीर्षक - हिन्दी आदिवासी साहित्य में स्त्री प्रश्न

शोधार्थी – अनुराधा पाण्डेय

हिन्दी भाषा में आदिवासी साहित्य लेखन की शुरुआत आधुनिक काल से होती है। वैसे तो आदिवासी भाषाओं में संथाली, मुंडारी एवं कुरूक में लेखन कार्य बहुत पहले से शुरू हो गया था लेकिन हिन्दी में भाषा में आदिवासी साहित्य की शुरुआत बहुत बाद में शुरू होती है। कुछ लेखन कार्य मौलिक रचनाओं से शुरू होता है और कुछ में अनुवाद किया जाता है। महिलाओं की स्थिति को लेकर भी साहित्य में बहुत बाद में ध्यान दिया गया। आदिवासी साहित्य में महिलाओं के स्थिति का रेखांकन और भी बाद में होता है। आदिवासी महिलाओं को विमर्श के केंद्र में लाने का काम महाश्वेता देवी अपने उपन्यास और कथाओं के माध्यम से करती हैं। निर्मला पुतुल का भी योगदान स्त्री विमर्श एवं स्त्री से संबन्धित रचनाओं को लिखने में रहा है।

मैं अपने इस शोध-आलेख में निर्मला पुतुल की रचना “नगाड़े की तरह बजते हैं शब्द” में लिखी गई कुछ कविताओं और महाश्वेता देवी की रचना “जंगल के दावेदार” तथा “आदिवासी कथा” के परिप्रेक्ष्य में कुछ महत्वपूर्ण बिन्दु जैसे; आदिवासी समाज में महिलाओं की स्थिति, गरीबी, अशिक्षा, विस्थापन से जूझती तथा अपनी संस्कृति एवं अस्मिता को बचाने में संघर्षरत महिलाएँ तथा आदिवासी महिलाओं के प्रति गैर-आदिवासी बाहरी समाज के नजरिए को स्त्री विमर्श के संदर्भ में परखना चाहती हूँ।

आदिवासी साहित्य पर लेखन करने वाली निर्मला पुतुल खुद आदिवासी समाज से आती हैं और अपनी रचनाओं में वे किस तरह से स्त्री प्रश्न को उठाती हैं चाहे वे महिलाएं आदिवासी हों या गैर आदिवासी। पुरुषवादी समाज को लेकर, स्त्री स्वतन्त्रता को लेकर, गरीबी, अशिक्षा, संघर्ष, उपेक्षा और भूमंडलीकरण के कारण होने वाली समस्याओं पर लिखती हैं। दूसरी तरफ महाश्वेता देवी एक गैर आदिवासी समाज से आती हैं और अपने गद्य विधा के द्वारा आदिवासी महिलाओं पर लिखती हैं।

निर्मला पुतुल अपनी कविता ‘क्या तुम जानते हो’, ‘माँ के लिए’, ‘ससुराल जाने से पहले’ और ‘उतनी दूर मत ब्याहना बाबा’ में स्त्री विस्थापन की समस्या को बहुत ही गंभीरता से उठाती हैं।

जैसे- माँ

चली जाऊँगी एक दिन छोड़कर

तुम्हारा घर आँगन

बरतुहारी जो कर आयी हो

तुम

रस्सी में गांठ सी

बांध जो आयी हो मेरी शादी की तिथि

पर क्या सचमुच

जा सकूँगी पूरी की पूरी यहाँ से?

आँगन में पड़े टूटे झाड़ू सा

पड़ी रह जाऊँगी कुछ न कुछ यहाँ

बची रह जाऊँगी गोहाल में

गोबर फेंकने के डलिए में

सटे गोबर की तरह

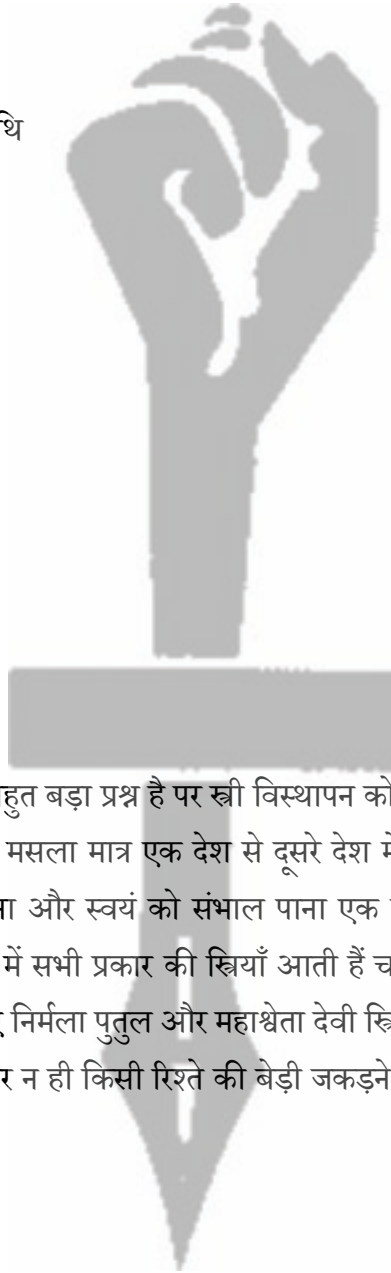
स्त्री विस्थापन का प्रश्न जो कि एक बहुत बड़ा प्रश्न है पर स्त्री विस्थापन को लेकर आदिवासी साहित्य में कोई गंभीर चिंतन नहीं हुआ है। स्त्री विस्थापन का मसला मात्र एक देश से दूसरे देश में होना नहीं है बल्कि यह विस्थापन एक परिवार से दूसरे अंजान परिवार में जाना और स्वयं को संभाल पाना एक बहुत बड़ा सदमा है जिसका हर स्त्री को सामना करना पड़ता है। इस विस्थापन में सभी प्रकार की स्त्रियाँ आती हैं चाहे वह आदिवासी हों या गैर आदिवासी हो। पूरे पुरुषवादी समाज को नकारते हुए निर्मला पुतुल और महाश्वेता देवी स्त्रियों के लिए स्वतंत्र समाज की माँग करती हैं जहाँ पर किसी का हस्तक्षेप न हो और न ही किसी रिश्ते की बेड़ी जकड़ने के लिए न हो। निर्मला पुतुल की कविता की एक पंक्ति है,

मैं स्वयं को स्वयं की दृष्टि से देखने

मुक्त होना चाहती हूँ अपनी जाति से

क्या मैं मात्र एक स्वप्न

स्त्री के लिए – घर संतान और प्रेम



क्या है?

महाश्वेता देवी अपने उपन्यास जंगल के दावेदार में आदिवासी महिलाओं को लेकर लिखती हैं और यहाँ पर महिलाएँ स्वतंत्र हैं यहाँ पर स्त्रियाँ भी युद्ध करती हैं। निर्मला पुतुल और महाश्वेता देवी आदिवासी साहित्य में आदिवासी महिलाओं की स्थिति पर एक गंभीर चिंता व्यक्त करती हैं चाहे वह घर-परिवार की हो या अशिक्षा, गरीबी, मजदूरी, हर प्रश्न को उठाती हैं।

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SUB-THEME – 6:

**EQUALITY, CONFLICT, PLURALISM
AND WOMEN'S STUDIES**

स्त्री अध्ययन और हिंदी में स्त्री वमर्श: एक आलोचनात्मक अध्ययन

अवंतिका शुक्ला

अ.स.प्रोफेसर, स्त्री अध्ययन वभाग

महात्मा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय हिंदी विश्व विद्यालय, वर्धा

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इस प्रपत्र में स्त्री अध्ययन (Women Studies) और हिंदी साहित्य में प्रचलित स्त्री वमर्श (Women Discourse) पर एक आलोचनात्मक अध्ययन करने का प्रयास है। स्त्री वमर्श के बारे में अध्ययन के लिए मैं खासतौर पर हिंदी को केंद्र में रख रही हूँ। हिंदी में स्त्री वमर्श पर चर्चा साहित्य के संदर्भ में मलती है और स्त्री अध्ययन में भी पढाया जाता है। स्त्री अध्ययन एक विषय के रूप में काफी हद तक समाज विज्ञान के पास खड़ा दिखता है। जब हिंदी में स्त्री अध्ययन हम पढते पढाते हैं, तब हिंदी साहित्य में चल रहे स्त्री वमर्श से भी परिचित होते हैं। स्त्री वमर्श से संबंधी तमाम महत्वपूर्ण लेखन करने वाली लेखिकाएँ स्वयं को नारीवादी कहलाने में खासा परहेज करती हैं। अभी भी अधिकांश लोगों की दृष्टि में नारीवाद परिवार व्यवस्था को भंग करने वाला, विदेशी है और स्त्री वमर्श के नाम पर भारतीय प्रभाव की बात होती है। दूसरी ओर इस स्त्री वमर्श को उसकी अपनी साहित्य की दुनिया में भी बहुत प्रश्नवाचक नजरिए के साथ देखा जाता है। अमूमन लेखिकाओं के ऊपर यह आरोप लगते ही रहते हैं कि उनका स्त्री वमर्श सिर्फ देह वमर्श तक ही सीमित है। समाज से जुड़े अन्य महत्वपूर्ण मुद्दे इसमें गौण हो जाते हैं। वे लोग कसी खास वर्ग से आती हैं, इस लिए इनके मुद्दे भी उसी वर्ग तक सीमित होते हैं। जबकि वास्तविकता ऐसी नहीं है। स्त्री वमर्श को लेकर स्त्री ही नहीं पुरुषों का लेखन भी बहुत चर्चा में रहा है। हिंदी में स्त्री अध्ययन और स्त्री वमर्श के बीच एक जुड़ाव देखना या स्थापित करना दोनों विषयों की दृष्टि से बहुत आवश्यक है।

इस प्रपत्र में मैंने स्त्री अध्ययन और स्त्री वमर्श के बीच इसी रिश्ते को समझने का प्रयास किया है। हिंदी में प्रचलित स्त्री वमर्श और स्त्री अध्ययन दोनों में क्या संबंध बनता है? स्त्री अध्ययन और महिला लेखन का एक दूसरे पर क्या प्रभाव पड़ा है? दोनों में क्या समानताएँ हैं? क्या विभेद हैं? किस प्रकार की सीमाएँ हमें देखने को मलती हैं? साहित्य में स्त्री मुद्दों पर शोध करने या स्त्री अध्ययन विषय के अंतर्गत साहित्य पर शोध करने में कन बातों का खास खयाल रखना आवश्यक हो जाता है? स्त्री

अध्ययन और स्त्री वमर्श में जो फांक है इस में कस तरह का पुल बना है या बनाना है. इस पर व्यापक चर्चा की जाएगी।

ASPIRED EQUALITY AND CONFLICTING IDENTITY: WOMEN COMRADES OF BENGAL

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Women studies encompass within itself the academic world and also the world of action. Consequently it thrives to focus on issues in which women strengths and roles are identified and accommodated. In doing so it not only challenges the social reality as presented in mainstream discipline but at the same time it ignites a process in transforming the existing mindset and values of the people. It perhaps requires initiative both at the theoretical and on the practical level. What is even more important seemed to be the communication between the world of knowledge and the world of practice otherwise secluded. So more and more research on women activists needs to be encouraged and brought into the realm of women studies.

Being an ardent student of political science, the present study tries to identify the existing inequality amongst women in the political realm, specifically within a political organization. Infact the study tries to explore the conditions of women members of the Communist Party of Bengal. The study takes the Communist Party as a case since the principle of equality happens to be mostly **intertwined and identified with the party's ideology. It seeks** to analyse how the women comrades reaching out to the masses at the grassroot level, propagating the principle of equality were themselves often denied the equal position within the organization. Whether such denial is intentional or not can be debated but what is worth noticing is the presence of patriarchal prejudices operating within the organization. Often the dedication towards their organization which they mostly regard as an extended family pulls them back from speaking in public. It is here, when the discipline of women studies becomes meaningful since research within its ambit helps to bring in the diverse experiences of women, issues relating to inequalities and gender discrimination across region and culture. Such research enriches the theoretical world and thrives to protect the interests of the women and in knowing our reality through a gender lens.

CHALLENGES OF EXCLUDED CATEGORIES IN TEACHING COURSE ON GENDER TO THE FIRST GENERATION LEARNER GIRL STUDENTS.

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Gender Studies is an interdisciplinary field of academic study on the issues of gender in its social and cultural context, which has offered new perspectives and methods of researching women's lives and in analyzing the structures and ideologies that mediate women's everyday existence. Conveying the critical understanding and gender perspective to students is always an important task for a teacher as excluded categories like caste, class, language and rural-urban divide plays an important role as Challenges of in teaching. This paper examines these challenges of teaching course on gender and discusses use of various practices in mitigating these challenges.

Wardha is a semi urban locality; girl students come from the nearby villages to pursue their education. Most of them are first generation learners. There is immense diversity in the classroom. The composition classroom varied in class, caste and linguistic background (Most of them are Marathi speaking but there dialect differs from mainstream teaching language). So efforts of building critical thinking and creating enthusiasm in to the classrooms is challenging for a teacher on these background.

In this paper researcher used the autobiographical notes and some stories and experiences from classroom and try to bring out the importance of teacher-student relationship, and the efforts he has taken such as discussing, organizing activities, visits, organizing talks with successful girls and narrating their success stories as a medium for teaching. These activities help students to come up with interesting arguments by giving references from their own life. This really leads to rich classroom discussions.

ON SECULARISM TODAY

Gabriele Dietrich

This paper deals with a longstanding debate in a new present day context. I remember Vibhuti Patel vociferously protesting the breaking of a coconut at the opening of the IAWS Conference in Trivandrum in the early eighties. I remember running a workshop on women exploring religion as a source of sustenance and hope in a liberating perspective at the autonomous women's conference in Mumbai in December 1986. Between these two events, the anti Sikh riots of 1984 had galvanised women's movements into decisive interventions. I remember heated debates whether the women's movement could be a force against communalism. I remember the disdain when we had to recognise that many women had been co-opted by communal and fundamentalist forces. . The destruction of Babri Masjid in November 1992 made it clear that communalism and even fascism

were real possibilities. In 2002, we were aghast seeing the scale of violence against Muslims in Gujarat and witnessing the re-election of Narendra Modi as chief minister in the same year. In the meantime, the Gujarat model of development has become an aspiration for large sections of the middle class. In neighbouring Sri Lanka, genocidal policies against Tamils are paired with a **militarised Buddhist chauvinism**. In Pakistan, the struggle for women's education of which Malala Yousafzai and other young women of the Swat Province have become a symbol, has injected new energy into the women's movement and other democratic struggles.

As we are meeting in the North Eastern region, we have to face the multi religious contradictions. Assam and several other states have faced ethnic tensions due to migration and anti-Muslim sentiment is on the rise. While Arunachal Pradesh is largely leaning towards the "Hindu Nation", other states, with Christian majorities, like Nagaland and Mizoram, live in a situation where Christianity is virtually a state religion. In this context, re-interpretation of scriptures and debate on position of women in customary laws is of great importance, but also lands women up in problematic positions and many contradictions. The character of Hindutva in the shape of BJP or RSS is often not understood.

Plurality of gender options is often highly tabuised in this polarised cultural setting. This makes it necessary to enter into the debate on individual rights vs. community rights and the defence of democratic core rights in a pluralistic society as worked out by authors like Neera Chandhoke and Rudolf Heredia and several others.

RECONSTRUCTING THE SIGNS AND IMAGES: A FEMINIST RE-INTERPRETATION OF MAHABHARAT

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One of the text which holds an important position in the Indian cultural milieu and defines the idea of Indian literature and Indian consciousness is *Mahabharat*. This consciousness through the centuries has formed the image of an Indian woman. The concept of women being chaste/unchaste, virtuous, voiceless, invisible has been burdened on Indian women through the images of women portrayed in *Mahabharat*.

The thinkers of third wave of feminism came out with the French term *écriture féminine* which throughout the whole feminist movement, feminists from all around the world have explored, questioned and problematized to explain different subjugated practices against women using discourses of religion, culture and tradition. This mode of writing has been exploited by the women authors of today who write to rectify the signs and images which persist in the society. I propose to explore, question and discuss the feminist interpretation of Draupadi in the epic *Mahabharat* as described in Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's novel *The Palace of Illusions*. Divakaruni's novel *The Palace of Illusions* is a text written from the perspective of Paanchali or Draupadi. Divakaruni

narrates *Mahabharat* from Draupadi's point of view and gives characters of the epic a different dimension altogether. Seeing through the gendered lens of Draupadi, Divakaruni has raised pertinent questions of agency, sexuality, sexual desire, pleasure and power which are unheard or gets curtailed in the masculine epic *Mahabharat*.

I also propose to interrogate the definition, redefinition and psychoanalytical baggage behind the feminist reinterpretation of the religious text and how this is leading to the change of the feminine images in the contemporary world.

CONSIDERING FORMS OF 'MARKED' CITIZENSHIP: MUSLIM WOMEN'S GROUPS IN INDIA

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The liberal ideal of an abstract, unmarked citizen has long been a point of criticism by feminist theory and practice for its exclusionary nature. Further, the public-private dichotomy in terms of citizenship in the postcolonial Indian nation state has also emphasised the modern, secular, unmarked citizen in the public sphere, pushing all ascriptive and associational identities into private sphere. This of course has been an unsuccessful attempt in the Indian context, with caste and religious identities weaving themselves through public contexts of citizenship whether through votebanks in electoral politics or eruptions such as protests, riots and pogroms.

However, the conceptualisation and implementation of a system of 'marked' citizenship – for example through reservation of seats in the Parliament for women – faces challenges as well, as seen in the opposition to 'quota within quota' reservation for Muslim and OBC women. Another question asked of this example is whether marked citizenship can be understood and enabled only through structures of formal representation.

My paper seeks to examine possibilities of marked citizenship as presented by Muslim women's groups in India which have been working towards Groups such as the Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan, the All India Muslim Women's Personal Law Board, Awaaz-e-Niswan and STEPS have been working in different parts of the country in various spheres, from personal law reform to formulating gender just nikahnamas or marriage contracts, to opening separate mosques for women.

The efforts of these women's groups represent a claim of ownership on space, political and social, discursive and material, that uses both the 'secular', 'public' space of the Constitution and 'private' religious texts in a strategic manner for the purpose of gender justice. This I argue reveals to us possibilities of embodying and performing citizenship which do not segregate Muslim women into being abstract women in the public sphere and Muslim wives, daughters or widows in the private, governed by personal laws, thus providing us possibilities of 'marked citizenship'.

POLITICS OF LOCATING 'GENDER' IN ISLAM IN INDIA

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'We believe that the key to the solution of women's problems lies in four, religion, culture, law and education. If the way paved in these realms of four principal domains then we can be hopeful of women's development' - Sahala Sherkat.

The status of Muslim women in India has closely been associated with these above stated factors. However, the Sachar Committee Report (2006) had given more importance to the socio economic backwardness eschewing the core issues pertaining to religion, culture and Muslim personal law. The core argument of the paper is that Muslim women India are always supposed to grapple with two very different discourses on equality and development: Islamic and state sponsored version of rights and equality. Both these discourses have largely neglected **women's quest for rights and justice**.

In India, state sponsored discourses have always treated Muslim women either as the wards of the minority community or as equal citizens of the country. On the contrary, Islamic discourse on **women's rights and gender justice** has been constructed, perceived and interpreted in such a manner that the relationship between gender and Islam seems to be incompatible. It revolves **around the politics of misinterpretation and misappropriation of the Quranic verses on women's rights** in this male dominated society. These interpretations relating to talaq, polygamy, burqa as well as inheritance rights revolve around the unholy nexus between religion and patriarchy. Apart from these two discourses, an alternative discourse on **Muslim women's rights within the Islamic framework** developed by Muslim women themselves has been emerging to deal with the **women question in India. The emergence of Muslim women's groups like Awaaz-e – Niswaan, Bharatiya Muslim Mahila Andolan in Mumbai, All India Muslim Women Personal Law Board in Lucknow highlights the shaping of an alternative discourse on women's rights within the Islamic framework.**

The paper will try to understand the politics behind the construction of *gender* within the Islamic discourse **including both the men and women's version on gender equality. The response of Indian State to the gender question will also be given importance.**

RELIGION AND GENDER BIAS: A CASE STUDY EXPLORING THE HINDU-MUSLIM DIFFERENTIALS OF KAMRUP DISTRICT, ASSAM

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'Gender bias' is observed in all societies across the world. Women constituting half of the population are often termed as the weaker or the deprived section of society. Discrimination and gender bias is experienced in several aspects among all human societies irrespective of the religion, communities, social and economic structures in issues like preference for a son, gender difference in didactic and occupational status. It is noteworthy that although religion asserts for 'gender justice' and equity for societal harmony and prosperity yet women who pioneer and actively participate in religious rituals for socio-cultural well-being are often directed and limited by religious morals in diverse and dramatic ways. It is ironic to state that although every religion articulate about the high place given to women in religious manuscripts, the reality is that the condition and status of the women are pathetic in practice. Like any other society and religious group in the world, such scenario of gender bias also exists among the Hindu and Muslim population of Assam together sharing 95.50 per cent of the total state's population (census 2001) and also in Kamrup district constituting 10.60 (Hindu) and 7.58 (Muslim) per cent of Assam's total population. Thus in this backdrop, the present study attempts to analyse and compare the gender bias and partiality existing among the Hindu-Muslim population of Kamrup district, Assam in terms of issues like preferring a son, gender differentials in educational, occupational conditions and also attempt to explore the role and contribution of religion in such disparities. The study is based on both primary and secondary data collected through survey with random sampling method, well structured questionnaire and various journals and official departments respectively which are analyzed with the help of meaningful cartographic techniques for clear exposition.

SEXUALITY, AND WOMEN'S MOVEMENT AND POLITICS IN MANIPUR

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This paper is an attempt to study contributions of women's movement in Manipur- especially *Nupi Lal* (women's war) and Meira Paibi Movement in bringing [ethnic] nationalism in Manipur. The idea of nationalism has been dominated by a discourse of patriarchal masculinity in India. Women are largely seen as 'moral and psychological' motivator of male counterparts in their struggles for national freedom. The activities of women during national movement have been reduced to private affairs within the home domain with no direct contribution in the movement. Such nationalist discourse which sources from the stereotypical construction of nationalist narratives to that of

'public' and 'private' will hold unreliable to study colonial and post colonial 'national' movement in Manipur. 'Ethnic nationalist' movement in Manipur has significant departures from Partha Chatterjee's nationalist framework of 'the inner' and 'outer domain' of nationalism in India. This paper will argue that women's movement in Manipur redefined the relationship between the home and the public and how the activities of home shaped, nurtured and conditioned political discourse of public domain in Manipur. Therefore, a division between private and public sphere is attainable in Manipuri society, such a division cannot construe how 'private domain' determines and constitutes the structures and functions of public domain. The history of 'nationalist' movement in Manipur is predominantly 'womanised' and so, any attempt to derive the notion of nationalism from any dominant model of 'men centric masculine nationalism' will not only deny political subjectivity of women- 'women as conscious political being' but also it will erode the very meaning of 'nationalist movement' in Manipur. In other words, women's movement constitutes and redefines the meaning of 'political' in the political history of Manipur. However, marginalisation of women in the construction of 'ethnic nationality' further leads to deviate issues of equality and equity of women from the dominant agenda of national development.

POLITICS OF PEDAGOGY: A DALIT FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE

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Kumud Pawde considers it a challenge to learn and master Sanskrit . Sikhamani elaborates as to how steel nibs are sprouting against the casteist education system. Urmila Pawar narrates how her school made her do the menial work and how she looked at her teacher as one of her childhood enemies. Jajula Gowri narrates how she proved herself by competing with other children in school.

Pedagogy has been one of the most colonizing strategies for ages which perpetrate prejudices related to caste, race, and class and the oppressive notions about gender. It becomes all the more problematic when caste and gender are combined. New voices have not only been struggling to enter into certain prohibited areas but also have been questioning how these spaces are constructed and maintained. The traditions of pedagogy are revisited to resist the academic hegemony and to design new pedagogies. Dalits have sharply questioned the educational institutions that barred Dalits or treated them as slaves. They have entered into the fields of knowledge and acquired languages that were prohibited for them earlier.

A Telugu Dalit Christian woman writer Vinodini, addresses the casteist nature of certain courses, purpose of these courses and their syllabi like Telugu literature. If the course is intended to teach language, Vinodini says that the language that this course teaches is not only archaic but also steeped in prejudices. As a Dalit Christian feminist, Vinodini is able to bring in sharper questions about the intersecting agencies of caste, gender and religion that decided and designed the policy

and practice of pedagogy to oppress, alienate and humiliate others who are not included in the acceptable categories in a society like India.

This paper proposes to examine Vinodini's articles against the backdrop of Dalit and feminist debates about the interface between pedagogy and religion. It will also discuss how such debates by Dalit feminist writers can provide new insights into epistemology and critical frameworks for interdisciplinary women's/gender studies.

NAGA MOTHERS ASSOCIATION (NMA) IN WOMEN'S STUDIES DISCOURSE IN INDIA

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North East India is known for the turmoil and conflict with political unrest and insecurities. The conflict between the people of the region with the Indian state for autonomy, the ethnic conflict between different tribes and groups and the internal conflict is the backdrop of the situation and **lived reality of the people. In this situation, the response of women's movements and women's studies in India and especially in North East India is very crucial.**

Looking at the history of women's movement, it important to note how Women's movement emerged in the region. The Women's movement in Nagaland emerged as Naga Mothers Association (NMA) as a response to political unrest and militarization in the state. With the conflict and violence touching every life in the state, the women group felt the need to come together to address serious problems faced by the state as result of the political unrest. Thus the Naga Mothers Association (NMA) was formed on 14 February 1984 as a state-level voluntary organization mandated to fighting social evils and problems.

This paper will look in to the women's movement in North East India, especially the Naga Mothers Association (NMA). The context and situations of their emergence and their location in the discourse **of Women's Movement and Women's Studies in India** needs to be looked at. NMA have battled serious social and law-and-order problems in the northeast. The social, economic, religious and political history needs to be theorized to understand the role they have played in different sphere of life in the state and **also in the larger political struggle and peace process. The NMA's identity of not just as women but as "Mothers" needs to critically articulated and interrogated.**

WRONGED WRONG SITA: A CRITIQUE OF DEVDUTT PATTANAİK'S SITA

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This paper attempts to look at retellings of the Ramayana through a feminist perspective focusing on Devdutt Pattanaik's *Sita: An Illustrated Retelling of the Ramayana*. The Ramayana is vastly popular to this day despite having oral traditions beginning somewhere in the 2nd Century BCE which were later written, translated in several languages and much later retold, enacted and televised. **Pattanaik's work is the latest retelling of Ramayana with the title of Sita and was published in the year 2013.** My interest in the Ramayana sprouted as a child as I grew up on a staple diet of mythology. My understanding grew as I read more and slowly began to question the concept of *dharma* and 'justice' as portrayed in this 'sacred text'. **There have been several studies on the Ramayana from several perspectives namely caste, class, feminist etc. Scholars have also studied the retellings of Ramayana in almost all genres including folk songs. I chose Pattanaik's retelling as the title 'Sita' held great promise for I expected a different interpretation of Sita instead I found a celebration of the conventional and typical Sita.** Pattanaik's treatment is dignified and magnanimous with Sita as a Goddess. His tone is formal and reverential and at the end of each chapter there are stories from various retellings with critical references. Despite all this the narrative, I believe is limited and does not raise the arguments necessary. This paper proposes to address the following issues. **Is Sita forced into captivity by society? What is the reason for her 'glorified domesticity and silence'? Is Sita not a model for Patriarchal control (wrong Sita taken as a right example)? Why does the burden of balance and welfare fall on Sita's and eventually women's shoulders to this day? Why Sita and consequently women are seen as the body in need of discipline both mentally and sexually? Lastly why despite having a 'choice' does Sita choose to be Gauri (docile and domesticated) rather than Kali (wild and untamed)?** The paper would also problematise the identity of women based on Sita.

NARRATING WOMEN: LITERARY STRATEGY BETWEEN HISTORIES OF ITS USE

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The case study for the paper would be modern Assamese fiction. The paper proposes to discuss three questions. The paper would demonstrate that Indira Goswami (1942-2011), in her writings on women in the 1980s, employed a literary strategy whose history was associated with literature on revolutionary peasant solidarity in the 1940s-50s. While the latter was a history of literary strategy in constructing identity, Indira Goswami's approach belonged to the history of literary strategy to deconstruct identity (including that of women).

Therefore, the paper would firstly explore the alternative meanings of a given literary strategy based on the histories of its use. Secondly, it would explore whether Indira Goswami, through her writings of deconstructed women, influenced one of the contemporary trends of "borderland" literature of the region wherein society is viewed as process rather than system. In other words, does "women's writing" have an impact beyond the domain of women in history of literature? Thirdly, the paper would explore if an Althusseurian frame would be appropriate to theorise Goswami's historical use of literary strategy in her writings on women.

CONFLICT, MOTHERHOOD AND FEMINIST PRAXIS: EXPLORING THE LINK BETWEEN 'PUBLIC' AND 'PRIVATE'

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South Asian Feminists were largely argued to be preoccupied with how nationalist political and legal frameworks enabled or retarded feminist praxis. The aim of this paper is to historically locate how motherhood has been invoked on the site of social movements in south Asian context of feminist praxis in the specific instances of national crisis in Sri Lanka, North East and Kashmir there by exploring the link between the so called private and the so called public. As observed by De Alwis, evoking maternalism that is evoking traditional images of womanhood that would implicitly challenge the socially constructed boundaries between public and private, men and women, state and civil society is not a new phenomenon is not new.

In the context of south Asia, one of the most significant political outcomes of the 1980s and 1990s in Sri Lanka was the collective mobilization of motherhood as a counter violence, both in the context of civil war in the north and east as well as Janatha Vimikthi Peramuna (JVP) uprising in the south. Secondly, within the last decade, when members of the All – Manipur Social Reformation and Development Samaj responded to the rape of a young Manipuri girl by publicly baring their aged bodies and demanding they all be raped, they also evoked the notion of motherhood by arguing that they were all mothers of the raped girl (ibid). In this case one can see extension of notion of motherhood beyond biological reproduction. Apart from these two there is another instance where motherhood has been invoked is organizing of mothers of Laskar – e – Taiba that uses 'mother's grief' to justify its mission in Kashmir (Haq 2009). It would be interesting to juxtapose it with the discourse produced by Association of Parents of the Disappeared Persons (APDP) in Kashmir Valley an organization headed by a woman and which is organized to combat the rampant extrajudicial killing and enforced disappearances at the hands of security forces in Jammu and Kashmir (Chakravarti 2005). Thus, the aim of this paper is to concentrate on these three initiatives from Sri Lanka, North East and Kashmir.

RECLAIMING FORGOTTEN HISTORIES: A TALE OF SHUDRA AND DALIT WOMEN REVOLUTIONARIES

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The contemporary discourse on women's contribution in various socio-political movements is largely drawn from the idea of a homogenous women's reality. However, the multiple realities of caste, ethnicity, religion, region etc have received limited attention in academic domain. In academic explanations of women's exclusion, the role of caste did not appear as an essential category for a long period. The accounts of Indian women's histories are loaded with narratives of upper caste women in which the life-worlds of Shudra and Dalit women, their contribution remain hidden and ambiguous in mainstream women's studies. The politics of recognizing icons has pushed the histories of Shudra and Dalit women leaders to the margins of women's history. However, the emerging literature on caste and gender in general and Shudra and Dalit women in particular, seeks to de-brahminize women's history and claim its space in the larger discourse on women's movement. This paper attempts to bring the historiographies and lost stories of forgotten women leaders from the Shudra and Dalit communities and place them in the alternative narrations on women's assertion. Women's studies continues to maintain a deafening silence on the existence of Shudra and Dalit women icons and revolutionaries like Savitribai Phule, Jhalkari bai Kori, Uda Devi Pasi and Mayawati. The paper highlights the blackout of independent life-world and day-today struggles of these Shudra and Dalit women in the annals of Social Sciences in general and Women's Studies in particular. Further, the paper will also analyze and understand the contribution these women have made independently and as partners of their male counterparts in giving rise and development to socio-religious and political movement in the Indian society. The paper strives to reclaim the lost history of few Shudra and Dalit women. This research will not only fill a gap in annals of Indian women's movement, but it will also help us to make these women visible. By recording such life-worlds we can appreciate whether they were passive and mute spectators or active participants, their own destiny makers in the trajectory of Indian history and women's liberation movement.

CUSTOMARY LAW AND GENDER RELATIONS IN MANIPUR

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Laws exist to protect and govern the lives of the people. Though the main characteristic of the state is to make laws, yet there are certain norms of behaviour which are impacting the lives of its citizens. One such body of law is customary law.

Despite the establishment of state legal institutions and major overhaul in legal ideology from post colonization, customary law continues to be an integral part of many indigenous communities. Most of the tribes in India continue to regulate themselves according to their own customary laws. The continual use of the customary law resulted in the existence of dual legal system. Studies have shown that apart from approaching the law courts due to the lack of resources and the desire for quick results, people seek solution through customary law. However, as justice under customary law is embedded in the preservation of traditional customs and their identities which is patriarchal in ethos, gender choices get foreclosed and women are relegated to the lower status. It is therefore important to understand the functioning of such law as it helps in defining the gender relations of the society.

Despite the growing body of literature to bring forward the diversity in customary and local laws, studies on the perpetuation of customary law among the tribes of Manipur, its history and present forms, has received little attention in the mainstream literature. For the tribes in Manipur, being part of their traditional customs and practices, customary law is considered as intrinsic to their identity and culture. It acts as a powerful tool to define the roles of men and women and dictate acceptable standards of behavior. Moreover, as Christianity has had its impact among the tribes, it also becomes important to understand its influence on customary law. Based on the study conducted among the Hmar tribe of Manipur, the paper delineates the status of women within customary law in an attempt to underline the importance of such study in the context of women studies.

COMPARATIVE PARTICIPATION OF GIRLS IN EDUCATION OF MAHAR AND MANG CASTES IN MAHARASHTRA

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In many national and international declarations and policies on education the importance of education has been underlined as an important indicator of the development. It has been accepted that each child is entitled to receive education, which shall be free and compulsory, at least in the elementary stages. However, education though recognized as essential fundamental human right and in India elementary education is the responsibility of the state still there is unevenness in access to education. The quality and access is dependent upon the not only the availability but the location of the person her caste, class, tribe or geographical location. It has been observed that amongst castes who are on margins also there access or perspective towards education is determined by their revolutionary past.

Taking into consideration the importance of education in development of person and emancipatory potential of education, the present paper will first refer to the statistical data on caste and education then will attempt to map the gap between different caste groups especially percentage of

education amongst mahar and mangs castes in Maharashtra. The percentage of education amongst mahars is more than mangs in education. This might be a result of adoption of Buddhism by mahars as they have followed the way of Ambedkar.

In this paper I will attempt to analyze the problems of exclusion of mangs in general and mang girls in particular from education. Both of the communities are aware the importance of education. Thus in the present paper I will try to analyze the practices in society, economic situation, political participation and anxiety about girls marriages to understand how does this affects the percentage of population accessing education. Along with this I will try to map experiences of champion girls from these castes who have negotiated with different caste biases and inequalities in society. Thus an attempt would be made to understand the questions raised by a new generation of dalit scholarship both about the accessibility of higher education and the limitations in making it enabling for those who struggle to gain entry into it. This will enable us to open debate on the absence of transparency in higher education and the nexus of networks of exclusion that operate formally and informally to reproduce caste inequalities in the field of education. This paper will map difficulties faced by mangs in accessing education due to an exclusion of these castes as well as challenges they posed to the social homogeneity of the classroom, boards of studies and other academic bodies, leading to obvious frictions on issues related to standards and merit.

मातृत्व की अवधारणा और पतृसत्ता

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एक स्त्री कसी बच्चे को जन्म देते समय ही माँ की भूमिका में आ जाती है। यह उसके जीवन का एक नया आरंभ होता है। एक स्त्री के लिए माँ बनना पूरी तरह से एक सांस्कृतिक घटना है। अगर हम उसके प्राकृतिक रूप की बात करें तो यह सर्फ स्त्री-पुरुष की यौन इच्छा का परिणाम होता है लेकिन इसे वडंबना ही कहा जाएगा कि प्राकृतिक अधिकारों के नाना कुतर्क देकर कभी सभ्य तो कभी बर्बर तरीकों से पतृसत्तात्मक समाज आज तक उसका दमन ही करता आया है और स्त्री की यौनिकता को नियंत्रित करता रहा है। स्त्री को माँ बनाने की संस्कृति मर्दागनी व बर्बरता का नित वस्तुतः होता आया है। वह स्त्री को यौनानंद व उत्तेजना-शांति का जरिया बनाकर उस पर गर्भ लादता रहा है। यदि लड़कियों को विशेष प्रकार की शिक्षा और मूल्य बोध का ज्ञान कराया जाए या यँ कहें कि उसे पुरुष के बराबर शिक्षा और ज्ञान के हर अनुशासन का ज्ञान लेने का अवसर मिले तो समाज को एक सकारात्मक दिशा देने का प्रयास होगा।

पतृसत्तात्मक समाज की यह मान्यता है कि स्त्री के लिए माँ बनना ही उसकी चरम सार्थकता है, यह एक आनंददायक कृत्य है एवं पुण्यमयी घटना है आदि। जो स्त्री माँ नहीं बन सकती है उसे बाँझ, कुलटा आदि शब्दों से संबोधित किया जाता है एवं उसे पतृसत्तात्मक व्यवस्था में बहुत ही निम्न स्थान दिया जाता है। माँ बनने की कतनी बड़ी कीमत स्त्रियाँ देहिं, मान सक एवं सामाजिक स्तर पर चुका रही हैं। एक स्त्री को नौ से दस महीने तक गर्भ ढोते हुए ही क्या कोई कम परेशानी होती है। गर्भवती स्त्री को हमेशा भगवान भरोसे छोड़ दिया जाता है। भारत जैसे कई देशों की स्थिति का तो कहना ही क्या! एक तो स्त्री के लिए गर्भजन्य बोझ और पीड़ा, ऊपर से खान-पान दवा आदि की कमी रहती है, घरेलू काम का भार भी होता है, उस पर पति की हर हवस के प्रति समर्पण होने का बोझ होता है। साथ ही प्रसव पीड़ा व प्रसव के दौरान मौत होने का डर। इतना सब कुछ सहने के बाद कौन सी स्त्री माँ बनना चाहेगी? सही बात तो यह है कि प्रकृति ने स्त्री को माँ बनने की क्षमता भर दी है, माँ बनने की अनिवार्यता पतृसत्तात्मक व्यवस्था द्वारा थोपा गया है।

TEACHING AND LEARNING THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT: BEYOND THE PROFESSION/PASSION dichotomy

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In the Women's Studies classroom, women's movement is an important and foundational theme. The major frameworks used in the classroom for the teaching-learning of women's movements are classification based on region, on the basis of period or as per the major issues taken up by the movement. In this context the period after 1990s and the contemporary moment are seen either as marked by NGOisation/depoliticization/deradicalization, or come to be lauded in celebratory terms of transnational networks. This paper will focus on the challenge of teaching and learning the contemporary women's movement in the classroom. The attempt will be to explore what pedagogies and knowledges which try to map shifts in strategies, issues, ways of organizing, instead of articulating and relying on inter-related dichotomies of global/local, funded/non-funded, professional/activist, deradicalized/political may open up for our understanding of radical politics in the contemporary moment.

The paper will try to bring narratives to the centre of analysis to illuminate the ways in which the present phase of the women's movement can be critically engaged with in the classroom without falling into easy dichotomies of decline/celebration. Thus it will try to go beyond looking at the

movement as 'NGOised' and an attempt would be made to look at the hybrid nature of feminist organizing, and problematizing the profession/passion dichotomy.

The first part of the paper will focus on reviewing work emerging from new sexuality studies and new Dalit studies as well as the sites of the internet and generational politics within the movement **to map the ways in which the 'feminist political' is being extended and reimagined to understand the ways in which we can imagine and assess the movement.** The second part of the paper will try and illuminate these themes through narratives of three young feminists, who come to feminism in the era marked as the period of professionalization, and who are currently engaged in work on sites of sexuality, informal labour union and caste. The attempt here is to analyze and explore the radical potential of these engagements.

FEMINISM, RELIGION AND RADICAL ATHEISM

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This paper aims at engaging in a logical connection between feminism and the communal/secular problematic in postcolonial democracies like India, through a close reading of what often gets known as certain 'local' brutal cultural practices, like say that of sati or widow immolation, and the corresponding 1986 Anti-Sati Act. **The 'fate' of the female subject, in certain cultural practices, explicate this very structural incompleteness to the greatest extent, where the exclusivity of the spiritual Indian core which eulogized women (i.e. objectivised as a fetish by the very same process which subjectivized it), as 'illiterate' and yet 'civilized' for being well versed in the patriarchal doctrines), not only furthered the institution of patriarchy, but rather also aided in hiding the logical incompleteness of each of these supposedly opposed concepts. But, the paper also tries to show how the fetish, owing to the very features of its structural character, is indeterminate and contingent. It tries to show how the relationship between an 'active' decision and a 'passive' one can be instituted in a non-oppositional way by contextualizing it through the cultural practice of 'sati' (widow burning) in 'modern' India. Such a reading help us to refrain from engaging in any straight forward dubbing of such a subject as 'sovereign' or 'agentic', thereby coming away from all gestures of ascertaining certain causal predispositions in sati. My primary argument is that without such poststructuralist unsettling of the 'subject', the postcolonial assumptions about subjectivity replicate the exclusionary strategies of methodological nationalism, strengthen the contours of 'cultural difference' and hence reinforce the Orientalist problematic. Such radical atheism of the representation of the moments of 'decision' of the female subject is crucial for understanding nationalist modernity in the colony. Here, an effort would be made to read the Indian philosophical concept of 'Maya' or attachment (although punctuated by hetero-patriarchy), as a feminist one, where the 'decision' of self-sacrifice is shown to dismantle the commonly perceived opposition between the Freudian notions of the life drive and the death drive. Furthermore, by reading religion against itself as a desire for survival and not merely as a certain Orientalist anthropologization of 'ethical openness' devoid of necessary**

closures, the paper will also have a remark on how the theory and practice or discourse and politics binary in the social sciences act to the detriment of feminism and its political causes.

FEMINIST CRITIQUE ON THE LEGAL INTERPRETATION OF RAPE: LEGAL REASONING ON CONSENT AND COERCION IN RAPE TRIALS

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The brutality of incidents involving rape, sexual violence and its various manifestations in women's lives are sometimes beyond the enactments of laws and legal frameworks. These issues are feminist issues which not only involve women but also transgendered and men, but the issues of sexual violence affect women very differently as a group.

There are differences within the legal discourse on the definition of rape but the idea predominantly present, consistent with all legal traditions is that the act of rape involves some form of penetration of a woman (and in some cases a man) and the second is that the act is forced without the consent of the woman or the man concerned. Rape is an expression of general male violence against women. There are other arguments that justify the need to track the legal system and how it functions to authorize and legitimize such violence against women. The rape trials explicitly demonstrate the nature of law and sexual violence and how they function to maintain the power and dominance of the men over women as a group.

In the above context there is a need to discuss the feminist perspectives on rape and how this relates to the understanding of rape within the legal discourse. How the legal discourse also constructs and discriminates between what it considers to be a reasonable woman and unreasonable woman. The limited understanding of rape as a crime in the legal system discounts the subjectivity of experiences, ideas of consent and coercion by a predetermined yardstick of 'reasonable behaviour'. **The understanding of sexuality within the legal discourse needs to be broadened along with transforming the judicial system by challenging the legal positivism in legal analysis.** The legal analysis should not only encompass a broader theoretical base but also be made socially responsible for the crimes against women. How the patriarchal social and sexual assumptions can be challenged **in the judicial discourse to prevent stereotyping of men and women's experiences** in rape cases also needs to be understood from the feminist perspective.

RIOTS AND SECURITY ISSUES: PERCEPTIONS AMONG BENGALI MUSLIM WOMEN

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The first recorded communal outbreak in Bengal occurred in the industrial suburbs of Calcutta in May 1891. It was followed by the Bakr Id disturbance of 1896 & the Tala outbreak of 1897. During the twentieth century, the communal riots of 1918 and 1946, have been extensively documented in fiction, memoirs as well as serious academic research, on the basis of police files and government reports.

Whereas pre-47 riots in West Bengal were mostly sparked off by the issues of cow-slaughter and **'music before mosques'**, post-47 riots in West Bengal were provoked more by news of atrocities perpetuated on the Hindus of East Pakistan. Although communal riots have been very rare in Bengal after 1964 riots with their macabre violence continue to haunt the individual and collective memories of Muslim women. More important than memories are anxious forebodings even when actual **violence is extremely rare. The 'fear' of annihilation by the 'other' community becomes all the more** urgent and inescapable after the Gujarat carnage of 2002. The eruption of communal violence elsewhere in the country shapes the lives and sensibilities of Bengali Muslims.

This paper chooses to focus on the narratives of Bengali Muslim women, on the basis of my findings of an extensive fieldwork in Kolkata and Burdwan. It seeks to address how the possibility of attack haunts most women of the community. This sense of insecurity is articulated in spite of the growth of communal solidarity in ghettoized neighbourhoods. Not only individuals, but institutions like factories and hostels belonging to Muslims also search for security in Muslim majority areas.

Though there is a marked cultivation of Bengaliness among Bengali Muslims and they try to identify themselves with the mainstream culture in a variety of ways, there is a deep-seated insecurity working within the minority complex. Such anxieties are fed from past and present sources, personal perceptions as well as propaganda by religious fundamentalists.

PERFORMING THE LIMITS OF SHAME: FEMALE NUDITY, RESPECTABILITY AND THE SACRED IN MANIPURI PERFORMANCE

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One of the questions which reading Talal Asad's essay 'Thinking about Agency and Pain' gives rise to is: what is the location of pain? Is it in the pained body? Is it in the people who observe or witness this pain? Is it in the space between? We could ask similar questions about the location of shame. Is shame **located in the space in between the 'shamed body' and the 'shaming look'?**

This paper seeks to examine two instances of performance of shame in contemporary Manipur. During the climax of Manipuri director H. Kanhailal's play "Draupadi" (2001), veteran actress Sabitri Heisnam appears in the nude on stage, having discarded all her clothes one by one, in protest against her rapists. We are, the paper argues, forced to witness a willing performance of shame by **someone who can be called, after Asad, an 'agent of shame'**. Three years later, in July 2004, a group of Manipuri women stripped naked in front of the Western Gate of Kangla fort in Imphal, in order to protest the brutal rape and death of Thangjam Manorama, a 34-year-old suspected insurgent, whom the Indian army had picked up from her house and shot dead a few days earlier. From the evidence gathered on the field so far, it is fairly certain that the individual activists at Kangla were not aware of the **existence of "Draupadi"**, which was performed only twice in Imphal in 2000-2001 and **nearly-banned by an enraged community that declared Sabitri a 'whore' for her shamelessness.**

The paper seeks to examine this apparent paradox: the differential configurations/receptions of nudity within these strangely reverberating theatrical and political events in contemporary Manipur (**caught in what one may call, after Benjamin, a 'historical time-lapse camera'**). **What are the contours of the 'respectable' and the 'necessarily' political, as against that which is deemed mere 'aesthetics' and willy-nilly located in the domain of pleasure?** What then is this basic antagonism in situations of political extremity between the regime of pleasure and aesthetics— the wasteful, so to say, and the domain of the properly political and revolutionary: the realm of pain undertaken *of necessity?*

MUSLIM GIRLS' EDUCATION IN A MUSLIM DOMINATED HABITATION IN NORTH-EAST DELHI.

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The present study intended to explore perceptions, expectations, and aspirations of Muslim girl students (15-25 years), on their own schooling, and community's attitude towards girls' education in context of existing educational provisions by state and community's own initiatives to educate girls. The landscape for the study was a Muslim dominated habitation, New Kardam Puri, in North-East Delhi. The study showed that how general attitude, due to existing stereotypes, of non-Muslim community members towards Muslim community contributes to the lack of understanding on the issue of the education and employment among Muslim girls. Confirming earlier studies the present study also showed that the multifaceted nature of the problem, related to social and economic issues pose a big barrier in the access of educational opportunities for Muslim girls. It is observed that in midst of inadequate educational provisions in the form of a ill-structured Senior Secondary School, the State fails to address the very crucial issues of safety and security related to their religious identity of the population. It is not only the access but also the teaching-learning environment that further deprives the Muslim girls from accessing adequate educational opportunities. Some of the interesting findings of the study revealed the indifferent attitude of the school teachers towards the Muslim girl students, limited options of subjects, poor transition rate at secondary and higher secondary level of schooling and further leading to poor enrolment in higher education. Community's efforts in educating girls were visible only in the form of Urdu training centres, or elder women teaching Urdu and Arabic to young girls, though the community members desire to educate their daughters in mainstream education as well. The study also included 20 case studies of Muslim girl students, parents, teachers and other community members that revealed that how these Muslim girls, however, begins their primary schooling, with some aspirations of becoming something or the other in future like- fashion designer, teacher, lawyer, business women and so on, but as they move on to Secondary and Senior Secondary stage, these aspirations comes in conflict with the societal compulsions resulting in compromising with their dreams.



SUB-THEME – 7:

**EDUCATION, KNOWLEDGE AND
INSTITUTIONAL SPACE (S)**

EDUCATION AND GIRL CHILDREN IN PONDICHERRY REGION

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Puducherry has made impressive strides in girl's education. However, girl's educational access is still limited and the problems of illiteracy, non-enrolment, low level of educational attainment, high dropout rate slow and staggering progress of the enrolled though school and differential access to education by gender, caste, etc., still persist. The present study on "Education and Girl Children in Puducherry region" addresses these basic issues of girl's education. The major objective of the study is to examine the socio-economic factors associated with girl children education, to understand the attitude and support of the parents towards their children education, and to analyze gender discriminations in the field of girl's education. The research finds that education and girl children are linked deeply in constructing hierarchies of gender and the perception of the society.

The patriarchal structure of society advocates the theory that a male is superior and considers a girl child as an economic burden. Due to this the girls grow up with a feeling of rejection and differences which stays with her all her life. There are many social handicaps that marginalize and silence girls which are the worst obstacles for her emancipation. In spite of government and other organizations initiatives to spread education to all those are other social, cultural and familial factors that are stumbling block to girls education. The empowerment of the girl is important, because discrimination against female children is so pervasive and so destructive to the social order, **strengthening girl's rights offers a critical opportunity to enhance not only individual lives, but the lives of nations.** So unite to jointly disengage the patriarchal ethos, **encouraging the girl's education and developing the nation.**

DOUBLE BURDEN OF WORKING WOMEN IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A COMPARISON AMONG THREE MAJOR UNIVERSITIES OF ASSAM

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Women working full time in the labour market often face a first shift(in morning) and a third shift(in the evening) at home. This is not an exception with the women working in higher educational level too. In the present study we will try to investigate whether this double burden have an impact on the quality performance and efforts for promotion. It will also seek to analyse whether this double burden work load prevent them to get access into the governmental and non-governmental initiatives for quality improvement as compared to men. An attempt will also be made to know the initiatives made avail by the concerned authority to reduce this burden of the working women with infants. The samples cover both the Research Scholars as well as Teaching Staffs of three major universities of Assam i.e. Gauhati University, Guwahati, Assam University, Silchar and Tezpur University, Tezpur.

THE GENDER QUESTION IN THE TEACHING PROFESSION: PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS

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My paper seeks to explore issues of gender in the teaching profession on the basis of my personal experiences as a teacher in an undergraduate college in Bengal for the last 17 years. It **will focus on the politics surrounding the female teacher's dress within the institutional space and outside it.** It will examine, on the basis of personal observations, the nature of interaction between the female teacher and male students, the differential responses of female students and male students within a classroom consisting of pupils of both sexes, and the extent to which the experiences of a female teacher are different in a college peopled by girl students only. It will also seek to record the **female teacher's observations on the nature of interaction among male and female students within a co-educational college,** and the variations in student behaviour across ethnic/socio-economic/community backgrounds. Finally, my paper will examine the pros and cons of having colleges meant exclusively for women students as well as the rationale of an all-women faculty in these colleges.

Since the beginning of my teaching career in 1996 till 2011, I had taught in a co-educational college, which meant that I had boys among my students and men among my colleagues. My initial posting was in a college in the hill town of Darjeeling. Boys and girls, mostly Nepalis and Tibetans, would sit side by side and interact freely among themselves. Subsequently transferred to another co-educational college at Barasat located on the outskirts of Kolkata, with students of both Hindu and Muslim communities, mostly of middle and low income groups, hailing from the interiors of the district of North 24 Parganas, I noticed that the boys and girls sat separately. A few girl students were escorted to college by their parents. They were hardly noticed moving together or chatting together in the college portico, canteen or elsewhere. At Darjeeling, I hardly spared a thought about my dress. Women teachers there had already started wearing salwarkameez. A few daring ones even came to college in a pair of jeans. Before I joined the college at Barasat, I was advised by a few of my senior women colleagues there that I should come wearing a saree. I decided not to wear a one. Initially, the male office staff would be staring at me since I was the only female teacher to wear a salwarkameez, and a few senior male colleagues would look disapprovingly. I decided to ignore them. However, during my long tenure in that college, I had to consciously avoid sleeveless blouses and kameezes, use lighter shades of lipstick and generally maintain a simple and unadorned appearance. When issues of love and sexuality entered my lectures, I had to handle them very carefully. Having been **transferred to a women's college in Kolkata, with a long tradition of catering education to women** of the minority communities, in 2011, I am now relieved in the sense that I do not need to exercise caution in my speech and appearance. I am able to discuss issues of love, romance and sexuality more freely in the classroom. However, while I understand that some Muslim **families send their daughters to this college only because it is a women's college, I personally** have my reservations about this segregation-based system of education and believe that the teaching community should urge the government to end it. Finally, I am not comfortable with the idea of an all-women faculty and consider this in need of immediate abolition. The rationale

of the continued existence of an all-women college including an all-women faculty needs serious rethinking and needs to be urgently addressed at the level of the state policy. My paper seeks to critically address the various ramifications of the gender question in the teaching profession on the basis of my personal experiences as a college teacher.

SECONDARY EDUCATION POLICY AND PROGRAMMING IN INDIA AND ITS IMPACT ON GENDER NON-CONFORMING CHILDREN

Archana

Nirantar

Nirantar, a Centre for Gender and Education undertook a gender audit of the Rashtriya Madhyamik Shiksha Abhiyan (RMSA) a national policy aimed at the last four years of schooling (9th-12th grade) from the lens of heteronormativity. The audit was done in a context in which the linkages between sexuality and education are largely unexplored in India, other than with respect to Adolescence Education and Life skills education.

The research explored and engaged both with the parents and adolescent girls to understand their concerns, anxieties and dilemmas with regard to sexuality and its impact on various aspects of education. It clearly showed that it is difficult to establish whether parents have more fear of sexual exploitation or their daughter themselves getting into sexual relationship on the way to school. Either way sexuality or its related norms were expressed as the overwhelming reason for the girls who dropped out of school. Another important finding of the research is that the nature of examination of how the school constructs heteronormativity requires not only an examination of school texts and class room practices but also how other dimensions of school life such as leadership among students (both formal and informal), the construction of the 'favourite' student, the construction of the immoral teacher etc. are critical sites for the construction of heteronormativity in schools. The research also provided striking evidence for the ways in which the rights of transgender young people are violated by the school system.

The methodology used in the research included the content analysis of the programme and related education policy documents, a survey with parents of girls who had been pulled out of school in a rural area in North India, FGD with school girls from the same area, interviews with three transgender people about their experiences of school education as well as an FGD with girls in urban setting.

REPRODUCING VALUES: EXAMINING HOW THE HIGH SCHOOL BIOLOGY TEXTBOOK DISCUSSES REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH FROM CRITICAL FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES

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The paper will be an exploration, from a feminist perspective, of how the national high school biology textbook engages with the idea of reproductive health. Some feminist educators like Mayberry (1998) envision a science education that seeks to foster social justice concerns in students. Such a curriculum recognizes that social and political values underpin scientific and technological development and will seek to make explicit these values to students.

What we attempt is a content analysis of the class XII NCERT chapter on reproductive health which discusses a range of technologies that serve to facilitate population control as well as fertility enhancement. Our analysis is based on a framework that sees the 'knowledge' that is selected and organized in textbooks as reflecting certain agendas (Apple, 1990). In this case, it is the state agenda of facilitating the fertility and pharmaceutical industry. Drawing from feminist critiques of technology such as that of Manorama and Shah (1999) and Quadeer (2011), we will place these technologies in their social and historical context and raise questions on why they are selected and discussed in the context of reproductive health, what aspects pertaining to them are foregrounded and what is silenced. Through this critique we hope to raise some questions on what a humanistic curriculum catering to feminist concerns will look like.

The National Curriculum Framework (2005) that frames what needs to go into textbooks discusses the aims of science education in terms of 6 validities- cognitive, content, process, historical, environmental and ethical validities. A curriculum with sensitivity to feminist concerns would give emphasis to the latter three validities that relate to the social, political and historical contexts and ethical aspects related to the practice and use of science and technology. Through our critique we will discuss how the so called objective and immutable 'content' that is presented in the chapter which constitutes dry descriptions of these technologies could change when these validities are brought in.

EDUCATIONAL CHOICES OF MUSLIM FAMILIES OF GOBINDAPUR AREA OF GOALPARA DISTRICT OF ASSAM: A GENDER ANALYSIS

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The term 'Multiculturalism' reflects a concern to make the liberal democracies of the west more sensitive to the existence of cultural pluralism within the boundaries of the nation state, which had till then been considered to be culturally homogeneous. Indian Constitution included provisions for minority protection under articles 29 and 30 is a reflection of its concern for such issues (Ali, 2000). The concept of 'minority' in western context is not similar with the minorities in India (Sheth, Mahajan, 1999). In India, Muslims constitutes the largest religious minority and

are deeply embedded at the regional and national levels. Muslims in Indian society are not **homogenous community, rather embedded in the respective region's culture and practices** where they live (Jairath, 2011). The literacy rate and educational status of Muslim is very low in India. The Sachar committee report (2006) shows that the dropout rate is significantly higher for Muslim students as compared to non Muslim counterparts. Education becomes one of the most important sites to exercise power and cultural dominance (Goswami, 2011). The educational backwardness among the Muslims is because of the small size of the social strata whose members can be expected to go in for education as a normal activity. In India, education among Muslims has been of two different kinds, religious education carried out by Madrasas and secular education designed to prepare a Muslim for an occupation and adult role in society (Ahmed, 1981). Muslims are prominent religious minority community most of whom live below the poverty line (Hasnain, 2004). The socio economic condition largely affects the educational choices of Muslim parents for their children. Muslims who have good economic condition usually has less importance for Madrasa education. But, some people also argued that it is the religion that influences the Muslim people in choosing the educational institution for their children. The patriarchy determines the life chances of women in both public and private sphere (Walby, 1989). There is difference in choices of schools of both boys and girls (Hill, 2011). In case of **girls' education, the parents preferred to send their girls to government schools where education** is provided free. On the contrary, they prefer private schools for their sons as the quality of education provided by the private school is regarded well than the govt. school. There one can see clear gender biasness towards the girls in choosing the educational institution by the parents.

In India, most of the literature is on the Muslims of 'mainland India'. The Muslims of Assam are regarded somewhat different from the Muslims of the other parts of the country in terms of their practices (Singh & Khan, 2001) Therefore, there is a gap of research in this area. In the Goalpara District of lower Assam, majority of the population is from Muslim community and the Muslim woman is disadvantaged in two ways- as minority and as women- as far as education is concerned.

So, the present paper will discuss the issue of educational choice for the children among Muslim families in a Muslim majority district of Assam by focussing on the interrelation between socioeconomic status, community beliefs and gender roles.

In the study, mainly non-probability sampling is used for collection of data. The study has been conducted by taking into account both primary and secondary sources of data. Primary data are collected by interviewing school teachers by using semi-structured interview method with the help of an interview schedule. The unstructured interview method is used for collecting data from the parents with the help of an interview guide. In the study, secondary data are collected from official websites for census data, government documents for District information and journals, books and articles on education of the Muslims in India.

NEGOTIATING AN UNCERTAIN TERRAIN: GENDER STUDIES IN AN UNDERGRADUATE CLASSROOM

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This paper is an attempt to articulate certain theoretical insights drawn from my pedagogic experiences in an undergraduate classroom at the University of Hyderabad. As faculty in **Women's Studies, I have largely taught at the M.Phil and Ph. D. levels. The undergraduate program is located in a large building in what is known as the South Campus—about 2 kilometers away from the different Schools housing the post graduate departments, albeit on the same sprawling campus. The spatial separation between the M.A./research level students and the undergraduate students has several implications. While the students in the undergraduate program are freshly out of schools or junior colleges, they have a direct entry into a University like space, which is not typically like a regular college. At the same time, they are not integrated or only partially integrated into the atmosphere and activities of the main campus due to the spatial and pedagogic arrangements and hierarchies.**

I will attempt to analyze the pedagogic situations and contingencies in my undergraduate classroom against this backdrop. I went into the class believing that a subject like Gender Studies would help the young students to address some of the issues they may be faced with—issues emerging out experiences of gender discrimination or sexual harassment, a sense of isolation, silences around questions of sexuality and the connections between caste, gender and (extra)academic life in the University. I had previously offered courses in English Language and Comparative Literature with a certain degree of success, to undergrads in the same program. At that point, I had felt that the popularity of some those courses could be attributed to the sustained pedagogic/curricular emphasis on an engagement with questions of caste and gender and the lived experience of the students. However, I was unprepared for the Gender Studies classroom and its challenges. I would often run into a stone wall while trying something that had worked so well in my previous classes. For instance, in a Comparative Literature classroom, speaking of the world outside and around the text led to an energetic and sometimes fraught discussion. In the Gender Studies classroom, I found myself struggling to be taken seriously. A majority of students appeared to think that Gender Studies could be dealt with a set of assumptions and opinions and casual observations. Any reference to the complexity of everyday practices and experiences would frequently get read into this pre-existing format. Moving away/out of a text had yielded a lot in my other courses; however in the gender studies class, I sometimes found myself centering certain concrete, tangible, printed texts. I also realized that a gender studies course is largely understood as a gender sensitization program, and one needed to address the risks and constraints of that understanding.

This paper is an attempt to reflect on my attempts to grapple with the challenges mentioned above. I also hope to link my pedagogic experience in a particular classroom setting to larger questions about the popular-historical understanding of gender/gender studies in India. What are the structural gaps in a school curriculum that leads to a near absence of any complex engagement with gender when students enter higher education? How does one recover the politics of lived experience in a gender studies classroom even as one introduces it as an academic subject calling for rigour as well as commitment? In other words, how may one work

through the imbrications of texts, lives and pedagogic practices to unsettle the commonsense of gender in a classroom, located in an transitional, intermediary space between the school and the university.

GENDER ISSUES, SOCIALIZATION AND EDUCATION

Divya Parashar

This study caters to the experiences of researcher by being in the semi-urban community of Punjab for a year. School experiences related to small kids and community experiences related to the living place of researcher leads to various questions and seeking their explanations underlying in the perception, expectation and socialization of a girl child. Role of socialization is **strong enough that it doesn't allow a girl child to question about her own identity. This relates to** the hidden curriculum aims to make these children open by making boys more sensitive to these issues as well as strengthening girls to develop their own identity with respect to equality. It also allows seeking an explanation lying in various situations pertaining to upbringing of the girl child and development of her identity. This identity development remains the responsibility of family and community members.

This research is also an attempt to seek transformation from home environment to school environment. Impact of school learning and internalization of social roles needs to be looked at in the area. Learning in the school is inclusive of textbook, being a part of curriculum, which incorporates knowledge transfer using textbooks designed during 2005. This also includes textbook analysis of primary classes and related perceptions of students and teachers in context of gender. Reflections on understanding and perceptions of school students were collected which signify a different assignment of subjects, participation in co-curricular activities, and role division among students on gender basis. Expectations of teachers and parents also play an important role in the development of gendered identity and stereotypes among children.

The internalization of social norms by young ones of the society helps them to set their roles by labeling themselves as boys and girls. This further leads to establishment of patriarchy, as clearly observable in north India. This study is documentation of those situations and experiences which tells us that inspite of the policy formation; women are still marginalized on many aspects because of being women and trapped in the social structure of our society.

NATIONALISM, EDUCATION AND SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF WOMEN

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Assam is a state comprising of the multi-linguistic groups and where the concept 'who is an Assamese' is politicised, defined and redefined again and again. Accordingly new expectations on

women were imposed as they are regarded as the custodian of tradition, mainly with regards to dressing pattern. This paper attempts to discuss how curriculum helps towards this end by looking into the portrayal of 'Assamese woman' in the SCERT textbooks. It also intends to understand if and how stereotypical roles are perpetuated through curriculum taking into consideration two aspects: (a) depiction of female characters in the textbooks; (b) mechanism of 'hidden curriculum' to perpetuate gender roles.

For the study, both primary and secondary data was used. Primary data have been collected by interviewing the teachers and students using unstructured interview schedule and through non-participant observation. Purposive and convenient sampling was used to select the Middle English schools. Purposive sampling was used to select Assamese teachers and students and Assamese textbooks from Middle English section. Further, simple random sampling was used to select respondents for interaction. Secondary data was collected through analysis of various education policies and the analysis of the textbooks. Presence and absence of woman from different cultures are used as criteria for analysis of the textbooks. Apart from the way woman characters are related to male characters in the textbooks are analysed.

The study reveals that women are identified with their dressing pattern. Again woman wearing particular attire found space in the textbooks as the protagonist or most of the time someone related to the protagonist, are portrayed as representing Assamese culture .Data collected through interview with the teachers and students revealed education of girls is viewed as period training that will help them in housekeeping. It is seldom considered as a process to take up higher education and subsequently a career.

MOTHERS IN SCHOOLING PROCESS: A STUDY OF MICRO-MOTHERING ACTIVITIES AND CHILDREN'S SCHOOLING ACHIEVEMENTS IN A VILLAGE IN ODISHA

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Mothers as crucial agents of cultural reproduction has been widely debated and acknowledged since the seminal work of Bernstein (1997). Drawing on Bernstein's perspective, several studies have established the key role of mothering practices on children's everyday life process. Schooling, being one of the essential and core elements of the everyday life process of a child; to a large extent relies on the role that mothers play along with certain other factors for schooling to be successful and effective. Several studies have confirmed the nuanced mothering practices in children's schooling process. However, the crucial role of mothers and the dynamics of mothering activities in schooling process has been lesser studied in India. An attempt has been made through this paper to explore the micro-mothering activities contributing to children's educational achievement. Concomitantly, the paper also attempts to look into the factors that influence the micro-mothering activities. The present micro study which has been conducted in a village in Odisha also aims to understand several mothering activities concerning children's schooling process in the context of differential educational qualifications of mothers and their varied location in the caste/community and class hierarchy. Moreover, the present study is also

interested in understanding the position and involvement of mothers in the family decision-making process relating to children's educational and career prospects. This explorative study develops its empirical understanding from a village study in Odisha conducted in the year 2009-10. The study found remarkable instances of maternal involvement in children's schooling process that gradually gets proficient with the increasing level of mothers' educational attainments. Educated mothers with their own educational expertise are found to be taking keen interest and simultaneously providing concrete guidance in their children's everyday schooling process. These mothers, along with their spouses also play a key role in the decision making process concerning children's present and future educational and occupational career choices. This does not happen in case of the poorly educated and non-literate mothers. Although, their love and care are so much required, their presumed unawareness and lack of decision making ability keep them out of any important family decision making process. These mothers completely rely on their spouses or other family members who have a greater say in decisions regarding children's schooling and future career plans. The not-literate or mothers with lesser educational knowledge deeply regret their inability, while they rather lament on fate that has made them unable to influence positively their children's present and future course of life unlike, the educated mothers.

A FEMINIST TAKE ON NARRATIVES OF WOMEN IN SCIENCE

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"Inspiring, informative, ingenious...meet twenty-five of India's most celebrated female scientists. From astrophysics to zoology, learn what it takes to make a career in science.

Who were they encouraged by? What did they struggle against? What motivated them to chose their particular field? What are the key questions at the cutting edge of modern research? What are the Big Questions that they are striving to find answers for?

Why chose a life in science at all?

Each of the women in this essential guide gives a short overview of their life and career. The profiles are accompanied by "Know-it-ology"—a brief introduction to their particular field of research. Each of the scientists describes her own "Eureka Moment".

This is the summary description of the book, *A Girl's Guide to a Life in Science* on the website of the Indian Academy of Sciences, Women in Science. Published by Zubaan, a leading feminist press in India, the book is a reformulation of *Lilavati's Daughters: Women Scientists in India*, edited by well known scientists Rohini Godbole and Ram Ramaswamy and published by the Indian Academy of Sciences. Both these texts signal a 'weak', but significant moment in the collaboration between women in science and feminisms in India.

Contextualised within the theoretical frameworks of feminist science critiques that a) underscore the absence and erasure of women in science and b) highlight the engendered nature and

practice of science, the paper examines the two texts as efforts of women scientists to document and visibilise their journeys and trajectories in science. The paper argues that in their efforts to attract more women and girls into science, women scientists in India are shifting from the position of denying the role of gender in scientific spaces and also uncritically accepting the **discourse of merit in science**. While both texts address the void of not having 'role models' for girls and women to take up science, they fall short of looking critically at science and scientific institutions from a feminist perspective. The paper is an effort in the direction of strengthening the linkages between not only the constituencies but also the discourses, of women in science and feminist science criticism in India.

ROLE OF WOMEN FEDERATION IN EDUCATION: EXPERIENCE OF MAHILA SAMAKHYA PROGRAMME IN ASSAM

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The National Policy on Education 1986 was a result of an extensive debate on the challenges **faced by the education system**. The Women's movement had **focused attention on social and economic constrains** that prevented women from accessing education. This issue was clearly articulated in the National Policy. The Chapter titled 'Education for Women's Equality' was hailed as a radical departure from conventional approaches. To translate the goals of National Policy Education 1986 (NPE) the Mahila Samakhya Programme (MSP) - education for **women's equality**- was initiated in 1989 to redress traditional gender imbalances in educational access and achievement.

The MS programme conceived of women's education as much broader than literacy, and a process of collective, critical reflection and active self determination to change conditions **constraining women's lives**. It brings social justice and gender justice agenda together, through a focus on the empowerment of socially and economically marginalised women.

Thus the critical focus in MS is recognising the centrality of education in empowering women to achieve equality. The strategy and institutional method to achieve the same is to organize **women into collective called 'Mahila Sangha' at the village level and 'Sangha Federation' at Gram Panchayat and block levels**. The vision of MSP envisages the development of strong, vibrant sanghas/federation with a capacity for autonomous functioning.

Assam Mahila Saamta Society started implementing the programme Mahila Samakhya in Assam in the year 1997 in three districts and now scale up to twelve districts of Assam covering 3229 villages. Till March 2013, a total of 3702 Mahila Sanghas have been formed in the programmes districts. These Sanghas have been federated into 29 block level federations of which 22 are

working as autonomous federations. Through the process total 1, 95604 women have been associated in the programme till date.

Throughout the process of rural women empowerment it is reflected that the sangha/federations have been playing a proactive role to create conducive environment for accessing education for women and girls. They have come up with some innovative interventions to address the need of **women's and girl's education and thereby creating space for them to become equal partner and take charge of village educational process.**

This paper will make an effort to highlight a role of federations that playing to ensure women's and girls' education.

BREAKING THE GLASS CEILING: HOW WOMEN IN ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP NEGOTIATE INSTITUTIONAL SPACES TO REACH THE TOP

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The glaring underrepresentation of women in leadership positions in academic institutions is an issue that has roused much concern world-wide yet has defied solution. Studies indicate that in higher education globally men outnumber women at about five to one at middle management level and about twenty to one at senior management level. While there are many women at the lower rungs of the academic pyramid, as we move up the number conspicuously and steadily diminishes. Academic discourses surrounding this phenomenon which dwell upon the various inequities and challenges that women academics face in their career pursuit preventing them from entering the higher positions, point towards the personal, structural and cultural factors which vie with one another to hold women back from breaking the glass ceiling.

In India's North-east too the scenario is not much different and one encounters only a handful of such women holding senior administrative positions. This study is an attempt to understand how these women who have climbed up the ladder scaling the gender barriers have negotiated with the institutional spaces challenging inequities and fences to claim their niche. While generating a database of women in top administrative positions in this part of the country, this study will bring together practical experiences from the lives of these women which will help locate realities that constitute the context within which women academics in the North-east find themselves and thereby facilitate the exploration of possible strategies to grapple with these realities.

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL (HISTORICAL) NARRATIVES IN A GENDER PEDAGOGY CLASSROOM

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The suggested paper discusses the importance of deconstructing hegemonic, male, heterosexual, upper-class, upper-caste dominated and eurocentric historiography to understand gender relations from a feminist, subaltern angle in a gender pedagogy classroom. It elaborates the U.S.-American-Austrian historian Gerda Lerner's argument that women's historiography is important for a personal as well as a societal development. Furthermore, the paper discusses Lerner's proposal that every woman should study women's historiography for at least a year in her life.

Putting personal historical narratives in the centre of interest, the suggested paper examines how such narratives influence identities and subjectivities. It analyses how historiography can be deconstructed by considering students' (family/women) biographies. Doing so, it highlights the potentials as well as dangers of looking at the same. The paper's concept is designed for gender pedagogy classrooms from college onward. It discusses subjectivity finding processes in which historical discourses play an important role on a societal, political, economic, social and personal level. It addresses students who are in the process of developing an analytical way of thinking and are able to interlink identities and subjectivities with historical narratives. Following Nancy Hartsock's *Feminist Standpoint*, in which she implies that experiences amplify possibilities of change, the presented concept focuses on the possibility of students changing their subject position by looking at historical discourses from personal/family experiences. The subject position plays an important role in so far as it enables students to contribute to a non-mainstream perspective toward history. It is a feminist intervention that this concept seeks to provide.

Looking at historical narratives in a classroom enables students, whose communities, castes, religion, beliefs, traditions, sex, gender and sexual orientations are left out in mainstream historiography, to explore and narrate their (family/women) experiences on historical events. **Spivak's concept of a subaltern woman's 'always-already object position', which will be** discussed in the theoretical framework, can be deconstructed by using narratives as a tool to analyse various subject positions and to respect different positions.

As 'selves are never fixed (...) [and subjects] (...) both temporal (...) and relational' this paper proposes an approach that allows students to look at their family's, particularly women's, narratives to start two processes. One, to deconstruct mainstream historiography and to contribute with a subaltern and feminist perspective on history through personal experiences, and second, to encourage students to look at their subject positions in relation to their family-history. To carry out a gender perspective in classrooms in a later stage of their carriers, it is beneficial for students of gender pedagogy to be aware of their own background. The presented concept analyses how historical events and historiography influence subject positions. Furthermore, it discusses how such reflexion processes can take place in a classroom and how

teachers can prepare for an enriching, respectful and non-discriminatory dialogue between students of different standpoints.

SEXUALITY EDUCATION AND SCHOOL SPACES IN MUMBAI

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Adolescent sexuality education in India is a contested site. It has historically raised and in the present continues to generate conflicting concerns from various groups – parents and families, governments, religious organisations, educational institutions, NGOs, the media and civil society in general. It is important to examine the institution of education in India as a site where knowledge about sexuality is produced, organised and regulated. Critically engaging with the politics of sexuality education in contemporary urban India by examining it at various levels will allow one to do this. This will entail engaging specifically with schools and adolescents in Mumbai around the question of adolescent sexuality and sexuality education.

I will borrow from sociology of education and more specifically Michael Apple to examine the school as a site where contestations over ideas of sexuality are produced, where students, teachers and principals negotiate and produce meanings around sexuality. This will borrow from a post-structuralist position that maintains that sexuality is discursively constituted. The school becomes one of the sites where this happens- and sexuality education classes are the official **sites of this discursive production (Louisa Allen 2011:13)**. The other 'unofficial sites' within the school spaces include corridors, school bus, assembly lines, playground, toilets, corridors and so on. These sites discursively produce knowledge about sexuality- and how it is regulated, controlled as well as negotiated by the different adolescents, teachers and principals. To examine this discursive practice it is important to cull out scandals, censorship, transgression and forms of surveillance and so on. At that same time, it is necessary to examine how these discourses on sexuality education frame the questions of sex and gender. What role does it play **in putting 'sex' back into the domain of the biological/natural/prediscursive?** What are the locations of sexuality when sexuality education is taught? How do the school and its spaces re-enforce heteronormativity through regulation and control of sexuality as well as sexuality education? How is sexuality thought about and constructed through this pedagogy? Is it located in the domain of the modern, of science, of the secular?

For the moment, one can hope to draw out the spaces of sexual culture in the Indian context methodologically through in depth personal interviews.

Since I will examine school spaces in retrospective, it might not be possible to understand how sexuality is produced in schools simply from these narratives. The only understanding I can arrive about the production of knowledge on sexuality and the regulation of sexuality will be through observation of sexuality education classes (or whatever other name the school might want to grant it), through interviews with teachers/principals, and through retrospective

narratives from young people. The analysis of these narratives will include the questions of memory and narratives and how they shape reflections on sexuality in schools spaces.

I will observe classes in private schools in Mumbai. While examining schools spaces, it is clear that I will examine the private school space to see what kind of sexual subject is created there, in a very specific context and space.

GENDER JUSTICE AND THE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS: QUESTIONS FOR FEMINISM TODAY

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I recently co-edited a special issue of Anveshi's broadsheet on sexual harassment and gender justice in the universities at Hyderabad. What I found troubling, although not surprising, was the prevailing administrative ignorance and disinterest in responding to complaints about sexual harassment. Even where the institutional regulations listed preventive mechanisms and solemnly proclaimed a commitment to dealing with harassment seriously, in most universities the mandatory committees were either nonexistent or convened only to deal with specific complaints and mete out **what they considered apt "punishment."** **Most of the complaints are dealt with in secret; committee members are often unfamiliar with gender-sensitive rules of inquiry, regard complaints as trivial or motivated, and believe that justice involves sermonising the perpetrator and the victim alike to behave better; and there are rarely any lessons learned from any "case"** to prevent a recurrence or worse within the institution. Needless to say, institutional mechanisms or the will to deal with larger questions of privacy, dignity, sexist language, social identity, and sexual difference are missing. And this even when such issues figure in the curriculum and when **student organizations take up a range of other "political" causes quite routinely.** A major conceptual blockage here could be that sexual harassment is largely viewed as a personal (extraordinary) dispute that calls for a legal settlement, rather than as an aspect emerging from the everydayness of social life on campus.

This experience has left me thinking how as a teacher I would face the challenge of creating a space with equal opportunities and choices, along with a sense of responsibility towards the larger community. In this paper I attend to some of these dilemmas and think aloud means of building a gender sensitive classroom and by extension, such a campus.

Some basic questions I seek to explore include:

In a university setup, what *pro-active* (preventive, rather than merely punitive) role should a statutory body like GS-CASH play?

What are the ways in which we might think of creating communities committed to equality, harmony and justice—rather than post-facto "disposal" of complaints?

How might address the new experiences and questions (of desire and sexuality, free speech and hate speech, solidarities and tensions within/between existing social identities and groups) that university students today deem to be of great interest and importance?

PREVENTION OF SEXUAL HARASSMENT IN INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN ASSAM: MYTHS AND REALITY, STRATEGIES AND PRACTICE

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The most significant contribution of the women's movement in the last few decades has been to challenge and debunk the notion of 'private' and 'public' issues. For generations women have been silenced into inaction for fear of social stigma, shame and rejection. Despite our awareness of the reality however, we are yet to accept without a fight the unpalatable truth that sexual harassment at workplace is not the problem of an individual woman—it disturbs the dynamics of the workplace and affects the status of women at large—it is about power play and sexual politics, it occurs with the abuse of power. This is especially true of the institutions of higher education as, traditionally, these have been esteemed as seats of learning and sacrosanct intellectual domains supposedly untouched by the "stigma" of sexual harassment. In this context, it is pertinent to note that the North East and Assam have operated as symbols of gender equity and considerable egalitarianism in terms of women's rights, freedom, participation in decision making and empowerment, in comparison to the other states of India in the national psyche. The present study would debunk this notion and subvert the existing myths through an exposition of the real situation in the institutions of higher education in the state of Assam. The paper contends that fifteen years after the Supreme Court has laid down the Vishakha Guidelines and a year since new inclusions in the Draft Bill for prevention of Sexual Harassment at workplace, most of the institutions of higher education in the state are still in the dark regarding the implementation and practice of the SC directives, which continue to languish on paper. In other words, most of the higher education institutions of Assam have failed to treat sexual harassment as a serious organizational problem or policy matter to be integrated into service rules. The above constitutes the tour de force of the paper & outlines its ambit.

Methodology: The above hypothesis shall be validated through a survey undertaken by the writers, which cuts across five districts and approximately 35-50 colleges of Assam that are affiliated to Dibrugarh University, located in Dibrugarh, Assam. A questionnaire was prepared to elicit/collect information on the status of Complaints' Committees in institutions of higher education, existence or otherwise and role of Women's Cells and Centres in terms of initiatives and interventions in this regard, cases handled, enquiries constituted and outcome and institutional policies, practices and strategies for prevention and redress of sexual harassment at workplace. The said survey represents and encapsulates the situation in the state.

THE POLITICS OF GENDERED PEDAGOGY: A TELEOLOGICAL QUEST FOR IMBIBING "DECENCY"

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This paper tries to attempt an analysis into the politics of subverting the progressive trends which feminists and other farsighted educationists are attempting to make in our country, eg: **Sex education. With the establishment of Departments or Schools of Women's Studies in a few universities in the last few decades, there has been a slow but steady increase in consciousness of anti patriarchal ideas among the Indian youth. While a large organized feminist movement has not developed in India unlike the "waves" in the West, there** has been the birth of feminists and other activists who have been able to discern the inherently patriarchal structure of our education system and clamoured for reforms and introduction of sex education and other such gender sensitisation programmes in the curriculum. The reaction of the patriarchal establishment, state, society, educational boards included, has been, as expected, not too conducive. It is only after extensive agitation that minor concessions have been made. However, these have alarmed the patriarchal elements of the society. The conservatives have been counter agitating against these reforms. Eg: Stopping sex education.

Amidst all this external agitations, there is a subtle but very determined politics of subversion which is actively at work to subvert the efforts to reformers, activists and feminists to render their efforts useless or worse use their very efforts to further the patriarchal interests of gendering and heteronormativity. Some very glaring examples can be those of attempts of rewriting the syllabi of school boards to suit patriarchal interests. Firstly the sex education courses have been severely warped, often beyond recognition. The paper makes use of critical a **study of the sex education course in the West Bengal board named "Jibon Shoili" meaning "Life Process" and the hypocritical and inadequate nature of the biology courses of three boards (West Bengal, CBSE and ICSE).**

The morality and convictions of the future generations depend on its education system. And that is precisely why the educational system is so vital for patriarchy. The ideals of gender, gender **roles, sexualities, ideas of the "normal" and all such other ideas are imbibed in an individual by** the education system. The syllabi is thus constantly being changed to accommodate patriarchal values, norms and create gendered identities of the masculine (read superior) man and feminine (read inferior) woman. Some cases explored by this paper are those of tampering of history syllabus in Madhya Pradesh state board glorifying the character of Sita and the role of submissive women. The paper also attempts to throw light on the imminent threat posed by right wing communal politics among both Hindus and Muslims and how such hard line politics adversely affects gender relations and furthers the cause of patriarchy. The paper also analyses the progressive voices against these retrograde forces and how such conservative elements can be countered and consciousness can be spread among the masses.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT, RAGGING AND HIGHER EDUCATION CAMPUSES: THE CASE OF JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY, KOLKATA

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The debates surrounding the violent attack of the spurned JNU student on his classmate and the Pavitra Bharadwaj case in Delhi University in the past few months have redirected public attention and feminist concern towards sexual harassment in campuses of higher education. Several agencies have been conducting safety audits of city spaces, particularly college and university campuses after the Delhi rape in December 2012. The University Grants Commission constituted the 'Task Force set up to Review the Measures for Ensuring Safety of Women on Campuses and Programmes for Gender Sensitization' to ensure that sites of higher education would become models of gender equity free from violence. The hasty passage of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act in April 2013 has added to the urgency of discussing its implications for universities which have so far been following the Vishakha guidelines.

It is in this context that a gender audit was undertaken at Jadavpur University, Kolkata in 2013. The extensive questionnaire survey included a section on students' awareness, perceptions and experience of harassment, including sexual harassment and ragging on campus. The proposed paper will present some findings of this survey and attempt to read them against the experiences of cases reported in the Cell for Gender Awareness and Action Against Sexual Harassment (CGAAASH) as well as the Anti-ragging Cell at Jadavpur University, arguing for a need to be attentive to the increasing overlaps and connotations between the two.

Both cells are active and receive several complaints, yet students reported low levels of awareness about sexual harassment and ragging on campus although they were more vocal about physical, verbal and psychological abuse. While this may be reflective of ignorance about what constitutes sexual harassment and ragging, it could also be a measure of students' reluctance to report these incidents since their knowledge of these episodes would have clear legal implications. Equally, there could be an inability to comprehend these categories as discrete since the lines between different forms of harassment are becoming increasingly blurred in recent cases of campus violence. Cases of ragging often carry elements of sexualized bullying which are frequently glossed over in the proceedings of these cases. The CGAAASH has repeatedly felt that these issues need to be focused on and handled differently. More recently CGAAASH has been receiving cases of organised groups, consisting primarily, but not exclusively of boys, harassing girls physically, verbally and sexually. Since the girls were unable to report individual names of those present in these "mobs", CGAAASH has had to refer these cases back to the anti-ragging cell who are more equipped to handle group harassment. Equally, many ragging cases are being brought to the CGAAASH by the students' unions deliberately because they feel that the offenders are likely to have milder

punishments there. The stringency with which the UGC is handling cases of ragging, directly through its helpline is perhaps responsible for this phenomenon. These experiences have underlined the need to revise our ways of classifying and tackling sexualized violence on **campus, to revisit laws pertaining to different offences which frame students' perceptions and reporting of them and to explore ways in which they may be deployed in conjunction rather than in isolation.**

MUSLIM WOMEN & ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION: A CASE STUDY OF UTTAR PRADESH

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Right to education got the status of Fundamental Right in the year 2003 after 86th Constitutional Amendment in the form of Article 21-A, though it was already mentioned in the Directive Principle of the State Policies. Role of education for the development of any society, in turn the nation building need not be emphasized again since its multi-dimensional value has been proved beyond any doubt. It is contemplated as the most important tool for the betterment and empowerment of any society. It is equally important to recognize the fragmented nature of the society like ours. Indian society is highly divided and fragmented, so the status of education among various sections also varies. In India women constitutes around 50% of the population in terms of resource usage but the magnitude of illiteracy is very high among them. There is an immense gap between the educational status of men and women in Indian society, among these broader and homogenous groups, Muslim women stand in their own category. The status of Muslim women in higher education is appalling and even lesser than the Schedule Castes. In sociological context, education is not only the need of an individual but also the need of the society to which it belongs. The main objective of this paper is to bring out the problems which are faced by Muslim women in their daily lives and also to highlight the path that has been **followed by the religious leaders in women's education along with the laws and policies made by the state and their execution.** Higher Education is the foremost factor which can make the life of a Muslim woman better as it determines the social and economic status for them. My presentation will focus on the issues faced by Muslim women in governing their lives and also their access to the Higher education as we cannot afford to overlook the fact that how simply they become the victims of massive exploitation as being uneducated in the 21st century. However, an educated Muslim woman can make important contribution into the socio-economic development of the society as well in the country.

CONSTRUCTED WOMANHOOD: RELIGIOUS REFORMISM AND CONTEMPORARY MUSLIM WOMEN IN KERALA

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The proposed paper aims to problematize the gender discourses around the category of 'Muslim women' in Kerala by looking at the promotion of education and religious revivalism among them in the of material as well as non-material or economic and social benefits that they have gained through Gulf-migration and Kerala Model of Development. The study mainly analyzes how the reformist and revivalist movements among Kerala Muslims have confined Muslim women to narrowly defined roles, relegating them to political and economic inferiority in the public sphere.

In the context of India, Gail Minault acknowledges that Muslim women were even more isolated from social and cultural change than were their men, and even more invisible to history than other Indian women. In her attempt to portray Indian Muslim women in their historical context and in the quest to characterize the invisible Muslim women, she pursues many strategies, such as: **as an issue, as symbols of the reformers', as an object of men's programmes, and through insider's perception (Minault 1998:1-10).**

The vivid presence of religious reform and revivalism, the material as well as non-material gains from the Gulf migration, and the residual impact of Kerala Model of Development have essentially shaped the socio-religious situation of Muslim women in contemporary Kerala. As in the general case of Muslim women, the number of women being educated and the amount of education women receive have both expanded markedly since the formation of Kerala state. The enrolment of girls in primary school has increased more than twofold and there has been drastic increase at the secondary and tertiary levels. Despite all these changes, Muslim women remain underrepresented at all social spheres, when compared to men. They constitute only a mere 5.9 per cent of the total workforce in the state. This study aims to **problematize this 'under-representation' of Kerala Muslim women, focusing on its causes, impacts, and their significance to both societies and to women's lives.**

THE NATION AND SCHOOLING: EXPLORING THE PERCEPTIONS OF 'NATION' AT KUMUD VIDYAMANDIR ENGLISH SCHOOL

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The school has always been one of the most significant sites for the indoctrination of the idea of the 'nation'. The school, as a material as well as an ideological space, therefore plays a key role in the construction of students as national subjects. This is true for schools that cater not just to specific religious or political interests, RSS -run schools for instance, but even those that claim to

be 'secular'. The paper looks at one such school in the Deonar region in Mumbai, Kumud Vidyamandir English School and explores the ways in which the ideas of 'nation' and national belonging are constructed, fashioned, re-fashioned and even challenged. A section of the paper also attempts to understand how students perceive the 'nation' as an affective category and what are the ways in which they negotiate the 'official knowledge' received within the school with their lived experience and particular social context.

The school in question is an interesting space for several reasons-it is a private school run by a five-member trust, all trustees being upper-caste Maharashtrians, and happens to have a fairly well-balanced ratio of Hindu and Muslim students. A seemingly secular space then, the school offers opportunities for the construction of certain kinds of ideas of the 'nation' and the 'citizen'. The paper includes an ethnographic study of the school in addition with interactions and informal interviews with students as well as teachers to understand these ideas and students' perceptions of the same.

BETWEEN ILL EQUIPPED SCHOOLS AND NEW SCHEMES: IS GIRLS' SCHOOLING CREATING SPACES FOR LIBERATION OR REINFORCING INEQUALITY?

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In the neo liberal context thrust on universalization of elementary education has lead to the formulation of many government schemes that focus on facilitating girls participation in public system. These schemes include distribution of free text books, uniforms, meals, various scholarships, hostels, bicycles, educational tours etc.

There are state wise variations in such schemes. For example, free distribution of sanitary napkins and distribution of iron tablets are additional huge projects in a state like Delhi. In the absence of special administrative support for handling this extra work huge amount of teachers' time is spent in implementing these schemes . Additionally, there are election duties and various survey related work that renders schools teacher-less for long durations. Right to free and compulsory education act has increased enrolment and crowded the government schools beyond recognition . The infrastructure and pupil teacher ratio leaves not much physical or mental space for quality teaching/interaction.

Enrolment and sustaining girls education has always been a problem owing to accessibility and patriarchal norms and it is sometimes claimed that such interventions have helped in overcoming these hindrances to a remarkable extent. The following presentation argues one, that while these interventions have increased accessibility, especially of the girls from the deprived sections, the same may also be obfuscating the issues of quality and equality in education. Two, more importantly, the instrumental burden of administrative and academic performance--defined in restricted sense of exam results etc. is not allowing the institutional spaces for enhancing the understanding of patriarchy and inequality and engagement with the issues of sexuality that requires creative handling among the adolescence groups. More so as under insecure job conditionality, disempowered teachers are reduced to mere implementer of the

orders from above thus, by and large, reducing schooling to an instrument of reproduction rather than sites for transformation or search for alternatives.

SITUATING INSTITUTIONAL SPACES: AN ENGAGEMENT WITH GIRLS EXPERIENCES OF SCHOOLING

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Girls' experiences of schooling, attains relevance and distinction, not only owing to the nature of historicity of girls' education in India, but also to the feminist historiographical explications in the domain, that underscore the gendered terrain intrinsic to the social and political discourse of women and girls' education. Contemporary research on gender and education in India emphasises that gender differentiated ideologies cut across other intersectionalities contouring the nature of girls' participation and experiences of schooling. This becomes particularly significant for girls situated at the social, economic and political peripheries. In fact gender differentiated experiences are often lived by girls through embodied subordinations that inform and are in turn informed by the ideological frames of patriarchy.

This paper situates itself within this larger context and draws its relevance based on the existing gaps in literature on gender and education, both in terms of political engagement with gender as a choice of subject and methodology. In fact, much of the literature in this arena presents an extrapolation from the voices and experiences of research participants such that the reader is unable to access their situated experiences. This attempt at abstractness is also combined with gaps in identification of appropriate tools for data collection. Also, much existing research on **girls' or children's experiences** of schooling is not contoured from a feminist epistemological frame of reference. In fact experiences of schooling in extant literature are often construed through responses of children and at best of teachers without taking into perspective other stakeholders such as parents and other family members and religious leaders in the community who exercise a crucial role.

This paper explores girls' experiences of schooling with specific emphasis on social, economic and cultural factors that impact enrollment, performance and retention in school and further aspirations for education beyond the primary school. The paper also views the factors within the school environment that support or thwart their access and sustenance in school. Thus it attempts to understand the processes by which institutions, primarily that of the school and family shape the experiences of girls' schooling. Data for this paper was collected in the Mamidipally Gram Panchayat located at KothurMandal of the Mahabubnagar District in Andhra Pradesh (AP). Mahabubnagar ranks the lowest in Human Development Indicators in comparison to the other districts in AP. Drawing from the theoretical frame of feminist standpoint for its methodological frame, the paper uses criterion based sampling and in depth interviews to elicit data. This research while identifying the process of schooling for girls as reinforcing them into the feminine also affirms the possibility of the school under particular circumstances as a space that accords release to girls from the relentless nature of household tasks. It thus equips them to contest the private and its gendered associations to exercise their agency. This becomes

pertinent since the significant role of government schools in socio-political milieu is not acknowledged as providing opportunities for the possibility for freedom in extant literature. This **paper is an outcome of an engagement into girls' experiences of schooling and calls for further research that may extend our understanding beyond the existing terrain of scholarship in the area.**

HOME AND SCHOOL SETTING PARAMETERS FOR PERFORMANCE FOR GIRLS

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The home and the school play influential roles in for adolescent girls. In Northern India performing agency in symbolic and physical spaces provided by these institutions is governed by values, ideologies, rules, and relationships on the one hand and big and small and open and closed spaces on the other. This phenomenological study suggests that adolescent girls' operate by a nonlinear construction of contexts that is tested for cultural appropriateness and motivated by perceived outcomes of agentic performances for self. The findings of this paper reinforce that performance and agency in the academic sense needs to be facilitated through culturally relevant career counseling.

The focus group proceedings were recorded and the data were then transcribed into Microsoft Word file for thematic analysis in accordance with the practices of the Vancouver School. The participants in the study were 40 girls enrolled in grades 7-10 in five schools in Lucknow. The educational institutions chosen reflect the variegated system of elementary and secondary schools in the city and include students from public and private schools, coeducational and girls-only schools, as well as schools with English versus regional (Hindi) language as the medium of instruction. The membership in different types of schools can be helpful in identifying the particular socio-economic context of individual participants. Thirteen structured focus group discussions collected in the dialogue format, which were facilitated in each case by two moderators and an observer informs this paper.

School is instrumental for the achievement and capacity for agency. However, the educational agenda of the school converges with the goals set by actors in the home sphere. This is elaborated and illustrated by a ranking system of the social institutions. The home is positioned above other institutions, particularly the school, and the primary articulation of obligation or responsibility is oriented towards the parents. Despite the significance attached to the school as a site for the realization of goals and the characterization of teachers and principals as important to learning and opportunities for development, the school staff including teachers is not viewed as career role models. This disjointed relationship between the human components of the school and the school as an institution would appear to disrupt the hermeneutic cycle of the parts making up the whole or vice versa that is characteristic of phenomenological methodology.

It appears from the student dialogues that the participants relate to their teachers in a strictly institutional context of curricular instruction and not in the context of social relations. A gamut of

actors in the home sphere, on the other hand, provides guidance on career matters. Teachers' assistance to develop the students in the direction of their goals is pedagogic and generic.

IMPACT OF CASTE AND GENDER ON PRIMARY EDUCATION IN ASSAM: A CASE STUDY OF KAMRUP

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Any study of primary education in India would assume greater significance when the aspects of caste and gender and their impact are taken into consideration. These are the two crucial factors that influence many aspects of life in a society like India. Such a study will contribute to a better understanding of the interface between education as a part of public policy on one hand and socio-economic development on the other. This study attempts to study how caste and gender impact primary education in Assam. Furthermore, it seeks to grasp the different ways in which students, parents/guardians, and primary school teachers view the prevalence of gender and caste inequality in primary education in Assam. The study attempts to study and understand the dynamics of caste, gender, and education in a society like Assam. As a resident of Kamrup District of Assam I would like to focus on problems faced by Assamese society in the context of caste and gender. My being an insider facilitates my access to people and collection of relevant data.

The research discusses Assam in general in the context of caste, gender and primary education; it concentrates on Kamrup district for its fieldwork and specific observation and analysis. I have used "impact" in the title as the work also discusses the state policies related to caste and gender that are being implemented to improve the access to education and excellence for disadvantaged sections and girls. In this way, the study explores the caste and gender bias in Assam as well as the positive measures proposed and implemented by the state to counter such discrimination.

The present study is based on reviews and analysis collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include data collected through interviews, participatory and non-participatory observations, informal discussion, and case studies. Secondary sources includes clippings from mass media such as newspapers, reports from news channels, articles and books published by scholars, activist and social workers, government reports, reports by NGOs etc.

EDUCATION FOR GENDER EQUALITY AMONG THE MARINE FISHING COMMUNITY IN PUDUCHERRY REGION

Sivakumar. I

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The research paper focused on gender equality through women's education. Education for women is one of the major means of social empowerment of women. Moreover education is a

prerequisite for promoting women's economic empowerment, political participation, health and well-being. The education status of Puducherry is one of the highest in comparison to the rest of India but the condition of the marine fishing villages need to be examined and understood in particular women. The major objectives of the research study to find out the educational status of women and to analyze the major socio-cultural and economic problems are impeding the progress of women's education among the community. This research study found that the gender gap in education in the community, also women who treated as the primary care-givers and producing food, consumption of goods and economic activities. Among the community literate women are empowered in terms of economic participation, gender awareness about girl children education and participated decision making activities etc. but the illiterate women's situation completely different. The research study finding shows that the education leads to the gender equality and women's empowerment among the fishing community.

ज्ञान और शैक्षक संस्थाएं : "स्त्री अध्ययन" ज्ञान के नए क्षतिज के रूप में

डॉ सु प्रिया पाठक

सहायक प्रोफेसर, स्त्री अध्ययन, महात्मा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय हिंदी विश्व विद्यालय,
वर्धा, महाराष्ट्र, 442005, ईमेल : supriya_rajj@yahoo.co.in, मोबाइल नं. 9850200918

महात्मा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय हिंदी विश्व विद्यालय में हिंदी माध्यम में स्त्री अध्ययन की शुरुआत उत्तर भारत के हिंदी पत्रों में मौजूद सामंतीबोध तथा स्त्री प्रश्नों के प्रति उपेक्षा भाव से इतर ज्ञान के एक नए क्षतिज के रूप में स्त्री अस्मिता के निर्माण तथा शैक्षक संस्थाओं में अपनी जगह मुकम्मल करने के इरादे से हुई थी। वगत 10 वर्षों में एक वर्ष के रूप में हिंदी माध्यम में स्त्री अध्ययन की संभावनाओं तथा चुनौतियों पर प्रकाश डालना इस प्रपत्र का उद्देश्य है। हिंदी साहित्य में कहानी, कवियों तथा आत्मकथाओं के रूप में मौजूद स्त्री चर्चा तथा सैद्धांतिक स्त्रीवादी चर्चा के मध्य स्थित द्वंद्व को रेखांकित किया जाना आवश्यक है। हिंदी साहित्य स्त्री चर्चा के संबंध में अपना प्रस्थान बिंदु उत्तर आधुनिकता को मानता है जब कि सैद्धांतिक स्त्री चर्चा स्त्री आंदोलनों तथा विभिन्न वैचारिक परंपराओं की उपज है। जो स्त्री अध्ययन की आधारभूमि तय करता है। स्त्री अध्ययन वस्तुतः स्त्रीवादी दृष्टिकोण की निरंतरता में एक अभिप्राय है जो मनुष्य की मानवता एवं समतामूलक समाज में विश्वास करता है। यह समाज के प्रत्येक तबके के अनुभवों को केन्द्र में रखकर ज्ञान के प्रति एक नया दृष्टिकोण विकसित करने के लिए प्रतिबद्ध है जो समतामूलक ज्ञान की रूढ़ सीमाओं को तोड़कर ज्ञान को उसके वृहद रूप में प्रस्तुत करता है। अन्तरअनुशासनिक वर्ष होने के कारण यह अन्य वर्षों के साथ ज्ञानात्मक संबंध भी स्थापित करता है। स्त्री अध्ययन की कक्षाएं बदलाव की शैक्षणिक-राजनीति के तहत संचालित होती हैं। अर्थात् सामाजिक व्यवस्था में

परिवर्तन इस वषय का केंद्रीय बिंदु है। नीरा देसाई के अनुसार "स्त्री अध्ययन आंदोलन को अकादमिक से एवं अकादमिक को आंदोलन के साथ जोड़ सकता है।" भारतीय स्त्री अध्ययन संगठन के संस्थापक सदस्यों ने भी इसे एक 'शैक्षणिक रणनीति' के रूप में देखा, जिसके द्वारा स्थापित व्यवस्था में परिवर्तन संभव है। न सिर्फ वचारों के स्तर पर बल्कि जमीन स्तर पर भी। उनका मानना है कि हम सभी एक ऐसी दुनिया में जी रहे हैं जो लैंगिक पूर्वाग्रहों एवं पतृसत्तात्मक मूल्यों से ग्रस्त है। इस व्यवस्था में परिवर्तन करने की आवश्यकता है जिसमें 'स्त्री अध्ययन' एक साधन का कार्य करेगा। हिंदी पढ़ाई में जाति, वर्ग और जेंडर की परंपरागत अवधारणाओं के बरक्स स्त्री प्रश्नों के प्रति/जेण्डर संवेनशीलता पैदा करने के लिए इसके ताने-बाने को समझते हुए क्या रणनीतियाँ बनाई जानी चाहिए, इसे समझने का भी प्रयास किया जाएगा। हिंदी प्रदेशों की शैक्षणिक संस्थाओं में स्त्री अध्ययन की उपस्थिति एक मुकम्मल वषय के रूप में किस प्रकार उन इलाकों में व्यापक परिवर्तन में कारगर हो सकती है यह जानना भी रुचकर होगा।

KNOWING IS/ AS BEING: GENDERED IDENTITY AND PERCEPTION IN INSTITUTIONAL SPACE – A LINGUISTIC STUDY

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Fricker (2000) claimed that "To conceive epistemic subjects as social subjects *is* ...to conceive of them as placed in relations of power", and Code (2007) notes that within such relations, acknowledgment "granted or withheld confers or thwarts membership in groups and communities of would-be knowers, grants knowledge claims a hearing or dismisses them out of hand, valorizes or discredits epistemic agency, and much more". Given such claims, it can be asked what are the implications for *emergence/ expression* of subjectivity in 'social spaces' such as institutes of higher education and what kind of epistemic concerns and "patterns of incredulity and cognitive marginalization" define subjecthood and gendered behaviour within such institutional spaces?

This paper therefore will delve into questions like (how) does such an institutional space carve gendered identities and (how) do subjects orient to such an institutional space as gendered (in the sense of Acker 1991)? Drawing on theoretical perspectives from studies such as Kaufman and Felman (2004) (which examines the *felt self* in terms of triple variables of knowledge and intelligence, occupation and cosmopolitanism) and Bandura's (1977, 1986, 1991) notion of *self-efficacy* (as an extension of social learning theory), this paper will look into the expression of self in an institutional set up and will examine how self-efficacy comes into play in the expression and presentation of selfhood in University students. Some other issues that will be addressed in this paper will be i) how does acknowledgement within the peer group become a marker of identity and ii) what expressions of the self trigger cognitive marginalization. Although Gumperz (1959, 1963) notes the interplay of the triple components of a person's identity viz. the person's

felt identity (self concept), the *presentation* of her/his identity to others (presented self) and the *identity imputed* by other to the person, it is to be expected that a young University student's identity will crucially hinge not only on psycho-social development but also her/his epistemic concerns in situated contexts (which themselves are not immune to working forces of power). In line with major sociological studies (Pascarella and Terenzini 1991, 2005) that strived to study changes in college students from developmental theories and college impact models, this study will present a linguistic analysis of identity formation/ expression in University students. In the process it hopes to ground the socialization process of the 'self' both in the individual/ cognitive dimension and organizational/ educational dimension through a linguistic analysis of the self's conversation(s) with the other within peer groups.

DETERMINANTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION CHOICE: A SOCIO-EDUCATIONAL CASE STUDY OF CHOICE OF WOMEN IN ENGINEERING AND LIBERAL ARTS STREAMS

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The field of higher education is abundant with multiple opportunities in terms of course and institutional selection. Seekers of higher education are conditioned by array of factors to make a choice out of given opportunities including the constrained sources. In such circumstances, the participants also get engaged in the process of acquiring credentials and manifestation of stratification pattern deriving from higher education choice. Sociological theories on educational stratification also points that choice is one of the driving force for stratified (e.g- in Indian context-caste, class, gender) educational decisions, which is deeply rooted in the social structure. With changing social, economic and cultural variables, discourses on higher education too has given due importance to the issue of stratification patterns. The issue of stratification and its analysis has been drawn towards inequality and inequity in terms of socio-economic background. However, an emphasis is also generated in regard to distinction of the factors that influence students to choose a particular stream or subject and more so in the context of dissimilarity between professional and non-professional stream. Such thread of understanding also hints at the subjective perceptions that students hold according to their socio-economic profile irrespectively. The paper attempts to discuss different forms of stream choice by female higher education aspirants and pursuers in the context of credential framework and attempts to analyze how they influence the intentions for further work nature of women students attending professional stream like engineering and non- professional stream like liberal arts. It makes an attempt to take stock of women participants and their determinants of choice of stream at undergraduate level. The emphasis lies in emerging with an understanding that choice of stream is a diversified phenomenon and there is prevalence of heterogeneity within women groups. Drawing from primary data in two colleges of Guwahati city, it tries to argue that differential aspects facilitates or hinder choice of streams by women. Even though they come from similar background perception of women on stream choice persists differently, conditioned by other factors equally. It also attempts to contextually argue that credential acquirement in terms of stream choice also indicates possibilities to unfold the meaning of stratification pattern and participation of women in higher education sector. The paper restricts its understanding of stream choice of women in relation to parents' educational

and occupational background. Thus, what are the factors that determine women students from engineering and liberal arts to make choice of their respective streams? Does heterogeneity of choice persists in women group coming from similar background besides inter-sectional? Do women are structurally or *vice versa* almost compelled to opt for the professionally most demanding educational stream like engineering or non-professional stream like liberal arts? Does the factor of credential come into play for women students in both the streams?

THEORISING GENDER IN EDUCATION POLICIES IN INDIA: A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE FROM AUSTRALIA

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The entrenched inferior position of women in Indian society has marginalised them in the formal education system. However, post 1970s movements for women's rights, education of women has gained considerable importance in policy discourse due to its perceived instrumentality in bringing equality and social justice. However, women's educational status is still gloomy even after six decades of developmental planning. The present study analyses the education policies of India from a gender perspective comparing them with two Australian policies. The paper thus compares and contrasts the Indian and Australian policies and culls out the determinants for enhancing the policies related to gender justice. With the inclusive growth agenda in place and pace, the author conceives it to be appropriate to retrospectively interrogate the Indian policies in the light of the policies of a developed country in order to cater for ideas contextually. The study analyses the policies textually with the following research questions (a) how is gender inequality being conceptualized in education policies? (b) to what extent do the policies de-institutionalize gender? The study thus identifies the theoretical reasons behind India's low performance in women's education placing it in a global context. In order to substantiate the arguments at a global level the study has also analysed two policies from Australia, while making a critical review of Australian situation and their policies in an attempt to have an insight into the problems of gender in the education sector of India. This comparison is expected to help us getting out of the parochial understanding of policies and to help in reducing the blind spots in the India policies.

GENDER STUDIES IN SCHOOL EDUCATION: AN ANALYSIS OF A CBSE TEXTBOOK ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND GENDER STUDIES

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New Delhi

In 2013, the Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) introduced a course titled 'Human Rights and Gender Studies' (HR&GS), an elective course for social science students of classes 11 and 12. The course has been introduced at the pilot stage in approximately 60 schools from the academic session 2013-14. Other than introducing students to human rights and gender as

academic fields, HR&GS has been envisaged as a course that will help students develop a respect for human rights and gender, and promote understanding and tolerance.

Feminist critiques have highlighted several problems with the manner of the articulation of gender in textbooks – from stereotypical representations of men and women, to uncritical reproductions of ideas of masculinity and femininity. The lack of criticality with which ideas of the nation, development, tradition, and modernity have been treated has also been discussed, along with the implications of these ideas for women and notions of womanhood. It has also been pointed out **that, often, research done in the areas of Women’s and Gender Studies is not reflected in the content of school textbooks and syllabi.**

In this paper, I examine the HR&GS course, by focusing on, first, the syllabi that have been prepared for classes 11 and 12, and secondly, the content of a textbook for class 11 published by CBSE. In particular I focus upon the Gender Studies section of the course.

This paper analyses the HR&GS course along two main axes. The first is the *academic* content of the Gender Studies units of the HR&GS course. The second is the sensibility towards gender and gender issues that is sought to be imparted to students through this course.

The Gender Studies units of the HR&GS course are intended to introduce students to Gender Studies as an *academic field*, and describe the basic concepts and main issues in the field. However, the textbook gives students a lopsided introduction to the field. This is manifested in various ways, including: it is women, and not all genders, who are implicitly the subject of the course on gender. Also, different sections of the text approach the questions of gender differently, leading to theoretical inconsistencies.

The HR&GS course is also intended to equip students to challenge various injustices stemming from a gendered social order, and to that extent goes beyond being only academic in intent. What are the tools and techniques that the course makes available to students for this purpose and how effective are they? What forms of injustice and exploitation are students being trained to recognise, and what means are suggested as ways of eradicating them? What forms are not discussed? Which forms and means of social transformation are not mentioned in this textbook? These are the broad questions and lenses through which I seek to analyze the HR&GS course and textbook.

**PATRIARCHY, COMMUNITY RIGHTS AND INSTITUTIONS FOR EDUCATION:
COUNTER-DISCOURSE AND NEGOTIATION FOR RIGHTS**

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The normality of silent forms of discrimination, and the manner in which the intimate, familial and the everyday forms of oppression determine political practices and institutional spaces, throw a great challenge to women negotiating spaces and rights in public life. The extension and

legitimacy of the patriarchal practices of the personal- intimate domains to aspects of public life impinge on basic human rights and freedoms of women. The social structure of oppression has remained intact in spite of the constitutional guarantees and the laws appearing with feminist **intervention. The advocacy for 'Personal is Political' falls flat as the 'personal' intimate spaces not** only continues to be heavily guarded, but extends itself and patterns the public and institutional **life for women. These combined with the recent mobilisations over communities' cultural rights** and identity politics, pursued mainly through control over women, provide further sanction to unequal segregated spaces, confinements and restrictions for women. The issues like segregation, seclusion, *purdah* for women in public space get automatically whipped up as **matters of community's cultural rights; while the institutions simply follow the norm in total** disregard of the constitutional provisions they stand apparently committed. This paper attempts to explore the ways in which the patriarchal practices reinforced by right wing politics have **shaped the institutional arrangements for women's education, and have** responded to the aspirations of women for equal access to resources in an otherwise democratic egalitarian Indian constitutional setting and a polity committed to positive-affirmative action for women.

The paper takes up the problems of everyday living for women in educational campuses, **specifically looking at women's education in one of the historic centre of education and 'reforms'** for Muslims of North India, which continues to be representative of educated Muslim opinion and remains in considerable centre-stage of Muslim politics. The general pattern and the problems of attitudes arising out of the general patriarchal setting are common to most universities in India. This paper looks at these dimensions along with the specific social location of an institution that claims – **its 'distinct' cultural heritage catering to Muslims of North India along with a persistent** and strong invocation of the account of its origin and initial history, its importance in the context of recent right wing movements, and the ramifications of these for women on campus.

The paper also looks at the attempts by women on the campus to negotiate spaces and challenge the constraints put on them. It seeks to bring out the innovative ways and use also of the cultural resources to counter the discriminatory discourses and practices. The paper notes the moments of breaking silence and overt resistances as well as non-confrontational strategy of shifting issues that girls employ in order to avoid disciplinary actions.

WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVE IN UNDERGRADUATE AND POST GRADUATE SYLLABUS IN ENGLISH UNDER GAUHATI UNIVERSITY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY

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A syllabus within knowledge system is an outline and summary of topics to be covered in an education or training course. Syllabus in any discipline is qualitatively and quantitatively considered as the foundation for furthering the future investigation in any field. Traditional knowledge is based on a study on men. Women constitute a category outside the purview of the **traditional knowledge system. Women's experience does not find a place in history, nor is she** visible in economic activity; as a result, women remain subordinate to men and discriminated.

Having women's perspective in the curriculum involves a critical instrument to study the problem from the standpoint of women and thus it is possible to remove the invisibility of women from the structure of knowledge. Hence the importance of women's perspective leads to the emergence of feminist view point that studies the social conditions of women in a sexist, male stream and patriarchal society, and enlightens learners about taken for granted sexist practices and gender – blindness of government and community practices that displaced, ignored and silenced women., led to an unequal and discriminating social order and familiarize students with literature written by women, to acquaint them with feminist theory and help them examining issues of women's experience, women's work, selfhood and representation. Syllabus in any subject refers a systematic process of learning with in a specific period. The pattern of syllabus in any discipline has been revised from time to time by introducing current ideas and issues to meet the interest of the student. Keeping this view, the new undergraduate (Major) and Post Graduate Course in English under Gauhati University has developed innovative and expansive thrust areas than the previous ones and are designed in such way that student can understand and use the English language effectively, and familiar themselves with recent issues and trends as represented in some of the best examples of English writing. The aim of the present study is to probe women's perspective into the Undergraduate (Major) and Post Graduate course in English under Gauhati University by analyzing the different papers seek to familiarize students with literature written by women, to acquaint them with feminist theory and help them examining issues of women's experience, women's work, selfhood and representation. After an indepth reading of both th syllabus it can be summarized that the syllabus undergraduate and Masters of Arts in English under Gauhati University are designed in a way that both of them attend to the basic significance of gender involves in the entire course content accounting for the everyday experiences of women which have been neglected in traditional sociology. Both the syllabus -Undergraduate and Post Graduate in English provide ample scope to study various issues and ideas of feminist literary theory and criticism. Both the syllabuses which have embraced many intellectual thoughts, texts and recent issues on women's lives and their conditions as a community can surely pave the way for higher study in multidisciplinary indiscipline like women's studies. So finally it can be said that gender visibility is one of the chief traits of the syllabus of both Undergraduate and Post Graduate in English under Gauhati University.

• Anumita Aggarwal & Daksha Joshi

Title – The Impact of Education level on female participation rate in Uttarakhand in the light of the Golden's 'U' Shaped Curve Function

Paper not Found

नारीवादी नाट्याभ्यास की भूमिका

Feministic Dramatic Study in the Theatre Pedagogy.

Dr. Nisha Shende

Dr. Satish pawade

नाटक के अद्यापन शास्त्र (Theatre Pedagogy) में नारीवादी नाट्याभ्यास (Feministic Dramatic Study) की एक महत्वपूर्ण भूमिका हो सकती है। जो नाटक के अद्यापन-अध्ययन को एक नई दिशा दे सकता है। 1975 से नारीवाद के अध्ययन का प्रारंभ हुआ है। विश्वविद्यालयों के स्तर पर स्त्री अध्ययन विभाग स्थापित किये गये। भारतीय स्त्री प्रश्नों को लेकर इस विभागाद्वारा विस्तृत, गहरा अध्ययन किया जा रहा है। उलझे हुये नारी प्रश्न तथा नारी समस्याओं को समझने के लिए, नर-नारी समानता के लिए तथा स्त्री विमर्श हेतु नारीवादी अध्ययन पद्धति की आज जरूरत है। इस पद्धति का उपयोग नाटक/रंगमंच हेतु अधिक उपयुक्त हो सकता है।

स्नातक तथा स्नातकोत्तर स्तर पर 'नाटक' अध्ययन-अद्यापन का विषय है। इसकी दृक-श्राव्यता इस विषय की विशेषता है। इसके अलावा नाटकीय प्रभावोत्पादकता भी अतुलनीय है। मनोरंजन के साथ प्रबोधन के लिए भी नाटक यह माध्यम अपने आप में एक बिरला माध्यम है। इसलिए स्त्री अध्ययन में नाटक का अध्ययन निश्चित रूपसे उपयुक्त सिद्ध हो सकता है। किंतु जब तक उसका अद्यापन नारीवादी दृष्टिकोनसे नहीं किया जाता तब तक नाटकों में निहित स्त्री विमर्श का अद्यापन अध्ययन प्रभावोत्पादक नहीं बन सकता।

नारीवाद का अपना एक दर्शन है, चिंतन है। अपनी एक विचार पद्धति है। अपने कुछ सिद्धांत हैं जो अद्यापकों को समजना जरूरी है। नारीवाद के अध्ययन के वगैरे कोई भी शिक्षक स्त्री-विमर्श के ज्ञान को आत्मग्रहण नहीं कर सकता और इस नारीवादी ज्ञान के अभाव में वह शिक्षक नाटकों का नारीवादी अद्यापन भी नहीं कर सकता। इसलिए नारीवाद का अभ्यास तथा इस अभ्यास के आधार पर नारीवादी नाटकोंका अद्यापन होना, या नाटकों में स्त्री विमर्श को खोजना, उसे विश्लेषित करना जरूरी है। नारीवादी नाटक का अद्यापन-अध्ययन एक स्वस्थ, प्रगतीशिल, समतावादी समाज निर्माण करने में सहायक सिद्ध हो सकता है। इसलिए नारीवादी दृष्टिकोन से नाटक को पढ़ना, समझना, पढ़ाना, मंचन करना उसकी समीक्षा करना जरूरी

स्त्री नाटककारों का स्त्री विमर्श तथा पुरुष नाटककारों का स्त्री विमर्श, स्त्रीविमर्शवादी पाश्चात्य नाटकों के प्रभाव में लिखे गये नाटक (डॉल्स हाऊस को मॉडल बनाकर), मिथकों पर आधारित आधुनिक नारीवादी नाटक, सक्षम नारी को नायिकापद में पिरोनेवाले नाटक, द्रौपदी, सीता, जैसे मिथकीय नायिकाओंको क्रांतिकारी नायिकाओं में तब्दील करनेवाले नाटक भी स्त्री विमर्श को अधिक सशक्त बना सकते हैं। लेकिन उसके अद्यापन के लिए स्त्री विमर्शवादी अद्यापन-अध्ययन पद्धति की जरूरत है।

नाटक में वर्णित स्त्री प्रश्न (विषय) नारी के हित, अधिकार और न्याय की रक्षा, आत्मसन्मान, व्यक्ति के रूप में अधिकार मिलना (कथा/आशय) लिंगभाव (Jender) के परिप्रेक्ष्य में भाषा, संवाद, चरित्रचित्रण, नाट्यगत संघर्ष, शिल्प और शैली का अध्ययन स्त्री विमर्श के दृष्टिकोन से करना जरूरी है। नाटक को पढ़ते समय अद्यापक अगर पुरुषसत्ताक मानसिकता से ग्रस्त है। या स्त्री विमर्श के प्रति अपरिचित है। या अज्ञानी है, तो वह नारीवादी नाट्याभ्यास के साथ न्याय नहीं कर पाएगा। इसलिए नारीवादी नाट्याभ्यास का पाठ्यक्रम विशेष रूपसे बनाना जरूरी है। स्त्रीवादी सिद्धांतों का अभ्यास भी जरूरी है। यह सिद्धांत नाटकों में व्याप्त स्त्री विमर्श को खोजने में उसे विश्लेषित करने में सहायक हो सकता है। समकालीन परिप्रेक्ष्य में तुलनात्मक अद्यापन-अध्ययन को भी मुद्देनजर रखना आवश्यक है।

नाटक पढ़ते समय स्त्री विमर्श के तत्व पढ़ाकर उन तत्वों के आधारपर नाटक की समीक्षा करना जरूरी है। लिंगभाव, वर्ण, वंश, जाती, पुरुषप्रधानता, व्यक्तिवाद, आज्ञादी, स्त्री-पुरुष समानता, धार्मिक, सामाजिक, सांस्कृतिक, राजनीतिक

व्यवस्था, स्त्रीवादी आंदोलन, नारी अधिकार, नारी उत्पिडन, पुरुषत्व—स्त्रीत्व की रचना प्रक्रिया, श्रमव्यवस्था, परम्पराएँ आदि बिंदुओपर स्त्रीविमर्श अद्यापन को एक नई दिशा दे सकता है। इसिलिए नारीवादी नाट्यअद्यापन पद्धति एक जरूरी माध्यम है। जो समाज की मानसिकता बदलने में मददगार हो सकता है। इन दृष्टिकोन की, भूमिकाकी चर्चा इस शोध प्रपत्र में की गयी है।

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SUB-THEME – 8:

CULTURE AND REGION

DANGEROUS DOMAINS: NEW NEXUS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN JHARKHAND

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On November 15, 2011, Sister Valsa John, a Christian nun was gruesomely murdered by a group of forty armed men in her residence in the village of Pachwara, in Santhal Parganas, Jharkhand. Sister Valsa had devoted her life to protect the interests of the tribal community under threat from the mining corporates that worked in the area. She had acted as the intermediary between the mining industry and the local tribal people before resentment against her, especially among young men, was created by a host of forces. They resented the presence of the charismatic non-tribal Christian woman; she was alleged to be on a **covert 'conversion' mission; the Maoist/Naxalite groups which needed a male group capable of violence** found her presence an obstruction to their advance. Finally when her companion, a young tribal woman, was raped by some tribal men, as a threat to her she ended up picking up the final fight that she lost and paid with her life.

The murder of Sister Valsa John, which is still being tried in court, serves as an exemplary case of the collusion of the powerful agencies—of corporate, the state, the extreme left and the right—operating in contemporary Jharkhand and creating new economies of violence against women.

However, this paper is not an isolated case study but an attempt to draw attention to a new nexus of violence against women in Jharkhand. It will draw upon at least three other cases of violence by the state and militant groups between 2008 and 2012 that include the infamous Kathikund police firing on tribal protesters, the killing of an IPS officer in the area, and gangrape of tribal school girls.

By examining these the paper will address the 'multiple sites of violence' as well as 'caste, tribe and community based disparities' which persist as forms of 'structural barriers' preventing the attainment 'human and humane' conditions of existence and are taking dangerous shaped in Jharkhand.

DECONSTRUCTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN SOUTH ASIAN COUNTRIES

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Human civilisation has progressed and it is being claimed that women in this post modern era are on equal footing with their male counterparts, but ground reality seems different. Many women are being inhumanly victimised and tortured beyond the level of tolerance. Many women are imprisoned, suppressed as well as killed on the name of honour or to control female

sexuality in many South Asian countries. Exploitation is both structurally and functionally cast in every society in its different shades. It is manifestation of historically unequal power relations and division of labour which had led to domination over and discrimination of women by men.

Violent customs and the code of honour/shame schema are implicitly and explicitly upheld by the economically determined social system, endorsed by religion, confirmed by law, and facilitated by state institutions. Honour related violence does not occur indiscriminately. It is mediated through class, ethnicity, religion, education, age, and residential location with a specific combination of many of these forces. All major civilizations and religions have developed a code of honour and shame schema revolving around female sexuality. Crimes like honour killing has had the silent approval of the society and it is culturally acceptable in some parts of the world. Silence in the name of custom, culture, honour, false prestige, and shame promote such crimes.

This paper will attempt to theorise violence and exploitation of women with special reference to socio-cultural and honour/shame schema. This paper will also deal with variance nature of crime on the name of honour and false prestige. It will focus on hidden and untold stories of violence against women of South Asian countries.

WOMEN'S EXPRESSION THROUGH THE SYMBOL: A FEMINIST ANALYSIS OF MARRIAGE SYMBOL TRADITION

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Sindoor, bangles, mangalsutra, bichhua all are the symbols of married women in India. Married Hindu women always carry these as a compulsion; this is neither the matter of her choice nor her right and in general populous and the women herself assumes these symbol as expression of her state of life and her life has been divided in parts with the help of these symbol. These sign communicate her stance of life like if she is teen aged, married, unmarried or widow. This communication or expression through sign is deeper in terms of her happiness, prosperity, wealth and health. In fact these symbols express the caste and class of women also.

These sign limits the desire of a woman or her desire embedded within the symbol in the process of socialization. Expression of symbol sounds always louder than expression of women. She encompasses with the tradition of symbol during her socialization and inculcates to live with it. Even it assumes to be very effective medium of expression to laugh, weep, ask, answer and sing for women.

These Symbol or sign is nothing without its value. A value that assigns to a particular symbol or better says a symbol is design to express a value or concept (Ferdinand Dyadic Model of sign). If we deal with the Marriage symbol with semiotic theory as Charles Sanders Peirce said "a sign... is something which stands to somebody for something in some respect or capacity" He declared that 'every thought is a sign'; These symbol generally have a value or thought of

"Women Subjugation" and somehow communicate women's privatization, control over sexuality and legitimate male violence. On other fronts sometimes women try to express her emancipation through these symbols.

In short this proposed research paper will try to understand different stages of women's life through symbol communication in context of marriage symbol tradition and within this try to explore, if there is any women voice beyond the symbol. Paper will also try to investigate relationship of symbol tradition with other tradition just to uncover the layers of patriarchy and within that try to interpret women's communication.

WOMEN AS KNOWERS IN CONTEMPORARY LABILE COMMUNITIES

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Trends in urban development and modernity in India over the past few decades have seen the emergence of communities labile and fragile in their locations, boundaries, as well as permanence. Vulnerable people displaced within and across cities, across rural-urban contexts, and the confident middle class migrating across cities, have both seen these shifts. For migrant workers and families, this means communal or near-communal residence in very small spaces, sharing linguistic, material and cultural space with people from other regions.

A sweeping survey of childbirth practices, a (stereo)typical site for caregiving between women, reveals multiple scenarios in this context. For one, women in vulnerable communities often access and are considered knowledgeable of "indigenous" childbirth practices. These women may have had knowledge of **traditional plant remedies in their 'parent' regions; transmission of these practices has been understood as working through mother-daughter transactions or among women in a stable community, not through codification in texts.** Following migration, however, these women either no longer have access to traditional regional ecologies, habitats, and networks, or possibly have access to a different ecology, cut through by displacement and urban redevelopment, to be learned all over again. This also fractures conventional notions of **'community', replacing it with newer, more labile collectives. In the event, sharing of practices indigenous to multiple regions, as also hybridisation of such practices, may result among women brought together in the spatially constricted labile communities I refer to above. Such sharing also possibly retains the caste stereotypes and stigma associated with childbirth care as a 'lower caste' occupation. Most of the women knowledgeable of these practices no longer necessarily depend on them for livelihood, but are yet often called upon for childbirth expertise in the narrow lanes where access to healthcare institutions is not a physical or financial option.**

Simultaneously, the "indigenous" is now packaged within modernity, as a privatised high end resource like Ayurveda, in private reinventions of traditional knowledge, and the "upper caste" reinstatement of traditional childbirth care as an exclusive practice, specially among the migrant

and non-migrant middle class. Multiple effects of modernity and globalization are in evidence here.

What does this mean for women's ways of knowing as critique of dominant knowledge systems like modern medicine and obstetrics, as proposed by feminist epistemologists? How do "knowing how" and gender-experiential ways of knowing challenge propositional knowledge in these contexts? Will 'traditional knowledge' or the 'indigenous' continue as an oppositional category? I will explore the specific questions of resistance and critique that emerge here, by posing the role of travel and re-composition of such knowledge, to further explore possible futures when this remains a collective and continuous repository, or becomes a private and therefore vulnerable, or a privatized and therefore high end resource. I will focus on the history of urban communities in India, concentrating on 3 wards in the city of Bombay between the mid-1990s to the present for the purpose of this paper.

WOMEN'S VOICES IN MALE GENRES: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF BHOJPURI FOLKSONGS

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The nineteenth century world observed many socio-economic changes due to the abolition of slavery which created a massive labour crisis in European colonies. The Bhojpuri region of India, which was a potential source of cheap labour, shipped thousands of people to these colonies to work in plantations. It had several socio-cultural consequences. Migration became an oft-repeated motif in most of the Bhojpuri folksongs genres. The Bhojpuri region is a cultural entity comprising eastern Uttar Pradesh and western Bihar. Mass migration was a heavy emotional loss both for people who were left behind and people who were leaving. Especially the women left behind had to face a lot of challenges. These challenges and pain of left-behind women found place in folksongs of the region.

Bhojpuri folksongs are heavily gendered. There are certain kinds/genres of songs which are sung only by women and there are songs sung only by men. For example jantsaari, songs of grind mills and jhoomar are sung by women and birha and chaita songs are sung by men. The pain of left-behind women were/are articulated by both of these male and female genres. **Interesting and important here is to note that even male genre have women's voices in it that is even the protagonists of the male genre is primarily a woman.** In this paper I would like to carry out comparative analysis of these two genres **to see whether the women's voices of these two genres are same or different.** My purpose would be to explore the similarities and differences in **the content, narrative style and attitude in the women's voices of male and female genre which have same historical, cultural and regional origin.**

GENDER PERFORMANCE OF KALARIPAYATTU, A MARTIAL ART OF KERALA

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This paper aims to analyze the relationship between the construction of gender and practice of Kalaripayattu, a traditional martial art in contemporary Kerala, southern state of India. As a region, Kerala is known for favorable gender equity indicators. But the experiences of women performers of Kalaripayattu illustrates the discrimination prevails in the realm of Kalaripayattu and its linkage with larger gendered practices in Kerala society. Theoretical reflection on female body and performance in the context of Kalaripayattu unravel the complexities of the notion of masculinity and femininity in the post independent Kerala. The empirical facts generated from the documents, writings on women experiences and the narratives of female performers, substantiated the theoretical framework postulated on gender, body culture and Kalaripayattu. By analyzing the gender dimension of Kalaripayattu, the paper brings the regional dynamics of gendered practices.

RECASTING OF BRAHMANICAL PATRIARCHAL SYSTEM IN CONTEMPORARY MAHARASHTRA: GENDER, MODERNITY AND MARATHI TV SERIAL

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In this paper, I will look at the interlinkages between electronic media, capitalist economy and brahmanical patriarchal system. I explore how brahmanical patriarchies are reconstructed on the site of television and review earlier works on television serials, particularly on the genre of family dramas.

Purnima Mankekar while looking at the relationship between television and modernity argues that the family not only becomes a site of mediation of modernity but also actively reconfigures through transnational flows of capital, knowledge and desire (Mankekar, 1998). Nilanjana Gupta **says that television programmes are constructed with global "modernity" and the changing dimensions of the role of community and women are at the centre of both these changes** (Gupta, 2000).

I will focus on Marathi serials in this paper. Instead of looking only at representations of women I will look at the ways in which women are at the core of this process of creating a new modernity. I will also try to identify the characteristics which differentiate the regional from the national.

A brief overview of these Marathi serials shows that they are a medium of constructing and maintaining Marathi identity and culture but this idea of Marathi identity varies across channels, building on interesting configurations of class and caste. The television as media is defining

modernity within the broad ideological structure of brahmanical patriarchy. In the globalized world brahmanism has reconfigured and continue to operate. I explore the use of ideal women characters from Hindu Dharmashastra, the link between the celebrations of Hindu rituals and festivals and consumerist life styles. I want to map the ways in which the nexus between brahmanical patriarchy, media and capitalist economy is reasserted through these television serials. The study will progress through a comparative analysis of prime time serials, family dramas from two different popular general entertainment Marathi channels.

WIDOWS OF VRINDAVAN: NEGOTIATING RESTRICTED SPACES BETWEEN THEIR SPIRITUAL AND SEXUAL LIVES

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The undisputed issues of '*Sexuality, Pleasure, Love and Desire*' are often silenced in the discussions on the discourse of widowhood. Exploring these relatable issues by acknowledging and validating the subjective experiences of widows, will be the core concerns of my paper. I would like to explore, understand and examine how these issues with all its complexities, polemical writings and interdictions find space and get articulated despite all the restrictions and the impositions aimed at regulating and controlling the sexual behavior of women within a socio – cultural and structural setting like the institution of the '*ashram*'.

This paper shall attempt to understand and explore how widows negotiate between their sexual and spiritual lives in these '*restricted spaces*' and '*regimented environment*' where they have often been labeled and described as '*non – sexual*' beings. In this paper I would also try to reflect upon how the conspicuous distinction between '*pure love*' and '*impure love*' gets conceptualized by the widows themselves, the implication of which is seen as forming the basis of what can be termed as "*emancipated love*" (bhakti) as opposed to "*bounded pleasurable love*". In trying to establish a continuum between the widows' '*sexual lives*' and '*spiritual lives*', this paper shall also attempt to explore the notion of '*spirituality in sexual unions*' where the material aspect of the body becomes the site of sexual politics and violence. Lastly in this paper, I shall discuss and examine the ways in which reclaiming sexual desires and redefining the notions of love and pleasure for widows not only becomes difficult given the constricted spaces within which such sexual, spiritual and social relations are expressed and channelized but also how such efforts of redefining the '*Self*' through these inter – subjective cultural experiences also at some levels, reflect the agential positionalities of the widows within the confines of the ashram.

**MATANGI: A FORGOTTEN SOCIAL SYSTEM AND ITS PRESENT RELEVANCE
(A SOCIOLOGICAL ANALYSIS OF LIFE, CONDITION AND WORK OF TRADITIONAL
MIDWIVES IN NAGPUR DISTRICT)**

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In Indian subcontinent Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani are the three medicinal systems and after being part of British Colony Indians adopted Allopathic and Homeopathic medicinal systems as a part of their modernisation process, in which they adopted all political, economical, social, cultural and medicinal systems from them without properly phasing-out there traditional systems and replacing them from the new one. Half hearted adoption and misleading knowledge of little traditions of the existing systems likely abandoned the will established system of midwifery, like many others. This paper is an attempt to give some credit to that system which serves each and every women of the past in the process of child birth and delivery.

It is a short paper mostly based on the experiences of the people and oral tradition with scattered knowledge. I did not find any of the knowledge/information from written or great traditions. There are some writings on Madiga and there Matangi system/cult, but in that the researcher or the writer completely left the socially important functions and there holistic system of midwifery. There is lot of researched and published work on Mangs of Maharashtra done by the scholars of this ex-untouchable caste and some other scholars but they too miss the immensely important role of their women and ultimately to their society.

This paper highlights the roles and functions Matangi performed in the past as well as in the present condition related with pregnancy, delivery and neo-natal care as well as her present socio-economic condition. She is leading the miserable life with her primordial socio-cultural and economic activities. She belongs to an ex-untouchable community and the modern medicinal system simply out caste her and the society whom she was serving from generation stigmatise her.

It is a pilot study of thirty respondents from Nagpur district, specially, from rural background. Purposive sampling method was used for selecting the respondents and information was gathered through open guided interviews of the respondent. It is a descriptive analytical study.

**GENDER, CULTURE AND IDENTITY: EXPLORING THE INTERACTIONS AND
CONTESTATIONS OF GROUP RIGHTS AND GENDER EQUALITY IN NORTH EAST INDIA**

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Multicultural, multiethnic and multilingual societies, not only reflect plurality and diversity, but also are often societies in conflict. Individuals are culturally embedded and to regard them as

'right bearing' abstract individuals is a negation of their group specific identity, especially cultural identity. Not only cultural identity is fundamental, but also recognition of that identity in public sphere is equally important. The liberal democratic state operating in these societies often express a discomfort in recognition of cultural identity. The liberal democracies are best in **'recognition of individual difference', but visualize 'group difference' as a site of conflict and recognition which may lead to more conflict. But the liberal state under the impression of 'benign neglect' and 'state neutrality' actually favors a majoritarian culture and expects the rest to assimilate within it.** Thus the state faces severe resistance in the process of patronizing a culture, over many others. Cultures are distinct and they develop historically with interaction of different stream and it carries a uniqueness which is specific to a cultural community. Thus non-recognition and domination can not only minimize the possibilities of making choices of good life for a community but also put the society in a constant state of conflict. But at the same time multicultural discourse on culture specific group rights may pose a threat to intra community freedom of certain sections within the community, specifically the women. This paper tries to explore how group specific rights can actually bring about a serious contestation to the issue of gender equality. This paper seeks to locate the issue of cultural rights and recognition of culture in public sphere within the ethnic identity movements in Northeast India and particularly in Assam vis-à-vis **the question of women's rights. It tries to unfold the puzzle of liberal democracy, multiculturalism and gender equality in terms of throwing certain serious issues and questions.**

UNDERSTANDING GENDER IN LIVELIHOOD SPACES: A STUDY AMONG KOLI WOMEN IN MUMBAI

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Among five coastal districts of Maharashtra, Mumbai is a significant contributor to fishing industry in the state. Mumbai has 73.215km coastal belt. Since olden days the Koli communities have been engaged in pursuing fishing as a means of livelihood. Fishing in the seas was an activity that was carried out predominantly by the males in the Koli community. In so far as accessing the resource, the men did their part. On the other hand, though the women folk did not engage in going to the sea and catching fish, the post harvest operations were done by them. This included vending, processing, drying of fish catch. The Koli women were thus burdened with both household duties and earning responsibilities. The author sees this to be a result of their gender roles as well as their community tradition of following fishing as an **occupation. The Koli women had conducted fish vending in fish 'bazaars' near the fishing site itself. As a result of following their ancestral work in 'outside' spaces, Koli women were labeled as more 'bold' than the other women in the society.**

Presently, Mumbai is a trading and economic centre in India which attracts migrants looking for any livelihood opportunity. These people are also entering into the domain of Koli community in fishing sector as well. This changes the nature of livelihood options for the Koli community who have to compete with new actors in the fishing industry. Further, with the increasing demand for

services in urban Mumbai, big malls are developing and changing the way food and fish products are delivered. This creates implications for changes in culture of fisher folk. For instance, the **space for vending fishes has changed from the 'bazaar' to the more 'sanitary' and air conditioned** fish counters in the malls and department stores. In this context of new interventions brought by urbanization and the market, it is important to study the new livelihood challenges faced by the Koli community especially the women members. It is also important to study how the Koli women are dealing with these new challenges. While studying these changes, we must focus on the changing gender roles of Koli women. The changes in the culture as a result of market interventions especially related to changes in spaces used for various activities in post harvest sector are also important to be studied.

INTERROGATION OF CONSTRUCTS ABOUT THE NORTH-EAST: A READING OF LITERARY NARRATIVES FROM ASSAM AND NAGALAND

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In order to comprehend the politics of ideas, it is crucial to fathom their germination and location. On a general note, a certain analysis or theorisation of an idea/ issue, condition/ subject, is identified as authentic while other versions are invalidated by forces of authority. But this act of invalidating these other versions need not imply erasure or silence. It would be interesting to read the notes of resistance against any monolithic narrative. This paper intends to look into the monolithic construction of identities, associated with the idea of nation.

In the case of India, regions lying in the 'north-eastern zone' face a dilemma about their identity and belonging. A blanket term, 'north-east', blurs the differences that persist amongst those inhabiting this space. Furthermore, from whose location and perspective is the label, 'north-east' employed? How valid is the term 'north-east' with reference to the eight states lying in one of the frontier regions of the Indian nation-state? The term north-east will be employed in this paper, only for the sake convenience.

The story of Nagaland and its struggle to tear itself away from India needs to be understood as different from the ethnic conflicts and insurgent movements in Assam. Similarly, Manipur, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram and Meghalaya have their own specific histories. But the image of conflict ridden spaces which need monitoring under the watchful eyes of the ruling forces is foregrounded by the state machinery repeatedly. Equating north-east (India) with violence and under development can be read as a construct that prevails about this region.

Through the aid of certain literary narratives by women that have emerged from Assam and Nagaland, an attempt will be made in this paper, to read the resistance to established assumptions and truths about a culture and its people. The cultural imagination of space and its people can narrate stories that differ from any popular version. In this paper, an attempt will be made to comprehend the complex texture of this region.

CONSTRUCTION OF FEMININITY IN NEO VAISHNAVITE RELIGION OF ASSAM

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The proposed paper seeks to explore how perceptions of femininity got constructed within the Neo Vishnavite religion and *bhakti* movement of Assam initiated by Srimanta Shankardeva and their intersection with ideas of purity and pollution of caste and gender.

The Neo Vaishnavite religion is perhaps the most popular religion in Assam and the *bhakti* movement played a very influential role in shaping the culture of the Assamese society. Both the movement and the religion are popularly believed to be revolutionary in the sense that it challenged the caste hierarchy and gave egalitarian status to everyone. However this notion needs to be examined polemically.

Dominant Hindu ideology has constructed certain perceptions of femininity and the ideal female. Leela Dube (2001: 87-113) looks at how gender is constructed through Hindu rituals and practices and how these implicate fundamentally in the constitution and reproduction of a social system marked by gender inequality and subjugation of women.

Susan Wadley (1988: 23-43) looks at the views of Hindu Ideology on femaleness and how it has constructed femininity. She looks at the contradiction in the Hindu representation of the female; women as fertile, benevolent bestower on the one hand and as the aggressive, malevolent destroyer on the other. The female is on one hand *shakti* (energy) and on the other *prakriti* (Nature). This is further derived to be seen as Women= Power + Nature = Danger. Therefore this Power needs to be constantly under the control of Culture or males in order to be benevolent. Wadley (ibid.) further say that according to Hindu cosmology, if a female controls her own sexuality she is both malevolent and benevolent. However if her sexuality is transferred to a man, she is portrayed as consistently benevolent. Hinduism has perceived the role of the mother and the wife as the two most important roles for women and have socialised women such that they can fulfil these roles to the best of their ability.

Neo Vaishnavism of Assam which belongs to the *bhakti* strand of thought has been seen as a means of emancipation for those sections of the society which have been outside the fold of Vedic Hinduism, particularly women and lower castes. Hence it remains to be seen if the Neo Vaishnavite religion managed to challenge these dominant perceptions.

In order to examine how Shankardeva perceived women and constructed femininity, various women who have been influential in his life and in the religion will be traced so as to understand the kind of femininity that was desirable. A critical examination of the various plays, *Ankiya Nats*, written by Shankardeva to propagate the religion will also be done to explore how female roles has been perceived and constructed. These constructions become very important to understand the status of women not only within the religion but also within the Assamese society because of its immense influence.

CHANGING FRAMEWORK CONDITIONS AND LOCAL RESPONSES BY WOMEN WRITERS IN TELANGANA

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Different segments of the Indian society have commented on and/or written about globalisation. From a feminist perspective, starting from Dalits and tribals to upper caste and class, globalisation has been the centre of interest for various women groups since the opening of the Indian economic market in the early 1990s. Women activists, academics and grassroots' organisations produced numerous writings, songs and documentaries on globalisation and its impact on the development of urban and rural India. This paper focuses particularly on writings and alternative modes of expression of women in Telangana in which they underline their views on the positive and negative impacts of globalisation on their lives. The region of Telangana is especially currently a highly discussed area when it comes to development policies and culture. Hence, it offers a variety of writings on these discourses. Songs, poems, and short stories in Hindi, Telugu and English are the sources for highlighting women's lives, resistances, protests, perspectives and ultimately their voices. Particularly the interconnection between globalisation and development policies and their negative and/or positive influence on women is analysed by examining texts written by women. In detail, the paper discusses the interaction between the women's movements and the society at large, how changing framework conditions influence both sides, and how alternatives can be searched for and achieved. This paper is embedded in a **feminist and "post"-colonial** theoretical perspectives as it argues that the era of globalisation is yet another form of colonialism. Parallels are drawn when looking at the embodiment of women, economic structures and political frameworks.

The so called development agencies and their impact on large parts of the Indian society have often been argued to be another form of European colonial power. The theoretical background as well as the findings of the paper highlight the interplay of the triangle of globalisation, development and women's voices.

BALANCING PREACHINGS, PRACTICE AND SCIENCE: WOMEN AND MENSTRUATION IN GOA

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Prayers, customs, beliefs, superstitions which revolve around person's life are determined by the religion he/she belongs to. When religion plays an important part in one's life, the influences of the religious teachings and practices begin at birth within that home. Religion also controls

personal behaviour. Hindu families in particular have many do's and don'ts during menstruation which women have been following through the ages though not without modifications. With increased health awareness and educational levels among women, it is interesting to study the impact of medical science and this education and awareness on the practices surrounding menstruation. There have been many changes in society:- a) access to knowledge and information has opened a gateway to explore the reality about one's body, b) the nuclear family system has also allowed women to make her own personal decisions, yet religion continues to play significant role in people's lives.

This paper has been inspired by my personal experiences being a Hindu woman growing up in a traditional household. I have tried to contrast and compare the experiences around menstruation collected from women across religions in Goa. I hope that this will give voice to women's feelings about religious teachings, tradition, health aspects and their realities. This paper will highlight how women are able to juggle their own personal beliefs with religious preachings and practice that get parcelled into what gets handed down as tradition, together with scientific knowledge that is acquired from various different sources.

FORCED MIGRATION, CROSS- CULTURAL MARRIAGES AND MARITAL CONFLICT: A CASE STUDY OF NORTH-EAST WOMEN SETTLED IN PUNE CITY

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India's north-eastern region is extraordinarily diverse, distinct, and indeed distinguished on several counts. There are more than 160 scheduled tribe groups in the region, with estimated 220 languages of Indo-Aryan, Sino-Tibetan, and Austric language families being spoken. (Maharatna and Sinha, 2001). Because of the lack of interests by the successive Indian governments for more than 60 years the region lags far behind in economical, infrastructural and industrial development forcing the people to live in a miserable conditions marked by the prevalence of poverty, unemployment, unrest and insurgency in all the north eastern states. This has resulted into the forced migration of the young generation from the native states to the well developed Indian cities and Pune is one them.

The presence of North Eastern persons is quite visible in different parts of the city and in suburban areas. According to estimates of a local NGO there are more than 15,000 males and female living in Pune. Many women who migrate for educational purposes did not want to go back to their state of origin. Instead, some of them either marry with a boy from their own home state or with a boy from other Indian state of origin. These migrant girls who marry a non-North eastern boy find it difficult to adjust with the traditionally Hindu orthodox families. The problem of adjustments rises not only at the husband's level but also at the familial and societal levels causing marital conflict leading to separation, dissertations and sometimes ending into divorce. This paper is based on a study of selected case studies about the problems of marital adjustment and conflicts involving these couples with different ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

AUTONOMY AND DECISION MAKING ROLE OF TRIBAL WOMEN: A CASE STUDY OF SANTOSHPUR VILLAGE IN SUNDERGARGH DISTRICT OF ODISHA

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Women movements internationally have gained lot of attention and various plans, policies are implemented by both government and nongovernmental institutions. Women are capable and have great potential but still then it is seen that the objectives to empower women have not been achieved. It also found from various studies that diverse indicators are contributing to the status of the women in tribal societies, i.e. decision making role, control over resources, income and literacy being the prominent ones. But a crucial question arises how and to what extent these indicators are influential in improving their socio-economic status in tribal society.

The objective of the paper is to assess the level of autonomy and decision making power of tribal women. Traditionally women have always been subjugated. True development of a nation is not possible if one if one half of the population is ignored or marginalized. Therefore the constitution of India has many rights and acts in favor of them. The present study, based on primary data collected from three tribal hamlets of Santoshpur Village, examines the decision making role of tribal women and to find out the impact of their socio-economic status of their decision making roles.

The development of tribal community cannot be accelerated without women participation. Therefore the government should focus on developing the literacy rate among the tribal women which would facilitate their economic upliftment. This would surely result in their qualitative participation and decision making among all aspects of their living.

हिंदूकरण की सांस्कृतिक राजनीति और मध्य प्रदेश के देशज समुदाय

नारीवादी दृष्टिकोण

मनोज कुमार द्विवेदी, पी-एच.डी. स्त्री अध्ययन, महात्मा गांधी अंतरराष्ट्रीय हिंदी विश्वविद्यालय, वर्धा
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संस्कृति को समझने में निहित 'गूढ़ता' को हम वैज्ञानिक चेतना की सीमा का प्रतिफलन मान सकते हैं। यहाँ संस्कृति को देखने का सहमतिपरक वर्चस्व स्थापित है। ज्ञान-क्षेत्र की बनावट जिस सत्तात्मक व्यवस्था से संचालित है उसका मूल ही संस्कृति का कुपाठ रहा है। औद्योगिकीकरण की राजनीतिक जरूरतों से निर्मित सांस्कृतिक व्याख्याओं को औपनिवेशिकता के प्रोजेक्ट में भली-भाँति आरोपित किया गया था। उपनिवेशों को समझने की प्रक्रिया संस्कृति के यूरोपीय महाआख्यानिक

सिद्धांतों के वैश्वीकृत ढाँचे के निर्माण का परिणाम थी। जानानुशासनों के जरिए इस नस्लीय प्रोजेक्ट को और ज्यादा पोषित किया गया है। यह संस्कृति-सिद्धांतों का राजनीतिकरण था।

आदिवासी जीवन-संस्कृति के सिद्धांतों के विकास में उन्हें विशिष्ट सांस्कृतिक फ्रेमवर्क में फिट बैठाया गया, जिसका प्रभाव आज भी 'सभ्यता के प्रारंभिक पुरुष' की व्याख्या में महसूस किया जा सकता है। संस्कृति की यह राजनीति ही मुख्यधारा-हाशिया, विकसित-अविकसित की मान्यता को वैधता प्रदान करने का माध्यम बनती है। औपनिवेशिक आधुनिकता के दौरान यूरो-केन्द्रित राष्ट्र-राज्य के निर्माण का दबाव देशज समुदाय के भविष्य को भी निर्धारित करने वाला था। राज्य सांस्कृतिक एकता का प्रतिनिधित्व तभी कर सकता है जब वह आंतरिक वैविध्य व अंतर्विरोधों को कुचल दे।

भारत में राष्ट्र-राज्य के साथ एथनिक-राष्ट्रवाद की समानांतर धारा विकसित होती है जो आज एथनो-धार्मिक गोलबंदी के जरिए हिंदूकरण की सांस्कृतिक राजनीति को संचालित कर रही है। देशज समुदायों के सांस्कृतिक रूपांतरण की राजनीति की प्रक्रिया इसी रूप में घटित होती है।

मध्य प्रदेश में मौजूद विविध आदिवासी सांस्कृतिक विरासत को नष्ट करने की कोशिश की जा रही है। आदिवासियों के हिंदूकरण की राजनीति आदिवासियों के वास्तविक 'स्व' को हिंदू अस्मिता के साथ जोड़ने के लिए हिंदुत्व की राजनीति बहु-आध्यात्मिकता पर आधारित समावेशी प्रक्रिया को आदिवासी और मुख्य-धारा के समुदायों के बीच संगठित करती है। हिंदुत्व की राजनीति का जो नया प्रोजेक्ट आदिवासी इलाके में संचालित है उसके जेंडर आयाम व्यापक हैं।

POLITICISING AND (RE) MEMBERING *SHOR* AND *PRANA*: EMBODYING REGIONAL CULTURAL DIFFERENCE IN PERFORMANCE PRACTICE

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In the Indian nation's chant of 'Unity in Diversity' there has been an acknowledgement of the many pluralities of language, ethnicity, religions and culture that exist within the political boundary that marks the Indian state. Yet there have been constant ruptures within this political fabric that evoke a reality of the diversity and difference that does not quite celebrate this notion of unity that is propagated by the State. The many struggles for identity and difference that do not have a homogenous notion of unity is evidenced by the movements for separate statehood, the demands for the recognition for new classifications of ethnicity and caste, the demands for

tribal land rights and the more militant separatist struggles that have deeply impacted this imagined of unity in difference. While legal structures, administrative bodies and even political office can begin to homogenise identity through their powerful mechanisms, it is in the realm of the artistic and the cultural that difference is deeply engaged with and even celebrated.

In artistic and cultural expressions, difference marks itself out in pronounced ways. The differences and inequalities of Centre and state/ region dichotomies also plays itself out in the **realm of the cultural. The very differentiation often made between 'artistic' expressions and 'cultural' expression points to this. For sometime now, creators of 'contemporary' artistic expression dip into 'cultural' artistic traditions to develop the basic vocabularies of their practice.** In this paper, I look specifically at the breath traditions developed by two cultural groups engaging with theatre as an art from Manipur (Kalkshetra Manipur) and Pondicherry (Adishakti) from a political perspective engaging with debates on cultural appropriation, hybridity and the **often problematic 'patronisation' of the arts and the ways that practitioners are forced to negotiate their own autonomy within these frameworks.** In the extensive research and practice of the two groups, it will be interesting to explore the political contexts that leave a deep impression on the aesthetic form of both these groups. Furthermore, it becomes remarkably apparent that regional specificities are also deeply linked with the cultural expression of these forms.

An extension of the region and geographical specificities also leaves its markers on the body of the performer. Do some of the erasures of regional landscapes and geographies through processes of urbanization and industrialization threaten these unique cultural bodies with erasure or do these bodies have the resources to preserve certain vital experiences of their own cultural experience? Through my engagement with the performance pedagogic practice of Heisnam Sabitri(Kalkshetra Manipur) and Veenapani Chawla (Adishakti), I find that they do indeed hold within them powerful resources of resistance against erasures of cultural memory through their performance practice. Thus in this paper through the vantage point of performance, I explore certain complexities, political and cultural, that arise from the encounter of the Centre and Region and also some insights into what may come to be creative interventions into some of the problems arising from this encounter.

SEARCHING FOR THE *DHENTULI* IN GOA: HIDDEN TRIBAL CULTURE SOUGHT BY THE FASHION INDUSTRY

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The *dhentuli* is the original dress of the Gawda tribal women in Goa. This dress resembles a sari except that it ends at the knees and it was originally worn without a *choli* (blouse) as the palu (flowing end of the sari) would cover the breasts of the woman wearing it and the palu was tied in a knot on the right shoulder.

Goa is known to many as the land of sun, sea and sand as it is today a famous destination for the tourists. The state Tourism Department as well as private agencies actively promote tourism

through various forms of advertising. The tribal community in Goa, which includes the Kunbi, Gawda and Velip communities, constitutes only 10.2% of Goa's population, yet surprisingly it is aspects of this Gawda culture that are used in the selling of Goa's 'ethnic' culture and is portrayed as the main culture of Goa. The Gawda traditional dances are portrayed as a form of entertainment for tourists on the River Cruises in Goa, for carnival parades and it is also staged for different folk dance competitions in schools and colleges.

The Gawda dance and dressing style is portrayed to the outside world as the identity of Goa but when the same identity takes its real form at the village level when the women wear the *dhentuli* (sari) they are not accepted by other people. They are looked down upon and discriminated. It is this discrimination that has forced some Gawda women to give up wearing the *dhentuli*. Those women who continue to wear the *dhentuli* today do not wear the original hand woven material but some other cheaper and easy to maintain material. Some people have preserved their original *dhentuli* but they do not wear it. They have preserved this *dhentuli* so that their children can wear it for local celebrations at the church and for the dance competitions etc.

This paper is based on an experience where the fashion industry in Goa was in search of the *dhentuli* and this researcher being from the tribal community was engaged to locate this dress and arrange for tribal women to wear this for a fashion photographer. This brings many contradictory views and questions about culture and the use of culture and tribal people which will be the highlight of this paper.

SREE NARAYANA MOVEMENT AND ITS ROLE IN THE MAKING OF NEW WOMAN OF EZHAVAS OF KERALA

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Travancore was a princely state until the formation of the Kerala state in 1956 by the unification of united state of Travancore and Cochin and the British ruled Malabar. It was in Travancore the first wave of social reform movement was started. This happened because of certain factors internal to the state in addition to the external factors like colonial rule and the missionary activities. Another major factor was the matrilineal system of inheritance that was prevalent in this region was a major reason for the improvement and the enlightened thought of the people of Travancore. The rulers of Travancore even followed the matrilineal inheritance system. The Maharanies of Travancore played a major role in the transformation of the society of Kerala. The concerns of the rulers for their subjects were great. The rulers of Travancore were very much enlightened about the need for education, civil rights of their subjects. This led to the increased literacy not only among men but also led to the increased literacy among women and the lower castes of Travancore which is one of the major reasons for the high literacy rate in Kerala. This paper focuses on the transformation of the Ezhava community and their women. Ezhavas were a polluting caste who emerged as a major middle class after the reform movement led by Sree Narayana Guru. He was reformer who was against the Brahmanical hegemony and rituals, but when the question of women reform arose, ezhava women too were reformed to become an

ideal Hindu woman. Even today, the SNDPY (Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam) - the organization of the Ezhavas, plays a major role in the making of their women to be ritualistic Hindu women, which will be dealt in detail in this paper.

**NARRATIVE OF PLURAL SELF, DOUBLE MARGINALISATION AND TWOFOLD
OPPRESSION OF INDIAN WOMEN IN DIASPORA: A STUDY OF WOMEN WRITERS OF
INDIAN DIASPORA**

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Indian immigrant community has been variously defined and looked at, as a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural community. The existence of Indian diaspora and the diasporic community in different parts of the world is the outcome of colonization, indenture labour, Kangani and Mistry system in the history and migration and globalisation in the contemporary time. Often the Indian community is been looked by the host country as a single monolithic community which practices analogous tradition and culture without much distinction, similar perception can be seen and observed in the case of Indian diasporic women as well who are perceived as single monolithic Hindu-Indian women being, an oriental, brown, mysterious object of sex, less assertive, passive and confirmative to patriarchy, thus they are subject to multiple oppression by home and host country simultaneously. The 'experience of immigrant and the process of constructing Diasporic identities cannot be generalized across categories of class, race, caste, gender and generation" (Rayprol,2005:130). And this issue of monolithic female identity has been challenged and confronted by many Indian diasporic women writers in their writings whose writing form the canon of postcolonial and third world feminist canon.

Postcolonial or third world feminism is far-reaching and variable. It investigates variety across representation of women in once colonized countries and in western locations. As it is far reaching and variable we find variety of fields to concentrate, some on the construction of gender, and homogenous ethnic identity while other concentrate on representation of women in the postcolonial discourse with particular reference to the work of women writers.

The present paper attempts to concentrate on the work of Diasporic Indian women writers who extrapolate on the issues of plural or multiple identities, gender stereotype and analyse power structures which further constructs gender, and gender stereotypes in the Diasporic Indian community. In their works they engage with themes of plural identity, marginalisation (ethnic, sexual, cultural, and linguistic) of women, unease, dilemma, and in-between-ness encountered by Diasporic Indian women. Sexual, ethnic, cultural and linguistic marginalisation is some of the crucial issues addressed by Indian- Diasporic women writers in their writings and forms the major theme of their encryption.

Sunetra Gupta's *The Glassblower's Breath* (1993), **Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni's** *Arranged Marriage* (1997), **Bharati Mukherjee's** *Desirable Daughters* (2002) and **Manju Kapur's** *The*

Immigrant, (2009), will be analysed in the light of the theme of plural identity, gender stereotypes, construction of gendered ideology, ethnic, linguistic and cultural marginalisation of Indian Diasporic women. The paper will look how the third world women are doubly marginalised and oppressed by the patriarchal ideology of first and third world countries both.

TRANSHUMANCE AMONG BHOTIAS OF KUMAON AND ITS GENDER IMPLICATIONS

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The paper tries to explore the practice of seasonal movement called transhumance among Bhotias of Kumaon. Ecology has played a big role in deciding the economy and livelihood of the area. The traditional economic life of the Bhotias has undergone several phases of transition from a trading community to becoming a service class community. Bhotias are geographically situated between the regions of two contrasted production, i.e. Tibet and Kumaon. This provided them with the opportunity to trade in both the regions. Pastoralism was the mainstay of this community. With time, political developments and infrastructural changes in the area, transhumance has declined and not considered as a viable livelihood option. Now, the winter settlement at higher altitudes is seen to be preferred by community members relative to their **summer settlement in lower altitudes and also perceived to be beneficial for one's health and livestock**. An interesting link emerges between the disappearance of trade and the need for educating their next generation of children which discourages transhumance. Children are made to stay in the lower altitude in the absence of mobile schools. As a result, women have to stay in the lower altitude to look after their children. On the other hand, men in spite of being unemployed prefer to go for transhumance leaving women with no choice but stay with children. This paper would look into the differences in the changing worldview of Bhotia men and women through narratives, with respect to ecology, infrastructural development and availability of alternative livelihood options.

CHILDBIRTH AS A RITUAL SPACE: A STUDY ON THE DIMASA COMMUNITY

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One of the ultimate "essential" experiences marking womanhood in most societies is the event of childbirth. Across cultures, childbirth events are symbolically related not only to supernatural beliefs but also to medical actions. Supervising both these aspects of childbirth experiences, are **the "specialists" who, in pre-modern settings, engage with the dual necessities of warding off "harmful" influences as well as providing a complete personal medical care to the birthing mother.**

This paper shall be an attempt to explore one such cultural setting on childbirth in the Dimasa community and the associated role of midwives as ritual performer, some religious and some not. The Dimasa community is a small indigenous group of north-eastern part of India, the majority of its population is based in the state of Assam. Patriarchal by nature, most events and the decision making within the community are significantly dominated by men. However within certain domain considered to be that of female, women have had considerable autonomy. Birth rituals and ceremonies constitute one such event which depict women as the ritual experts which require elaborate practices. Birth rituals are entirely performed by women in the community. The hojaijik(priestess), baroajik(assistant priestess) and anumajik(mid-wife/foster mother) hold a very important place and the three figures along with the women of the concerned household are solely responsible for all rites and rituals starting from the time of delivery of the baby to the **social custom of the "introduction" of the baby to the society, known as Nana Dikhonba, which marks the completion of the liminal period.**

By exclusively looking at the birthing ritual in detail, the attempt will be therefore to analyze the transformative experience of childbirth for those who assist in the process, if this role allow them a special status in this male dominated society and if the lack of codification allow women to modify and monopolize their role as the sole ritual experts in rituals related to birth.

RE-TELLING MYTHS AND RETRIEVING PLURALITIES: READING WOMEN'S ALTERNATIVE NARRATIVES

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Stereotyping women has been one of the major tactics employed by the patriarchal societies to **keep women in their 'proper' place. The dominant narratives of the society, such as, folk tales, myths, literary representations and mass media projections, have mostly projected women in extremes. They are either idols of desirable feminine virtues or incarnation of the most 'threatening powers'. While the first type is to be emulated, the second one is invariably demonized.** Such fixed categorizations deny women individuality, and ignore the pluralities women embody and live by in their day-to-day life. In recent times women activists, theorists and writers have invested a lot of energy in correcting these homogenizing stereotypes, so as to **give due acknowledgment to the heterogeneity of women's experiences. One of the ways in which Indian women writers have tried to balance out the lopsided sexist representations is retrieving the myths and rereading/retelling them. Sometimes by reviving the forgotten characters and incidents and on other occasions looking at the well known episodes from a different perspective, these writers have tried to undermine the commonplace perception of mythical narratives, which has contributed significantly in the perpetuation of patriarchal ideology. Rather than the 'standard' ideals of Indian womanhood, i. e. Sita, Sati and Savitri,** these women writers more interested in surreptitious figures like Surpanakha, Kaikeyi and Draupadi. Either by giving passing references to these mythical figures in their narratives or adopting them in the larger narrative framework, these writers have tried to show how the

marginalized, demonized and sometimes misinterpreted female figures of myths represent crucial realities of women's lives and how discounting these experiences, desires and concerns leave our cultural ethos severely limited. While our myths had been quite polyphonic in nature, it's the reiterated 'regulated' mis/readings which have made them so very rigid. This paper reads some assorted instances of Indian women's writing (such as, Shashi Deshpande's *A Matter of Time*, Pratibha Ray's *Yajnaseni*, Githa Hariharan's *The Thousand Faces of Night* and *When Dreams Travel*) that attempt to retrieve the myths and assert the plurality of women's lives. By deconstructing the tyranny of binary oppositions which govern women's lives, where they can either be 'all sacrificing ideal wife, daughter and mother' or 'selfish domineering witches', these narratives humanize women's lives. Using instances from the myths, these narratives show how contradictions have always marked women's lives and the 'ideals' espoused by the patriarchal society are nothing more than the figments of 'collective' imagination. The paper seeks to underline how this practice of rereading/ rewriting challenges the monocultures of mind which repress alternative ways of existence. However, it also acknowledges that such alternative narratives reach out only to a limited section of the society and mass media is still replete with the stereotypes. Hence, rather than romanticizing the practice, the paper emphasizes that we must try to circulate these egalitarian representation as widely as possible.

VIOLENCE AGAINST URBAN WOMEN IN INDIA: AN OUTLOOK FROM SELECTED INDIAN CITIES

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In cities of all over the world, girls and women feel unsafe alone in the street. Physical, sexual and psychological violence has become a part and parcel of their daily life while interacting with other people on public transport, in workplaces, schools, colleges, hospitals, and in religious and other social institutions. It cuts across lines of rural boundary and reaches to urban sphere of women life resulting either bodily injury or emotional trauma or both to urban women. While identifying its causes, several factors come into front like unsafe space in the form of deserted streets, dark lanes, isolated bus stop, changes in social controls, unemployment, extra marital affair, Illicit relationship, psychological maniac/ disorder etc. Categorically, there is a number of serious violence but interestingly, most of those remain underreported and reliable statistics are hard to come and if reported, the victimised does not get justice very often. In this way violence against women in towns and cities in India has been rapidly escalating from last few years which needs due attention.

The objectives of this paper therefore are to find out the root causes of violence against urban women in India, its spread and consequences despite having rules, laws and regulations to curb it along with few proposals to minimise this social issue.

'NAJAAYO JOMUNAAR PAAREY...': A STUDY OF EROS AND THE FOLK IMAGINATION IN GOALPORIYA LOKA XANGEET

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The folk contains an imagination that offers us a peek into the diversity of common life and its ways. It is a site of mnemocultures that encompasses the mores and lore of a people over time. The oral enables us to delve into a deeper psycho-social understanding of a society, allowing us to unearth pluralisms that lay masked in the garb of everyday life. Goalporiya loka geet, through the motifs of nature (*prakriti*) and symbolism (*pratik*) address and convey the intimate interconnectedness between man and nature, the feminine and the masculine, challenging the duality a phallogocentric world has come to embody. Romanticism of nature-- rivers, birds, animals, fishes-- attempts to create a pastoral world ridden of barriers of caste and sex. In these songs, the unabashed celebration of the body fuses with the uninhibited flow of rhythm of words and metaphors. The rootedness in these songs dwells in correspondence with the sharp critique of the various structures of oppression.

The paper shall also expand upon Pratima Barua Pandey's role in consolidating the identity of this community of people. (In this context, the support and contributions of Bhupen Hazarika cannot be forgotten, and shall be analysed). Her oeuvre encompasses the songs of the people "so different from those of the *bhadralok*," as often stated. Gender dynamics in her lokageet is very crucial to her lyrics; in her days, a woman pining for eros in descriptions of elephant-Mahout, Buffalo-shepherd, fishermen/women was considered indeed immoral, which is why folksongs were never considered pristine treasury in the bourgeoisie formulation of 'culture'. The longing for a mahout's touch is best exemplified in – 'Jeidin mahout sikaar jai/ narir mon mur jooriya roi re...'

Thus, Goalporiya Lokageet challenges homogenized notions of the Assamese culture, nationhood as well as of womanhood.

WOMEN AND MENSTRUATION (TAKING CASE OF ASSAM)

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The main objective of the paper is to understand the practices associated with menstruation. There are various notions of purity and pollution associated with this natural process, both regionally and religiously. An attempt will be made to understand women's perspective of the entire issue and how they treat the customs.

In Assam, if a girl undergoes menstruation she undergoes rituals similar to marriage. In the coming months there are many restrictions for touch and mobility for her. It has the following research questions:

- a) What is the perception of menstruation among women;
- b) What are the general custom in their family during first menstruation?
- c) What rituals they need to follow for every month cycle?
- d) From where they have learnt the rituals?;
- e) Whether they had ever enquired about the reason for such rituals;
- f) Do they think such rituals relating to purity and pollution justified?
- g) Would they like to continue with such restrictions till they attain menopause?

Samples would be from women between age group 11-20 as first group, who have either attained the menstruation or about to attain. My next group will be woman between age group 40-50 who had either attained menopause or yet to attain. This is mainly selected to understand changes of opinion (if any) from two distinct generations of women.

The study area is be Guwahati city as it is the only place in Assam which has seen transition in culture from time to time with oldest and newest locations.

My hypothesis will be developed in the process of field work and theorised as per the finding. As method, I shall use qualitative method like Focussed group discussion, in-depth interview, oral history.

AGENCY AND RESISTANCE IN *ABHIYATRI*

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Women have always remained occluded in the pages of history. They have always been written over or unwritten by the dominant narrative of official history. Oblivious of the need to record their work and achievements they always remained silent. **This is one major reason for women's subordinate state.** In colonial Assam the prevalent customs of child marriage and purdah system **were the major deterrents to women's education.** The advent of the British in 1826 saw the streaks of modernity gradually creeping into Assam. The idea of education for the women gained importance along with organization of secular societies and printing and reading of books and journals. This jolted the men in the society who dreaded that if women are educated they would yearn for independence which will accommodate more daunting time for them. They preferred the women to be more suited for the domestic world and not for the public world which remains the exclusive domain of men. The import of new ideas from the West saw the birth of an **ideology that accepted, as Partha Chatterjee has noted in "The Nationalist Resolution of Women's Question", the pursuance of science, technology, rational economics, and western political forms while regarding the home as the source of "true identity" that needed protection and strengthening, not transformation (Forbes 15).** This kept the women outside the hegemonic power structure to become the mute subject.

The society does everything to keep the women silent, and their "coming to voice" and agency paved the way for social and political change in society. A rebel woman who questions the very

essence of being a woman has been immortalized by Nirupama Borgohain in the image of Chandraprova Saikiani in the novel *Abhiyatri*. **Chandraprova's** tumultuous life made her all the more a stronger woman who not only stood up to the circumstances, but made the Assamese woman question her own identity in the society and embark on a path to self-realization. She vehemently opposed the purdah system in the colonial society and is responsible for consolidating the women throughout Assam. The paper would make a significant study to probe into the acceptance of a rebellious woman in the society who trespassed all the societal norms to instigate the women to realize their self-consciousness. It is also interesting to note as well as question the excitement in Chandraprova upon being conferred the *Padmashri*.

THE TWO NEVER SHALL MEET?

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The debility of women in our society is magnified by several factors. It is not simply a question of class differentiation because cultural behaviour is not dependent on class identity. This identity is not very pronounced under the prevailing conditions in spite of very disturbing contrasts in the socio-economic sphere. But communication among different sections of women has become more complex than before. The a-political consciousness has become deeper and **hence there have emerged pockets of relatively greater unconcern for 'the other.'** This is more pronounced as a vertical division is more or less a well accepted norm. The middle and upper middle class of women segregate themselves through some newly found activities into which the lower classes have either no entry or have no leisure and need for such diversions. The fashionable trend these days for women of certain classes is to involve in some apparently religio-spiritual preoccupation. There is no chance of a non-elitist woman becoming part of such a group even if she has the leisure and inclination to be one. There is an undeclared political classification taking place in such cases, much to the advantage of the reactionary forces which have a distorted idea of tradition and whose motto is exclusion. Recently, there was a huge congregation of 'soundarya lahari groups' in Bangalore at the palace grounds where a political leader spoke about "Indian culture". Women went in groups from different parts of the city as if they were participating in a 'festival of liberation' although it was only a mark of segregation from the other ranks of women in their own milieu. The question is whether a unified idea of 'woman in Indian society' is possible irrespective of manifestations like the one cited above and there are umpteen other 'exclusion modes' which are operative. Why does this consciousness strike roots and why is it subtly encouraged? Is it detrimental to the cause of woman as a class fulfilling the long cherished objective of emancipation? How does one cry a halt to the cultural divide which is one of the several legacies of patriarchy?

SACRED LIVES OF WIDOWS IN ASSAM: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN GENDER MAINSTREAMING

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Widowhood in India is a much neglected subject in contemporary discourse. Widows represent 9% of the female population, that is, over 34 million women (Census of India-2001); yet researchers and policy makers have paid scant attention to them. Notwithstanding the grief and insecurity a woman faces at the loss of her husband, a widow within the normative Brahmanical structure faces innumerable challenges which is intricately linked to issues of women empowerment. The survey report titled *Study on Widows at Vrindavan* (2009-10) conducted by the National Commission for Women reveals that majority of the widows in Vrindavan live in abject poverty, being abandoned by their families. In the guise of religious sanction and tradition, they rarely inherit property, has no right to remarry, is vulnerable to violence and abuse; and often not even recognized in poverty statistics.

In Assam, the Brahmanical religion with its patriarchal ideology brought about changes in gender relations in ways that were peculiar to the existing socio-cultural conditions. Social reformers such as Anandaram Dhekial Phukan, Hemchandra Barua and Gunabhiram Barua, fought for equal rights for women and was in favour of widow remarriage. In the recent past the literary pursuits of Jnanpeeth awardee Mamoni Raisom Goswami have also brought to fore the astonishing lack of public concern for widows, even by women's organizations not to mention the role of the State in inclusion of gender issues in policy frameworks. Widowhood discourses must be seen as integral to the broader struggle against gender inequalities. Gender Mainstreaming which relates to organisational strategy in an institution's policy and activities, aims at building gender capacity. An attempt is made here to gain insights into widowhood in Assam in the context of Bhakti tradition to understand the linkages between culture and gender. More importantly, it discusses issues and challenges of mainstreaming gender to identify and understand problems of widowhood in Assam.

WOMEN OF MAJULI: A STUDY OF THE CULTURAL POLITICS OF ABSENCE

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It is a fact universally acknowledged that dramatic changes have taken place in the legal, political, educational and socio-cultural status of women in India since independence. But there are certain regions which are not yet touched by all these reforms due to their geographical isolation. Majuli Island of Jorhat district, Assam falls under this category. The historical records show that being an island cut off from the mainland; the inhabitants of Majuli had no free contact with the mainstream society till the sixties and seventies of the last century. Again inside the island there was always a patriarchal dominance primarily focused on the Satra institutions where women hardly had any space. Thus the women of Majuli are doubly isolated from the mainstream. The ideological dominance of patriarchy and stereotyping of women's roles in such a traditional society plays a crucial role in determining their participation in the public spheres in general and cultural sphere in particular.

This paper tries to look into the factors behind the cultural isolation of the women of Majuli. Our specific interest is on the power-politics at work which justifies the absence of women in the mainstream. Attention will be given to the regional isolation vis-à-vis cultural marginalization of these women. It has been observed that as women belonging to rural society, they show a passive acceptance filled with silence. They have never questioned this imposed silence/absence; rather they tend to construct different communities/female-cultures for themselves. The study becomes more interesting when we try to unearth the unanswered question – whether they are imitating the mainstream or challenging it by denying/ignoring its existence.

READING THE FIT BODY: BODY WORK AND IDENTITY FORMATION IN CONTEMPORARY BENGAL

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This paper looks into the formation of the new Bengali middle class woman, a class, like any other, identified through their specific modes of inhabiting public and discursive spaces, and in the case of the middle classes, a more assertive and representative inhabitation. It investigates the bodily practices, and the body-images that enable individual women to fashion themselves into legitimate occupants of these discursive spaces, carving out meaningful social existence, creating social value. Using the body and body work as sites through which new kinds of **formations of class come into being, this paper situates the contemporary Bengali woman's engagement with the body in a historical context, to understand the implications of the contemporary practice. Aesthetic, medical and fitness discourses as present in advice columns and special features of women's magazines, testimonials of women involved in body work (both as learners and trainers: the social hierarchy inverted within the space of the gymnasium/ yoga class), newspaper articles and advertisements point at the formation of gendered identities and the imaginative engagement with these ideals by individuals. Body work has managed to procure a 'new' (both in terms of the prominence accorded to it through its close association with acts of consumption, and its difference from already existent practices of body work- especially in its ability to transform itself from a masculine to a supposedly feminine preoccupation) space for itself in the cultural realm, an investigation of its specificities will help in delineating the contours of the embodied ideal of "middle-classness". The analysis of the body-** projects that form the middle class will at the same time point at the bodies that this middle-classness excludes. By and large, ethnographic testimonials show that Muslim women are excluded from communal body work- the spaces of body work are aggressively Hindu, urban and upper caste- all markers that form the new middle class in Bengal. This paper, therefore, looks at the figuration of the new middle class Bengali woman: laying bare the exclusions and the physicality that shape her.

CAN WOMEN CREATE CULTURE OR JUST FOLLOW IT IN THE NORTH EAST REGION?

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Cultural expressions of the North East Region are very vibrant and assorted. The society as a whole and women in particular has been part of this cultural journey. Trauma, threats, discontents, trends and tradition have been expressed through cultural expressions of art works, performing arts, films, craftworks, fairs and festivals. Cultural revolutions through public arts and musical movements have become an unwritten norm for transforming conflict in this region. Use of folk traditions and cultural expressions for mass movements and mobilizations is a trend which needs close attention from the feminist perspective. Cinema has also been a huge influence on the cultural expressions of people in this region. Language, regional themes and characters of this region have been passionately captured by the film-makers of this region. But in contemporary times, there has been a growing influence of diverse cultural media from across the borders. One such influence is of Korean cinema. This paper will also focus on the impact of Korean cinema on young people especially on women in the North East Region. But what has been the impact of these cultural expressions on women in the region will be explored. Through this paper the researcher will attempt to capture these nuances.

THE UPPER CLOTH MOVEMENT IN THE 19TH CENTURY C.E. KERALA SOCIETY

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Women are always constructed as vulnerable in the society, particularly women in India faced multi-level of oppressions due to religion, caste, region etc. The woman suppression in India prevails in almost each and every region and the amount is differed. In Kerala, the non-Brahmin women were not allowed to cover their upper portion of the body and not allowed to carry pots on their hips. The baring of chest was treated as higher social status and it considered a sign of respect. Usually, the girls were taught to bare her breasts as a mark of respect to the incarnate deities such as Brahmin and they were insisted that their greatest duty was to give pleasure to them. The sexual submissiveness of Sudra women to the upper caste Brahmins had been projected as an important element to preserve their caste dominance. Marco Polo, the Venice merchant of 13th century C.E. recorded the nakedness of these women. In later period, the Christian missionaries considered this practice as uncivilized and raised the morality questions. In the 19th century C.E., a group of enlightensposed questions and agitate against the custom. The protest is popularly noted as upper cloth revolt or upper cloth movement. The movement considered that the subjugation of the community lied in the female body and they believed that the women empowerment would liberate their community from the caste domination. In 1859, the king of Travancore issued a proclamation of announcing the right of women to cover their upper part on certain condition that they should not imitate the clothing style of the upper caste. The proclamation did not quell the tension immediately. The order of Sethulakshmi Bai (1924 C.E.-1931 C.E.) curtailed the custom completely. In general, the movement was not

registered properly. The paper intends to bring forth the multi faced perspectives of the upper cloth movement and the role of women in Kerala which was peculiar in the Indian subcontinent.

"JAI SHREE CHUDEL MATA": ANALYZING THE IMPLICATIONS OF BRINGING TOGETHER *CHUDEL* AND *MATA* ON THE PROCESS OF CONFIGURATION OF FEMININITY

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In this paper, I analyze a moment in the history of Gujarat – the emergence of a temple in 1991 in the town of Kungher, situated in the Patan district of North Gujarat where the spirit of a witch is worshipped as a goddess. In 1991, a local temple, a five brick structure to be precise, was **remodeled into a huge temple called "High Court of Kungher."** This led to the emergence of the entity of Chudel Mata (Mother-Goddess-Witch), also known as the "Judge" of the High Court of Kungher. In this paper I will look at the ways in which the new goddess effortlessly penetrates into different kinds of spaces within everyday life due to the availability of wide range of circulation and penetration avenues, mostly attained through publicity strategies. This includes the actual site of the temple, the official website of the temple, the booklets that the temple prints, covering different aspects of the goddess and the temple Trust, as well as the plastic bags which are used to give *Prasad* to the devotees. In this paper I will focus on three issues pertaining to the representation of the goddess: first, the fact that a witch is worshipped as a goddess (What it means to call a witch a goddess?); second, she is not only called a goddess, but a 'mata' (What are the meanings that are attached to label 'mata'); and why and finally how did the witch emerge in 'modern' Gujarat. Thus, the questions that I will engage with in this paper are: how to locate the witch in post 1990s technologically advanced Gujarat which projects itself as a site of economic progress and development? What are the implications of change in medium of representation of Chudel Mata on the femininity that gets configured through the entity of Chudel Mata? How does the entity of witch acquire a globalized space in the form of a *Mata* and what are its implications on configuration of femininity in the context of Gujarat ?

With special focus on the narrative that the temple circulates as the official tale delineating the emergence of the witch-goddess, I locate violence in the site of representation. My conjecture here is that the kind of goddess that emerged in the nineties is a standardized, homogenized, sanitized, and controlled form of goddess with an apparent pan-Indian identity, building upon the rhetoric of modernity and secularism. I read the entity of Chudel Mata as a homogenized, mainstream articulation, smoothening over the ruptures in terms of caste and gender dynamics within the community, created through the figure of the witch. In short, the ways in which two separate terms *Chudel* and *Mata* are brought together in order to form the entity of Chudel Mata provides a space to engage with the politics of representation, through the nexus of community, gender, and form.

WHAT SHALL I BE? EXAMINING GENDER AS TEXT AND CONTEXT IN MY EXPERIENCES WITH LADAKH.

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As a self-identified transgender, butch, faggot, pansexual, polyamorous, lesbian, genderfuck woman-person assigned gender female at birth, during the course of my work and travels through remote terrains of Ladakh, I have experienced the pleasures, powers, challenges and dangers of 'passing' as somebody of indeterminable identities almost regularly, without always even wanting to. Each distinct, diverse experience has left me amazed (or amused!), forcing me to reassess my understanding of gender constructions and readings. It has led me to re-evaluate not just how binaries exist within the discourse of gender but also how gender in itself is almost disadvantageously seen by most modern-day scholarship as a polarised tussle of the self-ascribed versus the socially ascribed.

As I traverse along borders of mind, body and scapes, bearing-wearing-sharing the signposts and stereotypes of my fluid and female masculinities, my gender is indeterminable to me by only looking within.

I attempt to access elements of the public sphere, in my non-normativities and see them rearrange themselves around me, as refracted through the stage of my acts as well as the lenses of unsuspecting actors – birthing, fixing, queering me and themselves in turn, as the Outsider Other - a politics of intertextuality if you will.

The central question my paper tries to posit then, through recording and recounting my modest experiences, is, if not gender be an often enabling dialogic process of simultaneously assimilated performances, spectatorships, and narratives; a constant collaboration with the signifying powers of the body as text, the subjecthood of its author along with the interpretive interventions of a scopophilic audience.

At the end of this paper I have tried to briefly trace other such non-normative, gender/sexuality-transgressive individuals in the region, be they only travellers or inhabitants of the land and relate their journeys to my own against a backdrop of the Ladakhi sub-cultures and consciousnesses, to understand how the sense of the individual self stands affected through interactions with(in) a community, in the process, arguing for more sustained engagement of the mainstream feminist movement with such spaces and ideas.

THE CULTURE OF WOMEN'S MARKET IN MANIPUR, A NORTH-EAST INDIAN STATE

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Manipur is the North-Easternmost state of the Indian Union. It is a unique place with more than thirty-seven ethnic communities of the group of people belonging to the various branches of the mongoloid stock. The origin of these groups of people traces from Mongolia to South-East Asian countries.

The culture of a unique system of Market gives rise to the formation of the erstwhile nation of Manipur mingling the various ethnic groups into a plural social structure in its more than two thousand years old history beginning from 33 A.D. as an independent Kingdom in Asia before its merger to the Indian union in 1949.

The uniqueness of the Market in Manipur is that it is a **women's market**. **Women play the central role** in this economic system which is based on an age-old concept of pluralism having Socio-political-cultural-economic implications. An agrarian and egalitarian economy is the objective of **this market in which women's** role breeds a collective and plural culture of economy.

A state of economic genocide has replaced once thriving and vibrant economy of Manipur. **Despite its devolutionary change, the women of the women's market have still been playing significant political, cultural and social roles in contemporary Manipur.** The paper, an attempt towards a feminist historiography on the culture of women's market of Manipur, analyze the aspects mentioned above depending upon both oral and written histories and interviews of the women of some women's markets of Manipur.

CULTURAL CHALLENGES TO ACCESS REPRODUCTIVE HEALTH: A GENDER ANALYSIS AMONG YOUTH OF SRIRANGAM – TEMPLE CITY IN TAMIL NADU

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Reproductive health issues are directly connected with gender. The gendered socialization, social and cultural norms and conditions are disempowered youth in reproductive health such as lack of power, lack of access to information, lack of decision making and choices, limited mobility, safe sex education, and gender based violence. This existing gender discrimination in society leads to misconception and poor understanding among youth who are the next generation builders regarding reproductive health matters particularly in the matters of childlessness and infertility related issue . It results, serious physical, psychological and sexual harmful health implications like premarital and adolescent pregnancy, abortion, foeticide, maternal mortality,

STDs & HIV/AIDS, sexual assaults and gender based violence. Also such acts create conflict and disharmony among individuals, families and society just because of restricted knowledge on reproductive health due to cultural pressure to provide scientific sex education. In this context **this paper tries to assess cultural perspective of the youths' both male and female knowledge and attitude about reproductive health issues and rights in gender perspective at micro level in Srirangam which is a traditional, historical place persisting mixture of class, caste, gender and culture.**

IS BUDDHISM EMANCIPATORY FOR DALIT WOMEN? FOCUS ON CONTEMPORARY MAHARASHTRA

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The relationship of women to the conversion to Buddhism is a lesser pursued area. Historically, **especially since the colonial period, 'untouchables' disgusted with the social disabilities within the Hindu fold, have converted to Buddhism, although in small number.** However these Buddhist converts for eg. in Madras and on Malabar Coast saw themselves as Hindus. Buddhism is seen as emancipatory by the anti cast movements, such as by Lyothee Thass of Tamil Nadu. In contemporary UP, popular Dalit literature has emerged as a critical resource for asserting Dalit identity altering the images of Dalit women (Narayan 2009). However the voice tracing the emancipator potential of Buddhism is rather weak (Hardtmann 2009).

It is in this context that we need to locate the conversion to Buddhism in Maharashtra in 1956 by Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar. With conversion Neo- Buddhist in Maharashtra coming mainly from Mahar caste does not reach a position of equality automatically, but it affects his attitude toward himself and his rights (Zelliot, 1980). There have been a few attempts to examine the emancipatory potential of Buddhism for women (Kulkarni, 2002, Chhatre, 2005), granting Dalit women equality in society (Karade, 2006, Dhamma Sangh, 2007).

In this paper, I seek to analyze whether and how Buddhism has been emancipatory for Dalits, more specifically for dalit women in contemporary Maharashtra, what have been the conversions to Buddhism outside Maharashtra for eg. Tamilnadu or UP, and how is Buddhist thought related to the everyday life of Buddhist women.

GROSS GENDER BIAS IN A SKEWED DEVELOPMENT PARADIGM

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Development in the modernized context of society is related to the index of urbanization, tools

of industrialization, standard of living, health, civic and educational facilities among other comforts.

Tribals and other communities inhabiting these naturally endowed resource base terrains where these development projects have been built are generally deprived of the infrastructure primarily because of their disadvantaged geographical location. Large numbers of them have over the years been alienated of their natural resource base and livelihoods. Many of them have also protested against this lopsided development. Ecology, geography, gender as well as ethnicity has had its repercussion.

Inequities, particularly in India's inherent stratified society, coupled with remnants of the feudal system and an emerging neo-capitalistic class has furthered the patriarchal system. This has merely jinxed the development paradigm. The dominant gender discrimination has taken the forefront among the upper castes of the Indian society in the most crude and brutal way. In traditional society where matrimonial alliance predominated social status of families, eliminating daughters has today gained preponderance to the extent of creating skewed sex ratio in the country. UN Population Fund states that six lakh girls were missing between 2003 and 2007. This excludes female infanticide. Indian sex ratio stands at 940. **Whereas highly developed agrarian economies in the country like Haryana's skewed sex ratio of 830, Gujarat at 918 – with 809 in Unjha Gujarat's biggest market yard.**

The skewed sex ratios in certain castes, particularly the landed ones like the Jats in Haryana, **Gowdas in Karnataka, Patidars in Gujarat among others , where they don't have brides for their sons** have further created problems.

Crossing the barriers of the caste system, these traditional societies have abused the custom of bride price prevalent amongst the tribal and dalit communities which has in turn opened up a flourishing marriage market in certain areas of Gujarat. These rapacious men purchase them at paltry sums of around Rs 50,000. Most of the cash goes to the touts. Most brides land up as serfs in the fields , some get trafficked. However they re saved from paying lakhs or crores of rupees they would have had to pay as dowry and lifelong exchange of cash to their daughters.

The market is generally limited only to those tribals who have been displaced by dams and development projects .Contrary to the promises given, these displaced communities have been pauperized. Ironically these tribal girls end up in he homes of the beneficiaries.

However this skewed development has caused a lopsided development pattern in the rural areas where women are no longer safe. Societal modes and values have got fragmented. This is merely to save dowry and to deprive the daughters from getting share in their property.

Quite by contrast, tribal societies value their daughters. The sex ratio of tribal districts of Dangs district is 1007, Tapi 1004. A tribal house can be identified by the number of daughters with the number of guggal trees. Trees is the best way to remember their daughters. Land alienation has triggered loosing these wonderful customs and also their customary rights.



SUB-THEME – 9:

**WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN
INDIA**

CONFLICT, PEACE AND WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVE: THE CASE OF JAMMU AND KASHMIR

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The issues of women in conflict studies, social movements and in peace processes have been ignored or subsumed by the larger political concerns and its normative male involvement. In conflict zones, as in the state of Jammu and Kashmir (J & K) in India, the state structures are often combined with exceeding militarism, fundamentalism and national chauvinism to reinforce patriarchal practices resulting in relegating women either invisible or to the periphery. This marginalization of women has precluded their engagement with authority and presence in important decision-making bodies leading to their views being ignored on the questions of conflict resolution, peace initiatives, demilitarization, reconstruction and similar issues.

The state of J & K has seen, particularly since last twenty three years increasing militarization of the region and terror and violence of the militants, role of many sponsored Islamic fundamentalist and separatist groups, hardening of communal and regional identities, violations of civil and human rights, and straining of Centre-State relations along with the flouting of federal contracts. All this impacted women and their agency in a significant manner - as persons, as citizens, as well as wives and mothers. Though women have faced violence as physical and sexual abuse, rape or displacement and forced migration, they have also played an active role in combating violence and conflict through resistance, peace and negotiations. This paper seeks to challenge the **marginalization of women's representations in conflict situations and peace process** and the patriarchal project in which they are located. More importantly, the paper argues for the presence of women and inclusion of gender sensitivity in many of the laws like **Jammu and Kashmir Armed Forces Special Powers Act' (AFSPA) 1990, the law granting special powers to the armed forces in 'disturbed areas'**, to counter the imbalance produced due to militarized and masculinized state structures.

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN NORTH EAST INDIA :SCOPE FOR UNSCR 1325

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For decades, women in Northeast India are the receiving end of the ongoing armed and ethnic conflicts. The region witnessed protracted conflict on all levels of violence ranging between low and medium intensity. In the past and present, women in Northeast India have played that crucial role. They actively engaged to improve the prospects for peace and sustainable development in the region. However, their contribution is often underestimated.

Due to prolonged armed conflict, the region breed into several armed opposition groups which

are about 79 in number. Their resistance mostly takes the form of occasional attacks on security forces, extortion, kidnapping, executions and bombings. The Government of India (GoI) has sought primarily to defeat or contain movements for self-determination with military force. The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act of 1958 was enacted in 1958 to contain the armed opposition groups and has been in force since then. It has been proved that AFSPA fostered a culture of impunity and gives armed forces considerable freedom to commit rape and molest and mutilate women and also enjoyed immunity.

As conflict exacerbates existing power relations, women suffered increased levels of gender based violence in the patriarchal societies of NEI. In response to the insecurity, men imposed even more stringent **restrictions on women's freedom of movement. Both state and non-state** actors have resorted to gendered forms of violence such as rape and physical assault.

Several peace talks and negotiations are going on between the Government of India and insurgent groups, but virtually without the involvement of women either as a component of the negotiating parties or as a topic in the agenda of the negotiation. Victims of human rights violations, a majority of whom are women, have not been consulted in the process. Let alone about broader plans for transitional justice, reintegration of former combatants, and post-conflict reconstruction.

The reasons for such exclusion can be analysed from the point of women's participation in governance in this region. Women in NEI seldom hold decision making positions in administrative, political or judiciary posts, and are almost absent from public and political life. The paper will examine the above factors and will analyse the scope and applicability of UNSCR 1325 in north east India.

CHANGES OF SPACES, CHANGES IN LIVES: MARRIAGE AND CONFLICT IN CONTEXT OF LIVES OF MGRATED MUSLIM WOMEN

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The argument in this paper is developed by linking mobility and migration to the idea of agency on part of the migrant woman as well as enunciates the difficulties, problems and dilemmas of being a migrant woman in a metropolis. Apart from secondary sources, data collected through field work, at Jamia Nagar, Delhi, has been included to substantiate this argument. The field work, being preliminary in nature, takes only a very small sample of Muslim women and providing vignettes of their experience, in their own words, is designed to take into account the reasons for migration that also results in the experience of being part of the process of ghettoization of this particular community. There is an effort to examine the processes through which women belonging to this community have sought to incorporate their individual aspirations independently as well as within larger familial goals. As the sample is of a limited size, no broad generalisations are being offered and it is hoped that this initial exercise will lead to an interest in further micro-level and qualitative research around migrant women, particularly from

marginalised communities, so that policy perspectives may be better informed from a subaltern standpoint that is not necessarily present in large data sets.

WOMEN IN CONFLICT ZONE: HEALING THE TRAUMA OF VIOLENCE

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The need to support survivors of violence is gradually being perceived as important in development programmes. This is due to increased awareness and thinking about development over the last two decades, which have emphasized the emancipation of women as the key to sustainable development, and, as a corollary, the importance of formulating practical strategies to address the barriers that impede women's participation in the development process.

Kashmiri women have been the worst sufferers of the ongoing conflict in the Valley. They have been victims of rape, molestation, and torture by security forces and militants. Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP) a women's organisation in Kashmir, utilises a gender specific approach to heal the traumatic impacts of violence suffered by women during the last more than two decades of the ongoing conflict in the Valley. APDP recognises the differing impacts of direct/indirect violence on women, and employs empowerment theory to enable women to reconstruct their sense of themselves as women, and as strong and capable persons to support family and demand government accountability regarding their missing family members. The paper based on the experiences of Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons (APDP) and from key insights from gender and development literature attempts to underscore that the trauma of violence in Kashmir is primarily social rather than medical in nature, thus, an approach to healing for women needs to be embedded in the notion of empowerment enabling women survivors of violence to pursue individual and collective strategies for social change in ways that are appropriate to the political and cultural nature of the trauma. Examining the impacts of violence on women only as a disease or disorder also acts to remove the political, social, and economic forces from which trauma has arisen. Women who experience psychological trauma in conflict situations are the victims of a political project intended to harm them. Hence, while women victims of violence do often suffer traumatic symptoms as a result of violence, it would be fatally inconsiderate to say that they are suffering from a disease condition

JUSTICE, COMMUNITY AND WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN KASHMIR

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This paper attempts to analyze the status quo-ist nature of New Delhi supported women's movement in Kashmir as a politico military strategy and a mechanism of institutionalized control, subjugation and disempowerment of women. These movements have had a top down approach for digging out targeted women's agency and in actuality have only tried to create political fragmentation within; which finds no resonance with the lived political and social realities. For many years quite a number of external agencies have worked on women's issues in Kashmir .But the larger narrative that emerged from this ngo-ised work with women only pits the larger political question of Aazadi against the issues of patriarchy, masculinity, and gendered violence. It is pertinent to mention that excessive focus has worked towards the targeted politicization over some issues while leaving some other vital issues. The other area that has been touched by Delhi based women's movement has been to draw upon women's mediating role in Peace process and Peace building with India. Since the idea is theoretically flawed as it remains a bourgeoisie activity which keeps bulk of women away from its fold. The second section will try to look at the local efforts towards building a strong women's movement in Kashmir. Though the early nineties saw a robust women's movement but they couldn't take up due to the lack of funds and the missing secular character. In the interim years what remained of the women's movement was the monthly presence of APDP women holding placards to find their kith and kin who were disappeared in the turmoil. This regular practice established a relationship between justice and memory. In 2013 spring, a group of young women came together to file a public interest litigation to reinvestigate the atrocities unleashed on the women of villages of Kunanshposhpora who were raped by the Rajaputana Rifle soldiers in 1991. Yet another development in the case was the public presence of these rape victims demanding justice, which had not been the case for last 20 years. This section aims to analyze the secrecy, subjectivity of the raped and hence the questions of justice

WOMEN AND SECURITY ISSUES IN BORDER AREA: A CASE STUDY OF GURDASPUR DISTRICT OF PUNJAB

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International boundaries, their issues and problems are studied by different scholars of various disciplines. Each discipline has discussed these issues within the framework of their domain. Most of the disciplines do not address how borders are affecting on women and much importance was given to sovereignty. India has its long physical boundaries sharing with various countries. Indian state of Punjab has sharing international border with Pakistan. According to survey report by India Today (26th September, 2007), Punjab has for the 7th time achieved the

status of most developed state of India among all Indian states. But it is not true for border areas of Punjab. Border Area of Punjab had faced displacement due to war or war like situation for several times. During this displacement process women faced lots of problems. There were no facilities of food, lodging and healthcare. Government is putting all type of restrictions in the name of 'security' in border area. This border does not only segregate India and Pakistan but also disturb the culture and harmony of the people and spread hatred. Nevertheless, the enactment of the first resolution on women, peace and security, 'Security Council Resolution 1325' (UNSCR-1325), by U N Security Council on 31st October 2000, introduce the disproportionate and unique impact of armed conflict on women and recognized the under-valued and under-utilized contributions of women in making conflict prevention, peace-keeping, conflict resolution and peace-building. On the other hand, India is very cautious in implementing the UNSCR-1325 by definition of armed conflict and denies responsibility under UNSCR 1325. Against this backdrop, this paper discusses how women faced problem in border Areas in the name of 'Security' especially during displacement due to war and war like situation in the light of UN Security Council Resolution 1325.

WOMEN'S INITIATIVE FOR PEACE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO TRIPURA: REAL CASES OF WOMEN'S INTERVENTIONS IN PEACE BUILDING

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Interventions from the Government of India for initiating peace-building in India's Northeast has largely brought about tendencies to exclude and marginalize certain sections of the population in the region. New categories of vulnerable populace were created in the process and this is not just about the NE and the projected mainland. Rather, the contested space of exclusion lies within. Peace-building in the Northeastern states today mean barely signing peace-accords of laying down arms, which is again often found to merge with fake surrenders in the name of mitigating armed conflict (refer to the surrender of BNLF insurgents in 2007 to Assam Rifles as a precursor of repatriation of Bru displacement victims living in Tripura). And then there is the unexplored regime of vulnerability for women in the tribal homesteads when 'hospitality' to the rebels is largely presumed to be one of the foremost criteria of allegiance to the rebel movements.

Women are found to participate in conflict situations in multi-layered roles. They are found as combatants, 'sleeper cells', and also as peace builders. Absence of women in the peace building process leads to creation of new problems where there are further areas of marginalization and exclusion of the gender. The UN SCR 1325 started off as a significant tool in the hand of the womenfolk to actively participate in the peace building process. It envisaged women's participation in decision making and policy framing, connecting development, peace, security and human rights for the first time. This paper tries to look at how women in Tripura are contributing to conflict resolution and peace building with special focus on armed tribal conflict.

INVISIBLE WOMEN IN THE SHADOW OF CONFLICT SITUATIONS IN MANIPUR

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In the dire situations created by conflicts or war like situations, it is the women and children who suffer the most. In India, in the North-East in the name of containing militants the security forces are empowered with extra-constitutional power, The Armed Forces Special Power Act (AFSPA) giving them impunity from prosecution for crimes they commit against civilian population.

In these conflict zones of the North-East which are termed as disturbed areas, a situation has arisen in respect of human rights violation leading to humanitarian crisis. Every other day three to four persons are killed either at the hand of the law enforcement agencies or at the hand of unidentified persons. Majority of these victims belong to the economically backward families and as such when they are killed they leave behind their unfortunate wives and children at the mercy of various hostile forces – social and economic.

The social and economic situation caused by the conflict situation has given rise to numbers of widows. These widows find themselves in a dire social situation. They find themselves having no economic means to sustain their livelihood, but even worse than this is the social stigma, physical abuse or even sexual abuse from society at large including their relatives. Many widows who have no alternative source of livelihood or income, or have family or children to look after them are left with no options but to take resort to manual labour or even to flesh trade. In many cases many such women are engaged in carrying or transferring arms for some militant groups. From the abstract projected above it is clear that these widows face a future of vast uncertainties for no fault of theirs. My paper will try to bring out some of the problems that surround these widows. Also the paper will try to focus on the various groups in society who are trying to help them rehabilitate and reestablish their lives and also what are the challenges ahead to help them live a dignified life. Empowering these widows will create opportunities for them to build a secure life for themselves and also help in protecting their children and avoid the cycle of intergenerational poverty and deprivation.

FEMINIST PERSPECTIVE OF NATIONAL SECURITY: WHOSE SECURITY DOES THE MAINSTREAM LAW SEEK TO REPRESENT?

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This paper seeks to address the limited aspect of the definition of security when addressed in

terms of “national interest”. It seeks to explore the gendered dimension of the concept of mainstream understanding of security and its exclusive character. It is therefore crucial to develop a much more democratic, decentralised and inclusive notion of security which moves beyond structural politics and addresses security in a much broader manner.

The feminist school of thought forms one very crucial stream within the growing discourse on alternative approaches to defining security. Feminist security as it has been established in the past few years seek to relook and redefine the basic concepts of security from a gendered perspective. Unlike the mainstream definition of security being looked at within a statist framework of realpolitik the feminist perspective seeks to ask crucial questions like **Where are the women? Whose security is the state representing? How have women’s interests been addressed by the state centric security discourses?**

It has become extremely important at the national and international level to understand the implications of such state centric approach to addressing security issues. In places like the North East and Kashmir where acts like AFSPA is a lived reality addressing the consequences from a gender perspective is an immediate necessity. Women and children under such laws are legally insecure with provisions of impunity for army officials being granted by the state. Rapes, sexual abuse and violence against women are everyday occurrence in areas under the security acts. **These realities are however overlooked by the state under the garb of “national interest”.** Feminist approaches expose the myth of the protection of the vulnerable section by the state by revealing the atrocities committed on the most vulnerable section under the guise of these laws.

WOMEN, PEACE AND SECURITY IN INDIA

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India is a democratic and the second largest populated country in the world. It has various linguistic, cultural religious and ethnic groups. Its constitution provides equal rights for all citizens. It has a society where status of women is pathetic. They always face myriad problems in our society such as gender discrimination, inequality and are victims of abuse and violent **crime like rape, dowry deaths, kidnapping, abduction, and trafficking. No doubt, India’s** economy is growing rapidly but some states of India are still not equally participating in its progress. These Indian states are facing the problem of poverty, and unemployment because they are affected by local insurgency and local conflict specifically in North-eastern regions.

The combination of poverty, insurgency, and unemployment and gender inequality enables trafficking in girls to thrive in North East. During insurgency and conflict situation women are subject to widespread and systematic form of human rights violation. Women are also subjected to various types of exploitation physical, mental and sexual. Such exploitation leads to lifelong social and psychological trauma. In the North-eastern states of India insurgency is the cause of rampant unequal distribution of wealth and unemployment. This leads to brutality

towards females by the unemployed males. This leads to violation against women like women trafficking. Trafficking is a criminal practice in human society all over the world. It is a serious problem of insecurity of women in northeastern region of India. It is a general practice of the poor family to send their girls and women for work in the wealthy families in the urban or rural areas.

Today this practice has been exploited by the traffickers to lure the women and girls to supply for those wealthy families looking for the domestic labor. These girls generally do not have access to any kind of education, freedom and work long hours to fulfill the owners demand in the poor unhygienic condition with primarily no pay. That practice is leading to women insecurity in northeastern regions. Therefore, the study examines how does local insurgency is an important factor for origin of women trafficking and brutality? How does state manage security and safety of women in those areas?

WOMEN'S SECURITY AND NEOLIBERAL STATE MILITARIST POLICIES IN INDIA: FROM A GENDER BUDGET PERSPECTIVE

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Neoliberal Indian state is keen on spending most in defence spending and militarization. Masculinist state is prioritizing on militarization in Indian Five Year Plans. Priority on defense spending has brought in obvious cuts in welfare expenditure on women, bringing in deprivation and destitution of Indian women. If we look at government schemes on livelihood, health and education, all such schemes are suffering in militarized area like North East and Jammu and Kashmir. **Women's security has taken a backseat in the entire welfare plan of women. Women in Development can also be an instrument in peace and security: this theme is lost in the perspective of Indian state. If we are looking from the point of view of gender budget, this also shows a tremendous deviation from declared objectives. Women in disturbed areas are suffering in the name of masculinist state's security measures. The paper analyses this from a gender budget perspective by looking at the Indian planning system. The paper also looks into the efficacy of the women targeted and general schemes of women in these states and the outcome of state policies on women's security in the end.**

THE ESSENTIAL ROLE OF WOMEN IN BUILDING SUSTAINABLE PEACE AND SECURITY

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Women are powerful agents of change in rebuilding and reshaping communities affected by conflict. The situation for women in conflict affected countries shows insufficient improvement,

because many “women, peace and security” initiatives are based on incomplete analysis.

Most of today’s conflicts take place within states. Their root causes often include poverty, the struggle for scarce resources, and violations of human rights. They have another tragic feature in common: women and girls suffer their impact disproportionately. While women and girls endure the same trauma as the rest of the population - bombings, famines, epidemics, mass executions, torture, arbitrary imprisonment, forced migration, ethnic cleansing, threats and intimidation. They are also targets of specific forms of violence and abuse, including sexual violence and exploitation.

Efforts to resolve these conflicts and address their root causes will not succeed unless we empower all those who have suffered from them including and especially women. And only if women play a full and equal part can we build the foundations for enduring peace, development, good governance, human rights and justice.

Women leadership for peace and security Cordaid believes women’s voices and their ideas need to be heard and acted upon by policy makers and practitioners alike, from the local level to international bodies. How they perceive and experience daily life in a conflict area is key to how things can be different or better for their families and communities. Voice of local women the existing indexes is missing the perspective of local women. Cordaid’s focus is on giving local women a voice and to connect that voice to international policy makers and governments. This results in well-informed and effective policies that are attuned to daily realities. Social innovation Cordaid aims to check whether policies and initiatives are working, by using locally gathered information about the current peace and security situation.

This may sound obvious, peace can only endure when women can make their voices heard and their interests are represented in peace talks and other fora where decisions are made which directly influence security in their daily lives.

स्त्री : शांति और सुरक्षा

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वैश्वीकरण के इस युग में आज स्त्री की शांति और सुरक्षा एक बड़ा प्रश्न बनता जा रहा है। स्त्री कहाँ सुरक्षित है और कहाँ सुखी है यह बताना आज एक चुनौतीपूर्ण प्रश्न है। समझा जाता था कि स्त्रियाँ घर की चारदीवारी में महफूज हैं पर वो चारदीवारी भी स्त्रियों के लिये नहीं शुकुन भरी जगह रही है और न ही सुरक्षित स्थान। आज स्त्री हर ओर से असुरक्षित है-संबंधों में असुरक्षा, पारिवारिक असुरक्षा, आर्थिक असुरक्षा, आदि ऐसी मुख्य परिस्थितियाँ हैं जो हर पल स्त्री को शंका करती

रहती हैं। स्त्री दिन प्रति दिन असुरक्षित होती जा रही है और उसकी इस असुरक्षा का कारण है स्त्री की देह। जब तक पुरुष मान सकता वाला यह समाज स्त्री को एक देह के रूप में न देख उसे अपने समकक्ष एक व्यक्ति मानना शुरू नहीं करेगा तब तक स्त्री की सुरक्षा की बात सोची नहीं जा सकती है। स्त्री की दिन-हीन दशा कब बदलेगी यह एक ऐसा प्रश्न है जिसका जवाब सायद ही कोई दे पाए। जिस प्रकार अपनी अमानवीय स्थिति से निकलने के लिए एक बड़ी तादाद में स्त्रियाँ प्रयत्नरत हैं और खुद को मुक्ति आंदोलन का हिस्सा बना रही हैं, उसी प्रकार स्त्री को अपनी सुरक्षा के लिए शक्ति बनाना होगा, आर्थिक रूप से स्वावलंबित होना होगा, और मानसिक रूप से दृढ़ बनना होगा। घरेलू हिंसा और अत्याचार के खिलाफ कड़े कदम उठाने होंगे। स्त्रियों की सुरक्षा के लिए उन्हें प्रशिक्षित करने की आवश्यकता है, और ये जिम्मेदारी प्रत्येक सरकारी-गैरसरकारी प्रसाधनों की बनती है। स्त्रियों को खुद की भी सोच को बदलना होगा, उन्हें शैक्षिक रूप से, आर्थिक रूप से और सामाजिक रूप से खुद को स्थापित करना होगा। तभी शायद स्त्री अपनी शांति और सुरक्षा की उम्मीद कर सकती है।

REVISITING THE IDEA OF SECURITY: A FEMINIST APPROACH

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State-centric security or military theorizations of security borrows its jurisprudential basis from neo-realism, a social theory that emphasizes on power dynamics between sovereign states, even at the cost of the voices of the other stake holders such as vulnerable groups, ethnicities, non-state actors, or other forms of affiliations with which a person may identify. When one talks of security from this vantage point, one usually talks of defense mechanism, border management and internal and international threats. In such a discourse of security, many other facets of **human 'security' are brushed aside**, despite growing understanding about the idea as a more comprehensive and secular space which engages and accommodates diverse interests embracing human rights, equality and entitlements. Ideas such as human security and human rights evolve from below. The lived experiences of women, especially in the third world locations, help enrich the ideas of rights and security going beyond conventional theorisations of these concepts. There is thus growing interest in understanding gender not as a sub-section of the idea of security but as a basis of thinking about a more comprehensive idea of international and human security. The question is whether a reversal of the dichotomous gender roles provides a third eye view to such an idea of security.

Against this backdrop, this paper attempts to extend a critique the traditional notion of "masculine security" from a feminist perspective with a view to explore the emerging roles of

women as 'security actors' and provide a gendered analysis of the idea. Finally, the paper will make a plea for a revised idea of security, which is broader and inclusive.

WOMEN'S ROLE IN CIVIL SOCIETY INITIATIVE: CASE OF NAGA MOTHERS' ASSOCIATION (NMA)

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The northeast region of India has often been regarded as the most conflict ridden regions of India since independence. Conflict in this region has become now more than a half century old. In the long decadal conflict the people of Nagaland have been affected by both militant and state violence. Following the ceasefire agreement between the Government of India (GoI) and the rebel groups peace process had been initiated in 1997. When the conflicting parties in ceasefire and they are on the peace process, civil society can play an important role by taking democratic and informative initiative for creating a congenial and amicable environment for talking peacefully in the negotiation. So, in post conflict situation civil society's role inculcate sustainability and growth to the peace process. In a civil society women's role is very crucial because in civil society initiative is noticed very least as far as the mainstream civil society initiative for conflict resolution process is concerned. It is the women are the most sufferers in any conflict situation. For this reason inclusion of women in the peace making process can heal the problems of women themselves.

The conflict in Nagaland had a history of bloodshed and terror in the minds of every mother wife of Nagaland. But the women in Nagaland had raised the voice against the human rights violation by both the state as well as by the militants in the name of raid and fractional killings. The civil society organistaions like Naga Ho Ho. Naga Mothers' Association, Naga Peoples' Movement for Human Rights have great contributors in

CONFLICT AND DEHUMANIZATION: A GENDERED PERSPECTIVE

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Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork in the border regions of Jammu and Kashmir, this paper argues that prolonged conflict and overwhelming presence of military masculinizes the everyday discourse and performances of the society; but more importantly, it makes invisible the practices of 'humiliation', 'dehumanization' and 'marginalisation' associated with the pervasive phenomenon of surveillance and constant military gaze. This paper will explore the ways in which the security discourse closely interacts with nationalism and religion to institutionalize the sites of violence and silence the voices of women. Silencing of women's voicing is not produced

merely both by coercive security apparatus but also by legitimizing the notions of nationalism, borders and boundaries; thereby in the process subduing the gendered concerns in favour of broader nationalist and security interests. This presents a complex situation, whereby women while experiencing humiliation or marginalisation endorse the nationalism discourse. This is especially reflected in the case of Hindu women (across caste and class) in the border regions who are critical of and yet endorse the military gaze. Various contestations to the Indian nationalist and security framework - mainly presented by the Muslim community - also manifest a masculinized vocabulary, which simultaneously silence as well as draw endorsement from the women of their community. This paper seeks to highlight these intricacies to further problematize and extend the gendered debates on conflict and security.

FICTIONALIZING CONFLICT: (ANTI) INSURGENCY AND ITS BURDEN ON WOMAN IN LITERARY FICTION FROM ASSAM

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Women and children are willy-nilly the unwanted casualties in any situation of conflict, and it has not been much different in Assam. Many writers have attempted to represent these travails of women caught in conflict. Violence is seen as product of different agencies - the state, the rebels, extra judicial forces or something that rises out of the aura of fear, terror and mistrust. What is remarkable in these works is the way the writers have constructed an associative dimension of these forms of conflict with women. The repercussions are not in just being killed but can have multiple dimensions like sexual violence, physical and emotional torture and trauma, financial ruin, loss of domestic harmony, both spatial and temporal, social ostracization and restrictions because of the climate of terror induced fear.

I propose to interrogate such fictional representations of violence on women. While doing so, I would be dividing these representations into categories that would be classified with reference to the different form of conflict that induced these states of violence at the first place. I select these works not for their mere documentative purposes but also as they have challenged the dominant and powerful forces of insurgency, the state and the society that silently acquiesce to the violence and often act in collusion to these agencies. Madness, hysteria, resort to superstitious practices, silence – both forced and willing are shown as the consequences of violent practices adopted by the insurgents and the state. These are alternative histories written about the **“weaker” gender caught in the times of conflict. At the same time, these are narratives of strength and courage too, of women who have coped with all forms of violence possible through collective and individual resistance.** I would try to limit myself to literary representations although references and allusions to real events cannot be left out, as the selected texts belong to a realm riddled with real conflict, and it is often that the real and the imaginary seem to dissolve into one terrible world of trauma.

WOMEN'S QUEST FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE: PERSPECTIVES FROM UTTHAN IN POST-2002 GUJARAT

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The communal violence of 2002 left deep scars across Gujarat, no more so than on the Muslim women who endured displacement, discrimination, loss of property, and—in many cases—physical violence, rape, torture, and the deaths of their children or loved ones. Human rights groups estimate more than 3,000 people, most of them Muslim, died during the communal riots, including 250 to 300 female victims.

Seeing the consequences of this “climate of terror,” Utthan chose to branch into the area of peace and conflict transformation in the most affected districts. Utthan’s approach towards addressing communal scars has implications for other activists and organizations working on women, peace, and security across India.

This paper presents a practitioner's perspective on the role of women in ensuring peace and **security. Illustrated by real cases of women’s interventions in peace-building**, this paper provides a conceptual framework for addressing and preventing communal violence through 1) mobilizing women by creating platforms for diversity and pluralism and 2) defining common interests and values based on the central theme of justice and peace.

After 2002, Utthan’s first step was to integrate conflict transformation into all of its work. In Panchmahal district, Utthan identified potential female leaders from diverse communities and backgrounds who were willing to discuss the ramifications of 2002 and address common concerns. These initial leaders then reached out to affected women not only to show them warmth, but also understanding of their concerns. The result was the establishment of the **Ekta Mahila Sangathan (or Unity Women’s Federation) in 2004.**

With the women mobilized, Utthan cultivated a mindset of solidarity among the federation members through dialogue, situational analysis, and capacity building. Utthan sensitized federation leaders on the deeper causes of violence and how minorities are targeted through hateful misconceptions that pitch vulnerable communities against one another. Utthan also placed their justice and peace-building efforts in a wider national and international context. A number of public demonstrations were also organized, including pilgrimages to different **members’ religious sites.**

The example of the Ekta Mahila Sangathan speaks to the preventative role of women when it comes to communal violence. In another example from Panchmahal, when a mosque in the community was defaced before an election, the women organized a public rally and, together with youth groups, condemned the action but also made clear that violent reprisals would also not be welcome.

These and other examples will be presented to show that women's interventions in peace-building are only successful when women are effectively organized and are aware of the sources and outcomes of violence. Only then do women have the strength and influence to prevent broader violence.

The carnage of 2002 showed that when underlying issues of inequality and discrimination are not addressed the result is hatred, **polarization, and violence**. By **strengthening women's** institutions and providing a space for open dialogue to build trust and solidarity, Utthan has found a successful approach towards ensuring the spark of violence will not ignite again in an area still reeling from the effects of communal strife.

DIFFERENTIAL ROLE OF WOMEN IN PEACE BUILDING

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Armed conflict affects civilians and women especially are often the worst affected. Nevertheless, the peace processes which are subsequently carried out are usually dominated by men. These decisions have had a gendered impact on women. Women are affected differently during militarization and their absence in peace processes leads to the failure to identify and address the problems women face during conflict situations. Militarization, a masculinized approach to security is considered appropriate by the patriarchal state as a solution to the conflict but it has **failed to deliver peace. Women's experiences and knowledge from the field can benefit and bring out a sustainable solution to conflict**. There is a need to go beyond patriarchal approach to find **solution to the conflict and for the inclusion of women's rights in the peace processes**. This paper analyzes the reasons for women being under-represented at all levels of negotiations in peace processes.

In the North Eastern region of India, the intervention by women in Nagaland has redefined peace and has led to transformation of gender relations in Nagaland. There has been a prolonged struggle going on in Nagaland which has affected the region since the time of colonial rule and Nagaland still remains a conflict zone. The constant militarization of the conflict by the state attempting to resolve the issue has had a gendered impact on women making them really vulnerable to sexual abuse. This paper describes the various efforts undertaken by the women in Nagaland to bring an end to the conflict and how they look for new ways to live together. It will highlight the implications their participation has had for improving the peace processes.

Women's participation in peace processes though present is minimal in spite of the fact that, they can provide great insights to peace building processes through their knowledge from the **field. The United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 provides that "all actors to adopt a gender perspective when negotiating and implementation of peace agreements"**. The paper **attempts to see how the UNSC Resolution 1325 has impacted the status of women's participation** in various peace processes.

Women organize themselves locally and hence their experiences, insights and knowledge about the practicalities of the field can be of immense use to the policy makers and implementers. There is a great need for including women in the negotiating peace tables as conflict affects them equally, if not, probably more, hence their equal representation is just and desired.

WOMEN AS PEACE-MAKER: DR. MAMONI RAISOM GOSWAMI IN THE CONTEXT OF ULFA-GOVERNMENT OF INDIA PEACE TALKS

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Mamoni Raisom Goswami is a legendary writer in Assam. Her works are a treasure to world of Assamese literature. This versatile writer has written many novels that contain appeal of humanity. Apart from her wonderful writings, as a human being she was an amicable person with dignity and fame. She has written her tremendous novels on the basis of her experiences in life. In her social life she had contributed a lot to the upbringing of our Assamese society for peaceful situation. The soil of Assam has witnessed lost of thousands of lives of innocent people, revolutionaries and soldiers in the dreadful conflict between the ULFA and the Government of Assam as well as Government of India. As a part of our civil society Mamoni Raisom Goswami has patronised the initiative of peace process after 30years of bloodshed in Assam. She had visited transit camps of ULFA, travelled family houses of top leaders of ULFA and tried to go insight the deep realities of the conflicting armed group and acted as a bridge between two **warring sides. So, she was chosen as the interlocutor of the Peoples' Consultative Group (PCG)** constituted by ULFA and she participated in peace talks between ULFA and Government of India (GoI). Here, taking the example of Dr. Mamoni Raisom Goswami, the role of women as peace maker is worthy to be discussed. Because gender identities of women generally allow them to do some forms of peace building that a man cannot do. Women are taken as peaceful who are not interested in any kind of violence than the men are usually prone to use violence. The paper will be an endeavour to light on the unique role of this magnificent woman as a facilitator of peace process. The present paper will be purely based on secondary sources like books, journal articles, news paper reports etc.

WARFARE OR WELFARE: WOMEN IN THE SHADOWS OF ARMED FORCES SPECIAL POWERS ACT 1958 AND ASSESSING THE CALL TO REPEAL IT (FOCUS ON NORTH EASTERN INDIA)

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People in the North-Eastern India especially women, have been protesting against the Armed

Forces Special Powers Act 1958 (AFSPA) which has been invoked for five decades. Indian officials have long sought to justify use of the law by citing the need for the armed forces to have extraordinary powers to combat armed insurgents. The abuses facilitated by the AFSPA, especially extrajudicial killings, torture, rape and disappearances have fed public anger and disillusionment with the Indian state. The AFSPA has not only led to human rights violations but it has allowed members of the armed forces to perpetrate abuses with impunity. The state of Manipur is the one most affected and most violence in all of India. The Supreme Court has issued guidelines to prevent human rights violations but these are routinely ignored. Since 2000 Irom Sharmila, an activist in Manipur has been on hunger strike demanding repeal of the act and the government has responded by keeping her in judicial custody, force-fed through a nasal tube, charged for attempting to commit suicide and has ignored numerous appeals for repeal from activists. Following the widespread protests after the 2004 murder in custody of an alleged militant Thangjam Manorama Devi in Manipur, the people have done everything humanly conceivable to register the protest against AFSPA- naked protest by Manipuri mothers, self immolation by student leader, mass demonstrations, petition to the Supreme Court, complaints to the United Nations and more. Civil society groups including the media, political parties, jurist, expert groups appointed by the government and the United Nations have constantly called upon the government to withdraw AFSPA from Manipur. Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh eventually responded by setting up the justice B.P.Jeevan Reddy Committee 2005 to review the AFSPA. This paper will focus on the abuses facilitated by the AFSPA which contravenes state and security laws of the constitution of India, women and to cease attacking civilians and ensure compliance with international humanitarian law.

WOMEN IN CONFLICT SITUATION: GENDER BASED VIOLENCE (CASE STUDY OF ASSAM)

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The Northeast region has its distinct socio-economic, geographical, political, cultural component from mainland India. All the North eastern state has been witnessed an on-going conflict for almost three decades. In this process the region continue to suffer but women and the children are the worst sufferer. Women have to deal with the particular traumas of conflict. When their husbands, sons, families and community members are targeted, kidnapped, imprisoned, tortured or killed, women are not only overcome by grief and fear, they must pick up the pieces, be **strong for children and other dependents and ensure the family's survival(Fuller:2010)**. This violence is different **from the violence experienced by the women in 'normal' life; women and children are the easy victim and the target for the opponent party**. Women faced different kind of violence like sexual violence (rape and sex slave), physical torture, displacement of family, family loss, threats culture and through these violence various types of infection spreads among the women and then to the society like HIV/AIDS. The impact of this violence is high in maternal

mortality rate and mental trauma among the women.

This paper attempts to explore the following: 1) the different dimensions of violence suffered by women during conflict (ethnic/ armed conflict); 2) the causes and consequences of physical, mental and sexual violence faced by women; and 3) existing support services for women survivors in violence situation.

ENGAGING WITH SECURITY AND STATE FROM A GENDERED LENS: INDIAN STATE'S CONSTRUCTION OF AND RESPONSES TO INTERNAL SECURITY IN 2010-2011

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In the following paper, an attempt would be made to engage with the relationship between the state and the imperatives of security from a gendered lens. The context being analyzed in specific is the manner in which the Indian state has defined and proposed to deal with concerns of *internal security pertaining to the 'Left Wing Extremism' in 2010-2011*. It would be argued that the state needs to be disaggregated into the legislature, executive and the judiciary; since there are times when some institutional parts of the state provide space for progressive **democratic engagement whilst other institutions don't**. The specific contours of violence faced by women and children at the hands of the state, in the above-mentioned discourse would also be examined.

Methodologically, this study would begin with an enumeration of and an analysis of theories about the security state from a gendered perspective. An attempt would be made to examine the relationship between citizens and the state as a parallel to relationships between genders in a patriarchal socio-political space. **In this context, Iris Marion Young's theorization of the security state becomes important**. Young (2003, p.4) has argued that a security state corresponds to the logic of masculinist protection. This entails creating a hierarchy between the state and citizens similar to the one, which exists in between the seemingly self-sacrificing and courageous protector/patriarch and the protected/family members, thus severely compromising on principles of democracy, due process of law, separation of powers, and equal citizenship.

This would be followed by an interpretive analysis of the following three documents which came out into the public domain in 2010-2011- The Annual Report of the Ministry of Home affairs (M.H.A.) 2010-2011 (section one: Internal Security), the Supreme Court Judgment on **Salwa Judum 2011**, and a **Fact Finding Report on 'Women in Jharkhand', by Women Against Sexual Violence and State Repression (WSS, 2011)**.

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भारत एक लोकतांत्रिक देश है, जहाँ सभी व्यक्तियों को स्वतंत्रता और समानता का अधिकार है, लेकिन आज के समय में अधिकार भी उन्हीं के पास सुरक्षित हैं जो ताकतवर हैं जिनके पास पैसा है, वही हमेशा से शासन करते आए हैं, फिर वो चाहे जाति पर आधारित समाज की बात हो या फिर स्त्री और पुरुष के बीच के संबंधों की बात हो। ऐसे में सबसे ज्यादा शोषण की शंका महिलाएँ हो रही हैं। आज हमारे देश में हमारी सुरक्षा के नाम पर जिन पुलिस और अर्धसैनिक बलों को तैनात किया गया है वही हमारे लिए सबसे बड़े खतरे के रूप में उभरते जा रहे हैं। आज महिलाएँ सबसे ज्यादा हिंसा की शंका तो राज्य सरकार द्वारा हमारी रक्षा-सुरक्षा के नाम पर तैनात किये गये पुलिस और अर्धसैनिक बलों द्वारा हो रही हैं। महिलाओं के साथ हिरासती बलात्कार की घटनाएँ दिन-प्रतिदिन बढ़ती ही जा रही हैं। इस बात का अंदाजा तो हम इसी बात से लगा सकते हैं कि इस मामले में अमेरिका और दक्षिण अफ्रीका के बाद भारत का विश्व भर में तीसरा स्थान है। फिर वह चाहे मथुरा रेप केस हो, रमीजा बी के साथ पुलिस द्वारा कए सामूहिक बलात्कार की घटना हो, या नार्थ इस्ट की महिला मनोरमा के साथ वहाँ तैनात सैनिकों के द्वारा किया गया बलात्कार हो। आज देश के कई हिस्सों में हमारे राज्य सरकार ने नक्सलवाद, माओवाद और आतंकवाद से निपटने और उससे सुरक्षा के नाम पर अर्धसैनिक बलों को तैनात किया है ताकि देश में अमन और शांति व्यवस्था कायम रहे। लेकिन क्या वास्तव में इनकी तैनातगी से हमारे अधिकारों और स्वतंत्रता की सुरक्षा हो पा रही है? क्या वास्तव में हम स्वतंत्र रूप से खुली हवा में सांस ले पा रहे हैं? क्या इनके तैनातगी से महिलाओं के प्रति होने वाली हिंसाओं में कमी आयी है? फिर सवाल यह भी उठता है कि एक महिला, कानून और सुरक्षा के नाम पर तैनात पुलिस और अर्धसैनिक बलों के बीच कस हद तक सुरक्षित है? इन सारे सवालों को ध्यान में रखते हुए "सैन्य शासन व्यवस्था, महिला सुरक्षा तथा हिंसा" यह विषय चुना गया है।

सांप्रदायिकता का इतिहास और महिला

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भारतीय समाज बहुभाषक एवं बहुधर्मावलंबी रहा है। प्राचीन युग से लेकर आधुनिक युग तक भारतीय समाज में गंगा-जमुनी तहजीब को देखा जा सकता है। उत्तर से दक्षिण तथा पूर्व से पश्चिम तक देश में जहाँ भी हिंदू एवं मुसलमान बसते हैं, उनकी संस्कृति एक है। भारत की क्षेत्रीय विशेषता हमारी इसी सामासिक संस्कृति (composite culture) की विशेषताएं हैं। हिंदू एवं मुसलमान जो देखने में अब दो लगते हैं, उनके बीच भी सांस्कृतिक एकता वद्यमान है, जो उनकी भिन्नता को कम करती है। दुर्भाग्य की बात है कि हम इस एकता को पूर्ण रूप से समझने में असमर्थ रहे हैं। इसका कारण है-राजनीतिक अवसरवादिता एवं धार्मिक कर्तव्य। पश्चिमी उत्तरप्रदेश में आज भी राजपूत और त्यागी मुसलमान अपने-आप का परिचय इसी तरह देते हैं। पंजाब के गाँवों में आज भी ऐसे हिंदू मुसलमान और सख जाट मलेंगे जो पुराने रक्त और ववाह संबंधों का अब भी आदर करते हैं। मुसलमानों का एक समूह ऐसा भी है जिसमें व्यक्तियों के मले-जुले हिंदू-मुसलमान नाम होते हैं। कई समूहों में काजी जी के निकाह पढ़ने के बाद, हिंदू शैली में ववाह की पूरी रस्में होती हैं।

सनातन की खोज भारतीय मनीषा से जुड़ी है, किंतु धर्म के किसी रूप को हमारी सभ्यता ने परीक्षा की कसौटी से उपर नहीं माना। कि रवाद भारत की धार्मिक परंपराओं का मूल स्वर नहीं रहा, यद्यपि इतिहास में उन मोड़ों के भी हजारों उल्लेख हैं, जो हिंसात्मक धर्माधता से प्रेरित थे। भारतीय संस्कृति को बचाए रखने में उसके प्रश्न, शंका, असहमति, वरोध, सुधार और वद्रोह की परंपराओं का बड़ा हाथ रहा है। भारत के अनेक संत कवयों ने सामाजिक वक्षोभ की अभिव्यक्ति और अन्याय से लड़ने का एक नया मुहावरा विकसित किया। परंपरा को प्रकट रूप से बिना अस्वीकार किये उन्होंने पैंने प्रश्न पूछे, गंभीर शंकाएँ व्यक्त कीं। अपनी असहमति को शब्द दिए, वरोध को वाणी दी, सुधार की योजनाएँ सुझायीं और आवश्यकता पड़ने पर वद्रोह का समर्थन किया। इन परंपराओं ने एक ओर सामाजिक तनावों को दूर या कम किया तो दूसरी ओर सामंजस्य उत्पन्न करने में भी सहायता दी।

हमारे समाज में सांप्रदायिकता का खामयाजा सबसे ज्यादा महिलाओं को भुगतना पड़ रहा है और

महिलाएँ सांप्रदायिकता से सबसे ज्यादा प्रभावित होती हैं। क्योंकि स्त्री ही किसी समाज में वंश की वाहक होती है और यह वंश परंपरा जाति में ववाह नाम की संस्था द्वारा चलाई जाती है। ववाह स्त्री की यौनिकता पर नियंत्रण का सटीक तरीका है। सांप्रदायिकता में महिलाओं के उत्पीड़न का मुख्य कारण महिला की सामाजिक छव है। किसी वंश, जाति या समुदाय का प्रसार-वस्तार महिला के द्वारा ही किया जाता है। क्योंकि महिला का जातीय ववाह वंश की वृद्धि को निर्धारित करता है और उसकी पवत्रता महिला के चरित्र पर निर्भर मानी जाती है, जिसमें सांप्रदायिक तत्व किसी समुदाय को दूषित करने के लिए या यह कह सकते हैं कि बेइज्जत करने के लिए महिलाओं का शोषण करते हैं। सांप्रदायिकता में महिलाओं का न सिर्फ शारीरिक, मानसिक शोषण होता है बल्कि समाज से उनको बहिष्कृत भी किया जाता है।

BORDERS BEHIND BARS

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India has been increasingly focusing on militarized and violent border control practices along the **country's eastern border with Bangladesh. Large expenditures are** being made towards increasing the number of troops, fencing the border and establishing technologies of control and surveillance. The arbitrary and ruthless nature of border killings and arrests has been on the rise, indicating the anxiety of the Indian **state to maintain its sovereignty and protect it from 'illegal'** intrusions. Fluid population movements generate cartographic anxieties for the keepers of borders. This paper seeks to juxtapose the grand narrative of borders with the narratives of **Bangladeshi women, detained in Kolkata under the Foreigners' Act 1946. The paper will be based** on my interactions with them for nine months between December 2010 and December 2011. It will also draw on everyday field notes and observations made during this period.

The Bangladeshi women prisoners gave multiple meanings and symbolic expressions to borders and what constituted a country. Their understandings diverged from the dominant (legal) view of states as distinct entities, a normative perspective in which borders demarcate nation states. Through their experiential understanding of borders, this paper attempts to highlight the multiple meanings that the research participants ascribed to territorial demarcations between two states. It is important to understand how the pool of meanings they assign to borders, from **behind the prison bars, relates with their 'act' of crossing the border. This will enable us to pave** the way for an alternative to a masculinised and militarised normative understanding of borders and the way female mobility across them is viewed.

WOMEN'S RIGHTS AND LIVES UNDER MILITARIZATION IN J & K: FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES ON AFSPA AND SECURITY

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GOI's 12th plan (2012-2017) document commits the government to review from a gendered lens AFSPA and to document its gendered impact. This paper aims at contributing an independent **documentation of women's experience of living under conditions of protracted militarization – state and non state- in Jammu and Kashmir with special attention to the border districts of Rajouri and Poonch. It seeks to understand women's perspectives on security and justice, and examines their coping strategies vis a vis the presence of multiple armed actors. In exploring the social impact of the multi-faceted aspects of militarized conflict, ceasefire and 'pacification', the paper unpacks the differential experience of women. Anti democratic laws such as AFSPA and PSA have suspended fundamental rights in areas deemed 'disturbed', thus denying millions of citizens' rights and access to justice. Nowhere is the experience of being 'unequal citizens' more acute than in in Jammu & Kashmir and along the Line of Control. Women are particularly vulnerable and disproportionately so in a militarized environment as recognised in UNSC 1325.**

Confronted with the continuation of militarization and its incursion into civilian areas of responsibility and activities post ceasefire/post conflict (including the militarization of development), the paper questions the very notion of a post conflict situation being possible. It looks at the gendered impact of the normalization of militarization and the entrenched culture of impunity within the feminist framework of militarism and patriarchy.

Feminist scholarship has established women's experience of the continuum of violence between everyday violence against women and the dramatically heightened increase of violence against women in conflict areas. That continuum is rooted in the low status of women. Moreover, the female body becomes the ground on which some fronts of *war* are fought. The Rome statute of the IIC recognises rape in conflict as a war crime. Sexual violence against women has been prevalent and widespread in J & K. But state institutions, especially the law and order structures are either inaccessible or hostile to women. The paper draws attention to the gendered consequences of impunity indicating the linkages between public and private violence.

WOMEN, WAR AND SILENCE: RESEARCHING GENDER BASED VIOLENCE IN ASSAM

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Armed conflict across and between communities result in massive levels of destruction to the people- physically, culturally, economically and psychologically. The genesis of most of the conflicts that has engulfed the Northeastern states of India is either to preserve the unique

identity or due to lack of economic development and opportunities for the large majority of the people or both. Women as heterogeneous group of social actors are arguably more affected than their male counterparts in conflict situations. Armed conflict exacerbates inequalities in gender relations that already exist in society. In an ethnically divided society in Assam, women's bodies are generally used as 'ethnic markers' thereby have more specific manifestations. The paper aims to analyse the multiple roles that women are subjected to and play in armed conflict in the state of Assam. The paper is going to highlight that woman in NE India with a special reference to Assam cannot be categorized just as 'victims' of conflict. Even when they are victims; they exercise their agency and survival techniques despite adverse conditions. Beyond judicial measures, how women grapple with the problem of the 'unpleasant truths' of the past in post conflict scenario will also be highlighted.

REVIEW OF RESEARCH ON GENDER SENSITIVITY AMONG THE GOVERNMENT

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People are born female or male but learn to be girls and boys who grow up into women and men. They are taught what the appropriate behaviors and attitudes, roles and activities are for them, and how they should relate to other people. This learned behavior is what makes up gender identity, and determines gender roles. It influences every sphere of activity including government administration service provision, several of whom are expected to safeguard the interest of women and promote their well being. All of these government authorities have traditionally been a male profession and a cult of masculinity prevails in these government offices. At times when a women approaches these systems whether a normal clerical office or a police station she is insulted and ridiculed by sarcastic remarks, intensive bullying, callous interrogation, sexist questioning further making her more vulnerable to exploitation. Also there are instances when these government officials are themselves the perpetrator and so there is no other way but to remain silent on issues due to the fear of stigma attached. As a precursor to a large study, this paper attempts to look at the existing knowledge on gender sensitivity among the Government officials and draw a theoretical framework to support the research on the foundations of standpoint theories, intersectional, post structuralism theories. The review will also look at factors such as the level of gender sensitivity among the Government employees and their officers while dealing with cases of violence against women, further it analyzes the occupational factors such as work related pressure, influence of political bosses and impact of the same on women victims. To conclude on the road to social equity, gender sensitization is not only necessary because of the constitutional provisions but also to unleash the energy and productive capabilities of women.

LOCATING SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION AND THE "FEMININE" : ALTERNATIVE SECURITY POLICIES

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Militarization can be proclaimed as the "domain of men". The discourses around militarization and related security policies are aggressive, violent or one may say "masculine". In most cases, the "masculinity" of militarization and security policies has led to more wars and aggression. One can define the security policies of the state as masculine, elitist and autocratic. The reason is the social construction of "masculinity" i.e. the way society produces "men" and "masculinity" which can be explained as 'how men ought to be'. In the way of this, it can be said that our society has constructed binaries between men and women; whereby men are strong/ violent/ protectors and women are weak/peace-loving/protected. However, many writers have criticized the two homogenous binaries that define and categorize men and women. They believe that there exist many contradictions in human nature. Despite the contradictions, it is difficult to deny the fact that the social construction of the binary between men and women has created hierarchy and inequality in society. But, the construction of "feminine" norms and values has also resulted in the discourse of peaceful negotiations. Feminists have highlighted this "feminine" discourse and said that, if given a chance, women can prove themselves to be better decision makers at peace negotiations. They can provide with better alternative to the mainstream security policies.

So, this paper attempts to understand the social construction of sexual relations in militarized society. Further, it seeks to address the issue that women can devise better security policies in militarized and conflict zones. There are two prime reasons for this: firstly, the social construction/socialization of women- as it helps/ 'constructs' women to be more peace-loving. As a result of this, women can provide with opinions better suited to reality. Secondly, the unequal relations between men and women, in general and in an otherwise militarized society, make women visualize and seek peace in a better way as they are the worst sufferers. It is because of women's specific 'positionality' with regard to their suffering and oppression that brings them in a better position to provide for a viable perspective. So, women, by viewing the reality from the other side, can provide with different and better alternatives.

GENDER AND CONFLICT IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS: A FEMINIST READING

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This paper seeks to engage with the major feminist scholarship in the field of International Relations (IR) theory to demonstrate the reasons for absence of theorization of gender in major theories of IR like realism and liberalism which influence security and defense policies significantly. Gender here is not seen as an additive concept but if international relation theories are analyzed from a gendered lens it would yield a very different picture of international relations.

Realism's preoccupation with the state renders conflict within a state invisible. Furthermore in realist paradigm, human nature in society is treated as a given condition which does not reveal anything about how world politics could be understood as a comprehensive world view, because the embedded gender relations are not a category for analysis.

Furthermore, liberal international relations theory is built on the human nature where individuals have inalienable rights which exist prior to the existence of any social association.

The individual here has characteristics which are associated with masculinity in our society. **Liberalism though treats all individuals equal before law but in this understanding the individual's** social location like class, race, gender are not treated as important categories to understand how world around us is shaped. What is the reason for under-theorization of linkages between conflict and gender in international relations is a research puzzle this paper seeks to engage with. This paper is divided into five sections. The first section is an introduction which lays out the problems with the current IR theories and what feminism has to offer. The second section is on feminism and IR theory which is subdivided further into two sections. The third section is on understanding realism from a feminist lens. The fourth section is on feminist understanding of liberalism to unravel the myth of abstract individual, which when decoded is a white man. The last section is on gender and ethnic conflict in feminist scholarship. Here it is demonstrated that how feminist theorization accounts for an understanding of gender playing out in armed conflict areas and is a significant departure from the militarized security framework proposed by both realist and liberal school of thought.

THE GLOBAL SOUTH WRITES 1325 (TOO)

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The passage of the United Nations Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000 is generally

identified with successful advocacy efforts of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) headquartered in New York, London and Geneva. Subsequent efforts to push the women, peace and security (WPS) agenda forward at the international level, in terms of the passage of follow-up resolutions and their implementation by the UN and other relevant actors, also appears to be identified with governments, NGOs and international organizations that are based primarily in the Global North. While such skewed dynamics of global governance are not unique to WPS issues, widely shared assumptions about the Global North being the conceptual, material and (not least) institutional home of the resolutions appear to inform debates on 1325 at the level of theory as well as practice in ways that limit its potential. So, for instance, while, on the one hand, the WPS resolutions have been identified as 'imperial' in some of the feminist literature, this has also been presented as a rationale for resisting their implementation within sovereign territorial borders. The proposed paper seeks to re-calibrate this received wisdom with as-yet-marginalized narratives of the Global South's contributions to the evolution of the international WPS agenda.

The primary argument is that actors in the Global South demonstrate their agency in implementing 1325 through National Action Plans (NAPs) and civil society initiatives *and* through acceptance, resistance and subversion of the imperialist tendencies of the WPS resolutions; as such, they are actively contributing to 'writing' 1325, the follow-up resolutions, and indeed the WPS agenda. The proposed analysis differs from the existing literature in its attempt to provide a collective understanding of local interpretations of the WPS mechanisms instead of examining the ways in which fragmented local experiences are brought to the international stage through select representatives of women's groups or as evidence/best practices in international policy reports. In addition to providing fresh insights into the development of the WPS agenda, the paper would also seek to contribute to efforts to theorize the role of the Global South in contemporary global governance.

OUR WOMEN'S QUEST FOR JUSTICE: IS IT A SOUTH EAST ASIAN TRAJECTORY?

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In nearly all of the states of the south east region, women have had more freedom to organize and control their own lives more than in many other parts of the world. That does not mean that they had equality with men, of course or that they were not oppressed in certain circumstances. However, sexual freedom and the opportunity to work outside the house were much more likely to be found in this area than in most others. The many legends of female warriors support this idea, as also do the various myths and folk tales of strong women taking the lead.

The reason why I am narrating the above account is because the women in Manipur are also the product of such an ethos. And the reason that they belong to this ethos is because Manipur, as one can see from the map, is bordering Myanmar. Traditionally, it has had links with Thailand, Laos, Vietnam as well as the South West China. The Manipuri women are therefore part of the south East Asian ethos.. The women's trajectory in this region needs to be understood from this

perspective. We also have legends of women warriors, of chieftains, as well as mediators in crime and punishments. What we also have is quest of two women for justice for their people.

This paper will attempt to discuss the spirit of freedom behind Aung San Suu Kyi' struggle and Irom Sharmila's resilience. Are they the images of our strong traditions and a peculiar South East Asian ethos as mentioned above? Are they the present warriors? Both our iron ladies did nothing out of ordinary before becoming the political stars, but they have been able to change the notions of nation building.

STATE SECURITY (LAWS) AND VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN MILITARIZED MANIPUR

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Armed conflicts and present political impasse in Manipur is a result of the contestation between the Indian state with its forces and the insurgency/non-state armed groups over the question of ethno-nationalism/self-determination which has a historical setting based on unresolved political questions emanating from the time of independence. The Indian government denies that there are any armed conflicts in India. Over the last 50 years, Armed Forces Special Powers Act 1958 has been applied in states like Manipur by using the phrases like 'disturbed areas', 'insurgency infested', 'law and order problems' 'national security'. And hence, there has been perpetual reliance on military methods and counter insurgency which is counterproductive as evident. In such situation of conflict the state and its agencies engage in legitimate violence against it citizens where it negatively affects women, children and men and results in gender specific disadvantages. The paper attempts to look at how violence against women is marked and carried out in militarized Manipur from a gender perspective. This paper will also delve into some of the important points of how women themselves are engaging with such state security measures in the level of formation of organizations and collective effort. Such formations of collective inform the failure of such policies and how women's bodies become a site of contestation.

THE MUZAFFARNAGAR RIOT AND WOMEN: AN ANALYSIS

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The analysis of Anti-Muslim communal violence occurred after September 7, 2013 in Muzaffarnagar, Shamli and surrounding districts of western Uttar Pradesh should be done to understand that the Hindu communal organizations have mastered to repeat Gujarat wherever and whenever they want, even without their government. At least 50 people were killed in this incident of communal violence, hundreds of homes were looted and burned, children were killed,

and women were raped and assaulted. Nearly 65,000 displaced Muslims are forced to live in relief camps without basic facilities. There are many such cases, in which rioters buried the body after murder. A large number of people are still missing.

Muslim women are scared and inside their shells due to family and social pressures, rape cases are suppressed before they get exposed. After the independence this is the first biggest mass riot **of the country where 'marriages' are performed on a large scale by Ulemas in relief camps** to suppress the cases of rape and violence against women. The government has proposed to give the amount of one lakh rupees to the newly wedded couple. Many Ulemas involved in the Muslim politics of Uttar Pradesh belong to these areas and these Ulemas/Maulanas are not making this question a political issue because Muslim politicians are still citing Mulayam Singh Yadav as an option against Narendra Modi in the coming time. The women against whom assault has been made belong to the lower middle class background and in this situation it is more important to meet their daily needs rather than their self respect. Few numbers of women are being seen at public places due to this communal violence.

A motorcycle accident was disguised into a communal dispute by the Hindu organization on 27th of August and false incident of eve-teasing (attack on patriarchal honor) was disseminated **to make the domineering 'Jaat' (caste)** community of western Uttar Pradesh stand against the Muslim community through filling them with communal spirit. The violence against Muslims was so planned that attacks were made in those villages where the percentage of Muslims was between 1-10. Such regions where Muslims are in a great number, negligible riot were there.

The Hindu organizations experimented the riots of Surat (1992) and Gujarat (2002) repeatedly over here. Using Islamic attacks/ love jihad on the patriarchal honor as weapon, the Hindu organization created a sense of insecurity inside the 'Jaat' community filled with dogmatic patriarchal values through the "Bahu-Beti Bachao Mahapanchayat" and used them in the communal riots after the incident of 7th of August



SUB-THEME – 10:

**DOCUMENTING GENDERED
HISTORIES: NATION, STATE,
REGION AND LOCAL**

PRISONS AND PRISONERS: REVISITING STATE'S CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITIES, HIERARCHIES WITHIN TOTAL INSTITUTIONS

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This paper is an attempt to understand the autobiographies and narratives of three women engaged in different struggles and their days spent in prison. The **concept of 'Total Institution' as given by Goffman has been utilised. Goffman coined the term 'Total Institution' and defined it as a "place of residence and work where a large number of like-situated individuals, cut off from the wider society for an appreciable period of time, together lead an enclosed, formally administered round of life" (Goffman, 1975). Though it was a pathbreaking effort by him to throw light on such institutions like asylums, prisons amongst others, a need is felt for a more nuanced understanding of these concepts. Idea is to locate the gendered dimensions within Total Institution like a prison. Goffman claims in his work that Total Institution is a place where all inmates are treated in a similar fashion; we however are arguing against this position. This research endeavours to question this contention by bringing forth the problems which a woman inmate in a prison, especially one accused of being 'Anti-State' faces. For them, it becomes a Total Institution within a Total Institution. Secondly, though Goffman mentions 'permeability' of Total Institution, he does not elaborate so much upon this crucial aspect. Through this paper, we would explore how the state and society 'permeates' into Total Institution and impacts its functioning and lives of inmates, in particular, women inmates. Idea is to also locate the role which 'discursive formations' in the outer world continue to play even inside these Total Institutions.**

Thus, the model of Total Institutions like prison is not as simplistic and 'democratic' as Goffman deems it to be. It is not isolated as well, as even in its isolation, it functions under the 'surveillance' or gaze of the state that impacts in turn the lives and understanding of the 'self' of these women inmates. The proposal here is to explore gender intersections and hierarchies, specific to women inmates branded as 'anti-state' and analyse the dilemmas pertaining to their understanding of the 'self'. We would explore these various themes by looking at works and narratives of three prison inmates who all were accused of being 'anti-state' and the atrocities they underwent during their days in prison. These are – Prisoner Number 100 : The Story of my Ordeal in an Indian Prison by Anjum Zamarud Habib, narratives of Soni Sori reported in media as well as using her interviews and Killing Days: Prison Memoirs by Joya Mitra. Anjum, a Kashmiri activist was labelled as a terrorist and persecuted under POTA while Soni and Joya were branded as Maoist and Naxalite respectively, tortured in the prison and ostracised by other inmates. We would also look at the works of Angela Davis and Assata Shakur to gain a conceptual understanding of women in prisons and how discourses on gender continue to play a pivotal role within it. These narratives would be analysed within the Interactionist and Foucauldian framework to understand the role played by the state and impact it has on the gendered 'self'.

MOTHER AS WITNESS: POETRY BY TAMIL WOMEN IN SRI LANKA

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In the three decade long civil war between the LTTE and the Sri Lankan government terrible atrocities were committed on the minority Tamil community by both the parties involved. This period of Tamil nationalism saw constructions of Tamil nation which were grounded on the **construction of an ideal "Tamil Woman"**. The period also witnessed a variety of cultural responses, including those by women poets. This paper broadly tries to elucidate how poetry was used to act as a witness to the experiences of the Tamil women during the Sri Lankan Civil War and how they responded to the Tamil nation making process. This paper will argue that the witnessing of war is 'gendered' as can be evidenced in the critical reading of poetry written by Tamil women in Sri Lanka. Specifically the paper will look at how the figure of the mother has been used in this gendered witnessing. Different kinds of motherhoods were mobilized in Sri Lanka through the course of the war, namely the valiant mother who encourages her children to die for the country, the suffering mother and the mother who resists power for the sake of her children. One of the key constructs of women in Tamil nationalism in Sri Lanka was of the figure of the **"Veerathayar", the brave mother who is the reproducer of the nation**. In the context of a war fought over competing nationalisms, the figure of Veerathayar was wrought through a reconstruction of the mythic characters from old legends and classics. A much more radical positioning of the mother figure was seen in the 1980s with the construct of 'social motherhood'. Even though social motherhood appealed to the naturalised and essentialized construction of women as mothers, it also revealed the transgressions of the Sri Lankan State and the LTTE which otherwise valorized the nurturance role of mothers. Set against this context, the paper will **examine how the figure of the "mother" has been used by Tamil women** in their poetry to write their experience of the conflict. This is done through a critical reading of their poetry by giving attention to the ways through which they have used the construct of mother to subvert the dominant notions of being an ideal 'Tamil Woman' as perpetuated by Tamil nationalism.

BRATAKATHA AND PANCHALI: IN SEARCH OF FADED VOICE

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The *Panchali* or booklets containing verses to accompany the rituals performed as part of the worship of various gods/goddesses, is a profitable commodity in today's market. In fact reciting from and listening to these *Panchali(s)* among women is still a common practice in many places of Bengal. So we can say that *Panchali* of various gods/goddesses is a genre that provides the cultural expression of religious belief. As a tradition this genre is transmitted through practice

from one generation to another. These practices are believed to have originated in rituals of great antiquity, which involved oral recitations by women. It is now felt that the very existence of this and other similar cultural traditions have been endangered by the recent developments in conditions of production and circulation of cultural goods. In this paper, my aim is to explore the *Panchali* of gods/goddesses, sold as commodities in today's market, as an index of the change, across time, of rituals and practices, expressed through literature.

Panchali originated from the *Bratakatha*, an oral narrative genre common to agrarian society. *Bratakatha* is an important part of *Brata*, a domestic ritual usually practiced by women. The precise historical origin is not known, but is considered pre-Vedic. *Brata* refers to the ritual itself while the narrative recitation accompanying the ritual is designated as *Katha*. The *Bratakatha(s)* were usually composed by women to appease and to glorify the gods/goddesses. *Bratakatha(s)* are usually recited in prose form. However, some of them have also been transformed into poetry.

The transformation of the 'Katha' or prose into 'Kavya' or poetry started during Muslim rule in medieval Bengal. At the eastern frontier of the great empires of the Classical and pre-Classical age, Bengal retained its local culture, not yet colonized by the "Aryan-Brahmanic" sweep over the north. Muslim rule is believed to have been the catalyst that led to a wider process of "Aryanising" in this region. In the process, several folk (popular) gods and goddesses were assimilated within a more composite Hinduism which emerged at this time. This process of "aryanisation" led to the composition of a genre of literature known as *Mangalkavya(s)*, centered upon the older *Bratakatha*, which marked the induction of local popular gods and goddesses into the Hindu pantheon.

The overwhelming influence of the *Mangalkavya* meant that *Bratakatha* itself started getting transformed - from an oral prose literary tradition to a written poetry form. The poems were composed in monotonous *payar*, *tripadi* meters, also called *Panchali*. Since the transformations of form and genre were achieved through the agency of male priests, the authority of *Bratakatha* was transferred from women to men. Much later, from the nineteenth century, with the arrival of the printing press and publication houses, *Bratakatha(s)* were commercialized in their poetry form called *Panchali*. In this process, the ruling male priests constructed some additional part of some *Bratakatha(s)* according to their own wish and these additional parts have been established as prime parts of those *Bratakatha(s)* in mainstream Hindu society.

भारत में उपनिवेशवाद के वरुद्ध 'रानी झाँसी रेजीमेंट' का गठन
(FORMATION OF 'RANI JHANSI REGIMENT' IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF ANTI-COLONIAL
MOVEMENT OF INDIA)

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भारत के इतिहास लेखन में महिलाओं के इतिहास को उपेक्षित ही रखा गया है। जब कभी भी महिलाओं के संदर्भ की बात आती है तो प्राचीन तथा मध्य भारतीय इतिहास में गनी-चुनी महिलाओं का नाम आता है जो एक विशेष जाति वर्ग से संबंध रखती थीं। भारत के आधुनिक इतिहास लेखन में जब हम महिलाओं के संदर्भ की बात करते हैं तो हम उनके राष्ट्रीय आंदोलन में उनकी भागीदारी से प्रारम्भ करते हैं। भारत में उपनिवेशवाद के विरोध में राष्ट्रवादी विचारधारा का उदय हुआ उसी के साथ भारतीय समाज और भारतीय इतिहास लेखन में महिलाओं को कुछ नाममात्र स्थान देने की प्रक्रिया प्रारम्भ हुई। राष्ट्रीय आंदोलनों के इतिहास में महिलाएँ भारतीय कांग्रेस द्वारा चलाए गए आंदोलनों में बड़ी संख्या में दिखती हैं। गांधी जी द्वारा चलाये गए सत्याग्रहों में उनकी संख्या अधिक है। इसमें महिलाएँ घर से बाहर देश की आजादी के लिए बाहर तो आयीं परंतु उन्होंने परिवार की दहलीज को पार नहीं किया।

गर्म दल और गांधी जी के विचारों में मतभेद होने के कारण तथा आत्मसम्मान और पूर्ण स्वतंत्रता प्राप्त करने के लिए रास बिहारी बोस ने सन् 1942 में आजाद हिन्द फौज का गठन किया, जिसे सन् 1943 में दूसरे विश्वयुद्ध के दौरान नेताजी सुभाष चंद्र बोस के द्वारा पुनर्गठित किया गया। इसमें राष्ट्र निर्माण की प्रक्रिया के तहत पूरे भारत के लोगों को एक सूत्र में जोना, जिसमें समानता, धार्मिक निरपेक्षता, तथा आपसी भाई-चारे की भावना निहित थी। इस प्रक्रिया के महत्वपूर्ण हिस्से के रूप में, महिलाओं को भी सम्मानजनक स्थान दिलाने के लिए 'रानी झाँसी रेजीमेंट' की स्थापना की गयी।

यह पहले Indian Independence League की महिला शाखा के रूप में क्रियान्वित थी और इनसे जुड़ी महिलाएँ फंड एकत्रित करने, प्राथमिक उपचार करने, परिचर्चा एवं सभाएं गठित करने में ही संलग्न थी। बाद में यह Indian National Army की 'रानी झाँसी रेजीमेंट' के रूप में स्थापित हुई।

इस रेजीमेंट की कैप्टन लक्ष्मी स्वामीनाथन को बनाया गया। रानी झाँसी रेजीमेंट में भारतीय मूल की महिलाओं के साथ-साथ बर्मा, संगापूर, पूर्वी एशिया आदि की भी महिलाएँ भी भर्ती हुईं।

इस रेजीमेंट की महिलाओं को न सिर्फ नर्सिंग और प्राथमिक चिकित्सा का प्रशिक्षण दिया जाता था बल्कि उन्हें हथियार चलाने की ट्रेनिंग, हिंदुस्तानी भाषा के माध्यम से विभिन्न प्रांतों के लोगों को शिक्षित तथा गुरिल्ला युद्ध करने का अभ्यास कराया जाता था। यह सत्य है कि कभी उन्हें युद्ध करने का अवसर नहीं मिला परंतु युद्ध के समय वे घायलों के उपचार एवं सहायता करने के लिए युद्ध स्थल तक गई थीं। कैप्टन लक्ष्मी स्वामीनाथन के अलावा कैप्टन श्रीमती एस. थावर तथा मनवाती आर्य्या के नाम को देखा जाता है। इस रेजीमेंट में दक्षिण भारत की महिलाओं की संख्या सबसे ज्यादा (75%) रही।

रानी झाँसी रेजीमेंट में पूर्वी एशिया की रहने वाली महिलाओं की संख्या भी अधिक थी। रेजीमेंट के भंग होने पर ये महिलाएँ भारत तो वापस आईं लेकिन आज़ाद भारत में उन्हें वह सम्मानजनक स्थान नहीं प्राप्त हुआ। इतिहास के पन्नों में भी उनके बहुमूल्य योग के लिए कोई स्थान नहीं मिला। देश की आज़ादी की खातिर लड़ने के लिए तत्पर इन महिलाओं ने अपने आप को न सिर्फ लड़ाई के लिए तैयार किया बल्कि अपने परिवार व समाज से भी संघर्ष किया। यह प्रपत्र 'रानी झाँसी रेजीमेंट' का संक्षिप्त इतिहास तथा उसके योगदान को प्रस्तुत करता है, जिसमें साठ वर्षों के बाद महिलाओं के इतिहास को लिखने में शोध प्रबंध संबंधित समस्याओं के विश्लेषण का प्रयास किया जाएगा।

DOCUMENTING GENDER HISTORIES: NATION, STATE, REGION AND LOCAL

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The women's movement has undeniably a long history in India and there have been (which continues) several shades and hues which is broadly referred as the 'women's movement'. Today, it comprises of both organisations that are working to conserve women's position and those aspiring to change women's position.

Indeed, women of India earned recognition by their active participation in their freedom movement. It has been mentioned by Urvashi Butalia and Ritu Menon and Kamala Bhasin (1998) that there were absence of a record of women's voice and contribution to political situations in pre-independent India and of the patriarchal nature of our documented history. There is

sufficient evidence that women were excluded from the formal education system. It is not surprising that their voices have not been reflected in the written texts that stand as testimonies of our history. It was during the time of non-cooperation movement that the women of Assam, like the women of other parts of India, took active participation. By the call of Gandhi, they came out of their four walls of their domestic life and became an active member in the impendence movement. Most of them participated through the programme of spinning, weaving and boycotting of foreign goods. Their organisation as well as their publicity works served as a source of inspiration to the other urban and rural women of Assam to educate them about the independence movement. During the time of civil disobedience movement of 1930 - 1934, the women of Assam also become active and participated in different programme of congress. They **formed the group called Nari bahini's (women squads) and carried out the programme of picketing.** Tribal women of north east also showed courage by joining this historic struggle against British for independent India.

The paper is subdivided into two parts. In the first part, it will deal with the contribution and problem faced by women as a whole in mass struggle and in second part; it mentions the active participation of women of Assam during freedom movement from 1921 to 1947. The paper attempts to examine contribution of women which cannot be ignored during the mass struggles **in the colonial and contemporary periods. What were women's roles in India during the colonial period and what kind of restriction or challenges they have to facing during that time and how they overcomes with this are the major questions raised.** Paper also points towards the issues **concerning the women's movement in India from its earliest traceable origins to contemporary times.** It also highlights the evolution of the movement and its transitions within the period.

WOMEN IN SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: READING ASSAM AGITATION FROM A GENDER PERSPECTIVE

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Like all other social movements, the Assam movement too had its roots in history of the society, economy and polity of the region. It was the outcome of prolonged discontent among the Assamese people in general and the leadership was taken by the educated intelligentsia- the All Assam Students Union and the All Assam Gana Sangram Parishad. Exploitation of resources by the centre and large scale migration of outsiders led to a increasingly growing general belief that the identity of the Assamese people was at stake. It started off in 1979 with the issue of detecting illegal immigrants and deletion of their names from the voters list and ultimately concluded with the Assam Accord in 1985 with promises of social political and economic changes.

In this six years long mass movement, women of all classes and age inspired by a sense of sub-nationalism, had actively participated . Despite their contribuion they failed to find a space in the formal decision-making process. Their contribution too has been kept unreported , their

concerns not recognised and they found their space in the movement more as victims in the reports. Their limited participation in institutionalized politics led to the myth that women are not interested in politics. Furthermore it has been observed that the movement provided women some liberation from the typical patriarchal order of being confined to the private sphere. There are instances of women joining in armed forces in increasing numbers, social organizations, business / entrepreneurs, peace and welfare activities thereby bringing in a transition in the society.

The paper will be based primarily on archival sources, newspapers and oral history. In the paper an attempt shall be made to look into the gender relations and on the impact of the movement on the women.

FROM THE INSIDE OUT: READING A MIZO WOMAN'S AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL NOTES ON ETHNIC NATIONALISM

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Prior to the withdrawal of the British from India in 1947 political movements in favour of autonomy preoccupied the ethnic interests. Since then, the region has been witnessing various forms of unrest, conflict and violence. Evidently, ethnic conflict has almost become a synonym for the region that attracted the interest of many scholars. Accordingly most of the discourses and literatures produced within the North East India remain within the study of ethnic conflicts.

Despite the long debate and discourse on insurgency, it was only in a recent decade that studies on ethnic conflicts in North East India from gender perspectives entered the theater of official discourse. But generally most of the works are confined within the impact of violent conflicts on women that made women devoid of agency. Moreover, the dominating framework of **'victimizing discourse' still holds back the subaltern women to voice their perspective and aspiration.** Although there are abundant literatures on ethnic nationalist movement, there is no primary historical work on women. Archives and libraries contain little information relating to the **experiences of women. Due to the recurring representation of 'consolidation' for patriarchal power, women are 'twice hidden' from conventional history.**

From the light of the above discussions, the study of women's lives in Mizo history requires new historical approach and methodology both at empirical and theoretical levels. By using 'agency' as the central of analysis the voices of women are recovered through the critical examination of an autobiographical note and prison diaries of a young lady, B. Vanlalzari. From her experiences the present paper attempts to reveal the conscious aspirations, worldview and perspectives of the Mizo women during the ethnic nationalist movement, which have been left out in the master historical narratives.

DOCUMENTING WOMEN PERFORMERS AS SUBJECT: PROBLEMATIZING FEMINIST HISTORIOGRAPHY

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Feminist writing is notable for the extent to which it has challenged social science disciplines and opened new ways of questioning and interpreting social life. However for a long time a large part of the feminist discourse has been fashioned by the experience of upper caste and middle class women. In the last decade attempt has been made to document the life of subaltern women. However subaltern women is also not a homogenous category and getting problematized on the basis of caste, sexuality, religion, ethnicity, etc. Amongst the subaltern women one section which is on the fringe are the women performers. Most of the women performers in the colonial period came from dalit communities. In fact amongst dalit women too women performers are marginalized. Women performers are considered the most unsettling figure. She is the most public women, exposing herself to the gaze of many unfamiliar men.

The mainstream historiography found it difficult to negotiate with women performers as they unsettle many social boundaries. They have remained invisible in mainstream history writing. Women performers have also remained on the margins of feminist historiography. There are a few biographies on them but they are elitist in character. Biographers present stories that necessarily begin and end with their achievements, singling out the high points of their artistic careers. The social backgrounds and personal lives of these women remain in the dark. Biographers, mostly from the middle class, find it uneasy to negotiate the social background of these women performers, since most of them come from the condemned quarters. In this profiling of women performers, the other parallel histories of their lives, that is, the longer and more troubled histories of the frustrations and endeavours are suppressed and erased. These women must have gone through emotional and social negotiations as they straddled the varied worlds of the personal, professional and social. But very little is revealed of the lives of these performers as subjects in existing literature.

In recent years though some studies have appeared on gender and theatre but the concern have been regarding the perceptions in society about the women performers. Without underplaying the significance of such findings, there is also a need to forefront the performers as subjects in history. The journey of their lives—their achievements, endeavours, frustrations, betrayals and humiliations—need to be mapped. But how does one retrieve their voices or bring them as subjects in history? The subalterns do not leave behind their written history. The women performers, barring a few like Binodini, who come from poor and illiterate background have not left behind their own accounts. Since subalterns do not leave written documents, one has to **work with 'fragments' and 'traces' to retrieve their worlds.** Oral histories become very significant for documenting their experiences or perceptions.

SUBALTERN WOMEN, SOCIAL TRANSFORMATIONS, HISTORIOGRAPHY AND THE PROBLEM OF REPRESENTING AGENCY

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In attempting to bring out subaltern narratives or subaltern voices, scholars often highlight the presence or the lack of agency. Agency has become one of the key theoretical tools to analyse subaltern consciousness and resistance. Likewise, much of the work on subaltern women in social movements, rebel organizations and in campaigns for social transformation often tries to **look for the presence or absence of agency in women's narratives of 'emancipation' and 'victimisation'**. In this paper, I interrogate the problems that arise for researcher-mediated narratives of subaltern agency. I want to point to the ambivalences and limits of agency as a recurring concept in the study of gender and subaltern politics. To make my argument, I draw on my field experiences among women in rural West Bengal who shape their lives and politics in the presence of left parliamentary parties, NGOs, Maoists and other organizations that claim to work for **women's emancipation**.

EVOLUTION OF MEIRA PAIBI AND THEIR CHANGING ROLE IN MEITEI SOCIETY

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Meira Paibi literally translates as "torch bearers". The use of Meira as a weapon symbolises the declaration of just war. The use of fire –a sacred symbol of the Meiteis adds sanctity to the movement. Every night, in every leikai of the Meitei community, groups of women sit in vigil against threats and disruptions to the peace of the community. The women carry no weapons or defence besides the torch which burns till dawn when the women go home, in fact Meira Paibi is **women's association and one of the largest grassroots human rights movements in Manipur**, comprising virtually the entire adult Meitei female population in every Meitei town and village. It is the watchdog of civil rights violations at the community level, initiating and engaging in campaigns against rights violations, such as arbitrary detention, cordon and search operations, and torture, committed by the security personnel of the federal government of India. Women torch bearers for long have shouldered the responsibility of defending human rights in Manipur. The use of Meira as a weapon symbolizes the declaration of a just war. The use of fire- a sacred symbol of the Meiteis adds sanctity to the movement. But the ever increasing number of organizations in the name of women, and mostly funded NGOs, seemed to have stolen away from them not only the sanctity but also the very human resources from the Meira Paibis. Money has been inadvertently used by the mushrooming NGOs to lure away the women-folk, in most cases through the promise of capacity building and teaching them alternative means of livelihood, such as soap making, manure making and others. This is precisely because each NGO

rears cadre-like-paid members, which is not the case with the traditionally established Meira Paibis. In such a scenario, recently, questions have been expressed if existence of Meira Paibis is under jeopardy. At this juncture, we feel that it is appropriate to revisit the Meira Paibi movement in Manipur.

RE-INTERPRETING THE ROLE OF BODO WOMEN IN INDIA'S INDEPENDENCE MOVEMENT: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THENGPBAKHRI

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The history of Indian freedom struggle is replete with acts of courage, sacrifice and dedication to the cause of freedom (All India Congress Committee, Documents, 2012). The struggle for Indian independence movement can be traced back to the second half of 19th century, which reflects the bravery of great men and women fighting for their country. During the nation-wide movement for freedom which tremble almost all parts of the country, people of Assam also made a historic contribution.

However, the entire history of freedom struggle in Assam reflects the heroic role of both the **sexes but contribution of 'privileged sex' has always been glorified and have been put on the centre while the role of women that is 'second sex' has not only been marginalised but also have been missing from the history.** Thus we see a wide gap left in the canon of literature to concentrate on these women.

Where on the one hand freedom fighter like Deshbhakta Tarun Ram Phookan, Maniram Dewan, Gopinath Bordoloi, Bisnuram Medhi, Omeo Kumar Das, Bipin Chandra Pal, Manik Chandra Brauah, Jagannath Baruah, Jyoti Prasad Agarwala, Md Tayabullah has been celebrated and glorified at the same time we find the fissure where women are marginalised and almost forgotten except certain exception which comes from mainstream women discourse. As such it depicts a vague notion of the freedom struggle in Assam as a movement fought by men only.

During the freedom struggle for independence in Assam, large number of women came forward to confront and fight against the ruling power of Britishers, nevertheless when it comes to the role of women from Assam who fought against the Britishers only few names are documented in the history. In spite of the fact that women from every stratum of the society participated in it, only handful of names belonging to the mainstream Assam such as Kanaklata Barua, Swarnalata Barua, Bhogeswari Phukanani, Ratnamala, Taleswari, Puspalata Das are remembered and known today while the contribution of tribal women has been marginalised.

Therefore, the present paper is an endeavour to bring into limelight the contribution of tribal **women of Bodo community to the India's freedom struggle** whose courageous saga has

remained confined only to Bodo people through songs and oral narratives. It would seek to critically examine and analyse the contexts of political awareness which has shaped these **women's identity with special reference** to the legendary heroine Birgachri Shikla, also known as Thengphakri in a systematic manner.

RECLAIMING FORGOTTEN HISTORIES: A TALE OF SHUDRA AND DALIT WOMEN REVOLUTIONARIES

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The contemporary discourse on women's contribution in various socio-political movements is largely drawn from the idea of a homogenous women's reality. However, the multiple realities of caste, ethnicity, religion, region etc have received limited attention both in academic domain as well as the public sphere. The academic explanations of women's exclusion, the role of caste did not appear as an essential category for a long period. The accounts of Indian women's histories are loaded with narratives of upper caste women's heroics in which the life-worlds of Shudra and Dalit women remain hidden and ambiguous. The recognition of Shudra and Dalit women's contribution and role in various socio-political movements remains a distant reality in mainstream women's studies. The politics of recognizing icons has pushed the histories of Shudra and Dalit women leaders to the margins of women's history. However, the emerging literature on caste and gender in general and Shudra and Dalit women in particular, seeks to de-brahminize women's history and claim its space in the larger discourse on women's movement. The new literature voices for an alternative space and challenges the established notions of women's realities. This paper attempts to bring the historiographies and lost stories of forgotten women leaders from the Shudra and Dalit communities and place them in the alternative narrations on women's assertion. Women's studies continues to maintain a deafening silence on the existence of Shudra and Dalit women icons and revolutionaries like Savitribai Phule, Jhalkari bai Kori, Uda Devi Pasi and Mayawati. The paper highlights the blackout of independent life-world and day-to-day struggles of these Shudra and Dalit women in the annals of Social Sciences in general and Women's Studies in particular. Further, the paper will also analyze and understand the contribution these women have made independently and as partners of their male counterparts in giving rise and development to socio-religious and political movement in the Indian society. By recording their life-worlds, their heroic struggles and deeds, their patience and forbearance, their long struggles and assertions, the paper strives to reclaim the lost history of few Shudra and Dalit women. By analyzing the life histories of these women this paper will not only fill a gap in annals of Indian women's movement, but it will also help us to make these women visible. Once this happens we can draw a linear line of Shudra and Dalit women's assertion in the overall history of the anti-caste movement. By recording such life-worlds we can appreciate whether they were passive and mute spectators or active participants, their own destiny makers in the trajectory of Indian history and women's liberation movement.

XEITU MONOT ASE..." THAT I REMEMBER

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This paper addresses the contingencies of documenting and archiving women's activism through the case of a project titled "Memory, Movement and the *Mahila Samiti* in Assam, India" (2009-11). It was funded by the Sephis Program, Institute of Social History, Amsterdam, supported by Tezpur University, Assam.

The project began with an objective to record memory, history and sentiments of this hundred year old institution by scanning archival documents and conducting audio-visual recording at Assam Pradeshik Mahila Samiti (APMS) in Guwahati, Dibrugarh District Mahila Samiti (DDMS) and Tezpur District Mahila Samiti (TDMS). It will be a two-part presentation: 1. An introduction to the nature of the project, the difficulties in recording and documenting early women's movement like the mahila samitis in Assam in early twentieth century. 2. An audio-visual compilation of various interviews, photographs and other documents from the archive to highlight their scope and limitations.

The only available historical overview of the movement is a slim text *Assam Pradeshik Mahila Samiti Itibritta* (History of the Assam Pradeshik Mahila Samiti), 1961, written by the founding Secretary, Chandraprabha Saikiani (1901-1972). Thus, documentation of the larger historical process has remained uncharted, which this project sought to explore. The project has digitally scanned handwritten minutes of meeting, proceeding books, documents such as cash registers; audit reports; photographs; booklets; of the samitis. There is also an audiovisual archive of interviews/conversations with past and current members, office bearers of mahila samitis and people who have had a sustained engagement with question of gender equality and social justice for women in Assam.

The Mahila Samitis were formed as local associations in urban centers of Assam in the first two decades of the twentieth century (Dibrugarh 1907, Nagaon 1917, Tezpur 1919). This mobilization attained momentum with the establishment of Assam Mahila Samiti (AMS) in 1926 under the patronage of Assam Sahitya Sabha and its growing association with the Indian nationalist movement in the 1930s and 40s. The Gandhian mobilization of women during the anti-colonial nationalist movements in India also partly formed the backdrop against which **Saikiani and her colleagues legitimized women's entry into the new public.**

Since early mahila samiti papers from the colonial period are scarce, women's memory plays a crucial role in how we access women's history. Through this paper we hope to raise questions on the relationship between individual and collective memory and subjective memory and the writing of history.

ENGAGING WITH FEMINIST HISTORIOGRAPHY: CRITICAL ENQUIRY INTO LITERATURE ON WOMEN'S COLLECTIVES IN INDIA

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Women's studies have been able to establish that mainstream history writing has been gendered and selective. So, how does one do feminist historiography while documenting about women's collectives/organizations? This paper intending to do a literature review of published works on histories politics and programs of women's collectives will try to understand the methods and methodologies used by feminist historians/sociologists/political activists while documenting them. But it also intends to enquire that while documenting social movements or resistance narratives whether some of the 'canonical' ways of history writing were questioned or reinforced? The literatures that shall be reviewed are by (a) Amrita Basu and her work on women's activism in two separate states in India published in the early 1990s. (b) Raka Ray and her work on a Kolkata and Bombay autonomous women's organization published in the late 1990s. (c) A Sangtin writers' collaborative publication on a NGO women's organization in Uttar Pradesh published in middle of 2000s. (d) An edited volume on the government sponsored Mahila Samkhya program published in 2012 and (e) A 2013 publication on AIDWA and its responses to liberalization. The spread of the literature reveals the different types of women's collectives that have emerged over the years and in ways have disrupted the nation-state discourse on women.

The object of this paper will primarily be to understand the methodology used to study these organizations thereby creating a new body of literature in social movements. But it also exemplifies the fact that there are approaches in narrating the past and capturing the present. The studies also situate these organizations within a larger political matrix. Through a review of these studies questions will be raised about the pedagogy of doing/studying/experiencing the gendered political.

ANECDOTES AND GENDERED HISTORIES OF POLITICS

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This paper engages with the impossibility of writing gendered histories of politics using institutionalized sources of knowledge. It also foregrounds the importance of subjecting marginalized sources to ingenious feminist nuance. It does so by questioning who or what the traditional storehouses of knowledge or public archives represent and by problematizing the discovery of alternative sources of knowledge for writing histories of women in the public sphere.

The paper is based largely on my explorations of the interface between politics and women's

writing in late-colonial Bengal and in newly-partitioned India. In tracing the emergence of different narratives of selfhood by women in twentieth century Bengal mainly through their non-fictional writing—particularly of women active in politics and public life from the 1920s to the 1950s—I was guided by archivists of a different order who were not to be found in institutions like universities, libraries, archives and museums. The sources that they directed me to were written texts, visuals and other kinds of unconventional material. Conversations with them and the anecdotes they shared became critical in starting off journeys through alternative sites of knowledge and in producing new knowledges that confront the politics of existing histories.

I would focus on the kinds of knowledge that anecdotes and conversations yielded, that written sources or visual material by themselves did not. I would also show how cross-readings of written, visual and oral narratives helped me make meaning of the politicization of women under leaderships that had been strongly patriarchal, in asking what women were doing to the **movements they had come into and how other aspects of women's lives were changing with their participation in political movements**. Reversing our gaze from the nature and intention of male leaders, I will argue how such methodologies might shed light on women going beyond the 'originary intentions' of patriarchalist leaderships.

DOCUMENTING RESISTANCE TO CASTE OPPRESSION THROUGH SAYINGS, PROVERBS AND SONGS

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Social existence determines the formation of an individual consciousness. In the formation of this **consciousness, an individual's social environment and material** condition play a significant role. **In the context of Indian society, an individual's consciousness is largely determined by a social** environment that is determined by the caste system. Caste system is a system of graded inequality. Hence it is a hierarchy, in which every caste is occurs below some other caste and above some other caste. In this hierarchy rights and privileges are organized in a descending order, as the Brahmins and other upper castes enjoy near absolute rights while the dalit castes are almost powerless. Material relationships dining and feeding occupations are largely determined by the caste system. Even social interactions are largely confined to once own caste members. The cultural interactions of the caste are largely influenced by the autonomy of caste. Cultural traditions and practices are largely restricted by your own caste. **The social location of my caste very much decides my understanding about my caste and it's other members. At the same time my caste largely decides my opinions about other caste and caste members. That's** why castes lower than my caste and its people were considered as lowly.

Dalit caste consciousness also evolves in the same frame of caste system. Untouchability powerlessness, economic dependency, distrust, neglect were certain social aspects that were imposed on the dalit castes. These aspects have played a major role in the shaping of the caste

consciousness of the dalits-both self perception and their perception of other castes.

Language plays an important role in the articulation of emotions and needs as also in the fulfillment of everyday activities. Language is the medium through which consciousness is shaped and expressed. To achieve the various linguistic devices like proverbs, sayings, songs, compound words etc. are employed. In a country like India, where of the castes were denied access to education and knowledge, linguistic devices play a major role in the framing of caste consciousness – both about oneself and of other castes. In the absence of literacy, there was hardly any written literature that was composed by the dalit castes. In the absence of written literatures, the social history of such knowledge deprived caste communities becomes possible only by accessing the oral traditions of such communities. The above mentioned linguistic devices become an important part of the oral traditions of such deprived communities. This enables the study of specific castes and of individuals therein. It also sheds light on the material and social conditions of the castes and individuals therein.

Thus, we can discuss the formation of dalit consciousness and its articulation through such linguistic devices as sayings etc. The evolution of dalit consciousness can be analysed through the study of linguistic devices as saying, proverbs, short poems, songs etc. Through recording these sayings, proverbs, short poems, songs, we can enable or enrich the peripheries of social history especially feminist social history.

MUSLIM WOMEN AND THE EARLY TWENTIETH CENTURY REFORM MOVEMENTS IN KERALA

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The very treatment of Muslim reform movements in Marxist and nationalist histories have been problematic. The reform movements in Kerala are coherently projected as progressive narratives of secular modernity. The caste mobilizations and overtly focused religious concerns of the reform movements are strategically woven into a 'cultural renaissance' that Kerala claims to have witnessed during the reform movements. This narrative of secular modernity is so much embedded in Kerala's public sphere that the prototype of 'modern malayali' uses this as a nostalgic vantage point to overlook inherent contradictions in the very constitution of Kerala's 'secular' silhouette, negating voices of women, Dalits, Muslims and all sorts of marginal identities. The active engagement of the Muslim community with the reform movements and its absence in mainstream histories highlight the fissures in this project of secularism that sets out to incorporate reform movements into a Hindu fold and exclude the elements that do not blend in.

This paper aims at presenting the participation of Muslim Women in Kerala in the reform movements and how their work went unacknowledged in the reform history of Kerala. The

journals through which they registered their agency in defining modernity in Kerala also provide counter narratives to the mainstream imagination of Muslim women as victims of a primitive religion. While negotiating with domestic roles and religious subjectivity, the alternative modernity addressed through these agential acts defies liberal and universalized notion of **freedom and modernity. The implications of the histories of these women's agency would be** documenting histories of marginalized communities, and raise serious questions about paradoxes within Indian nationalism that excludes voices that do not fit into categories of elite nationalism. The concern here would be how the national modern is created and how gender structured this national modern. Muslims as outcastes in the fringes of this national modernity get excluded in the retrieved spiritual exaltation of the ideal Indian womanhood as explored in many feminist studies. The engagement with modernity by the Muslim women redefines both what modernity **stands for her and also how religion gets refashioned in the era of changes and 'progress.'** It is interesting to notice how the Muslim women incorporated progress into the structures of religious identity and addressed modernity through the frames of religion. Thus this paper tries to historicize reformism and Gender in early twentieth century Muslim Reform Movements in **Kerala and further explore how women's historiography produces counter histories of Muslim women, as documented through their journals and periodicals.**

हिंदी की स्त्री आत्मकथाओं का प्रकाशन, प्रचार और स्वयत्ता का सवाल

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हिन्दी में जब से गद्य वधाओं का विकास होता दिखाई देता है, उस पूरे कालखण्ड में (1850 से लेकर 1950 तक) एक भी स्त्री-रचित उपन्यास नहीं मलता तो आत्मकथा लेखन का अभाव स्वाभाविक है। 19वीं सदी की आरंभक पत्रिकाओं में स्त्री-दर्पण पत्रिका में (जुलाई 1915 से मार्च 1916 के अंको में) सरला: एक वधवा की आत्मजीवनी मलती है जो वास्तव में एक उत्पीड़ित की आत्मा भव्यव्यक्ति है और संवाद की शैली में लखी गई है। इसके बाद कुछ अन्य आत्मा भव्यव्यक्तियों की पड़ताल करने की भी कोशिश की गई है, जिसमें स्त्रियों द्वारा लखी टिप्पणियाँ व अखबारी लेख आदि मलते हैं। सीमंतनी उपदेश (1882) में लखी गई, इसकी लेखिका एक अज्ञात हिन्दू स्त्री मानी जाती है। यद्यपि इसको आत्मकथा नहीं कहा गया है पर भी इसमें लेखिका के निजी व आत्मीय प्रसंगों की भरमार है। लेखिका स्त्री की रीति-रिवाजों में जकड़ी परम्परागत जीवन शैली के बारे में लखते हुए पुरुष समाज पर सवाल उठाती है, लेकिन अपना नाम बताने का साहस नहीं कर पाती। जब कर्नाटकी की पहली आत्मकथा रससुंदरी देवी रचित आमार जीबोन का प्रकाशन सन् 1868 में हो गया था। इसके बाद वनोदिनी दासी ने आमार कथा लखी। मराठी में भी कई आत्मकथाएँ लखी

गई, जिनके माध्यम से स्त्री-जीवन की समस्याएँ सामने आई। 19वीं सदी के उत्तरार्ध में पंडिता रमाबाई (1850-1922) के लखे पत्रों में आत्मकथांश मलते हैं, इसके अलावा 1907 में वे ए टेस्टमनी ऑफ पावर इन एक्जास्टिबल ट्रेजर में निजी और आत्मकथात्मक प्रसंगों को लखती हैं। 19वीं सदी में जब स्त्री शिक्षा का सवाल महत्वपूर्ण हो जाता है तभी स्त्रियों पर बात होनी शुरू होती है। इससे पता चलता है कि स्त्री लेखन का संबंध भाषा व क्षेत्र विशेष में स्त्री शिक्षा की स्थिति व उससे जुड़े आंदोलनों से भी जुड़ा है। औपनिवेशिक भारत में स्त्रियों के सवाल पर जेराल्डिन फोर्ब्स वुमैन इन मार्टिन इंडिया में लखती हैं- 19वीं सदी में स्त्री शिक्षा का सवाल इस अर्थ में महत्वपूर्ण नहीं होता कि स्त्री की वास्तविक जरूरतें क्या हैं और उसे क्या चाहिए? बल्कि इस बात पर ज्यादा ध्यान दिया जाता है कि स्त्रियों को किस तरह से आधुनिक बनाया जाए। इसका प्रमुख कारण वे कई प्रतिष्ठित व प्रभावशाली ब्रिटिश लेखकों द्वारा भारतीय धर्म व संस्कृति और सामाजिक नैतिकताओं तथा स्त्री संबंधी रिवाजों की कड़ी निंदा करना मानती हैं। पार्थ चैटर्जी परम्पराओं में महिला प्रश्न पर बात करते हुए लखते हैं कि ये अत्याचार पुरुषों या उनके विशेष वर्गों द्वारा उतने नहीं किए जाते थे जितने कि धार्मिक नियमों और कर्मकाण्डों द्वारा किए जाते थे। दूसरी ओर सामाजिक सुधारों के रवैये के बारे में वे लखते हैं कि इस दौरान स्त्री-प्रश्न का संबंध व शष्ट सामाजिक संबंधों में महिलाओं की स्थिति से उतना नहीं था जितना कि एक औपनिवेशिक राजसत्ता और एक वजित जनगण की तथाकथित परम्परा के टकराव से था। इस प्रकार इन उपलब्ध दस्तावेजों में स्त्री संबंधी वचारों की पड़ताल आवश्यक हो जाती है कि वे स्वयं स्त्री, परम्परा और आधुनिकीकरण के बारे में क्या सोच रहीं थी और कतना स्वतंत्र व निष्पक्ष होकर निर्णय लेने की स्थिति में थीं? क्यों कि राष्ट्रवादी परियोजना और पश्चिमी संस्कार व आधुनिकता के चुनिन्दा स्वीकार का वैचारिक औचित्य का प्रभाव आज तक बना हुआ है। इस संदर्भ में स्त्रियों का मत बहुत बाद में दर्ज होता है और यह भी सवाल है कि क्या अब भी वे निर्णय देने में सक्षम मानी जा रहीं हैं। आज भी स्त्री का क्षेत्र घर और बाहर के बीच बँटा हुआ है कि कन घर के क्षेत्र को अब बाहर की गति व धर्यों से पहले की तरह नहीं अलगाया जा सकता। फ्रेंचस्का ओर्सेनी अपनी किताब हिन्दी के पब्लिक स्फीयर के बारे में बात करते हुए लखती हैं कि 1920 तक स्त्री शिक्षा का सवाल शहरों तक केन्द्रित था। गाँवों, कस्बों व देहाती-पछड़े इलाकों में यह सवाल अभी भी महत्वपूर्ण नहीं बन पाया था। 1920 से 1930 तक स्त्रियों की शिक्षा के लिए जिस तरह की पुस्तकें व सामग्री तैयार की जाती थी, वह उन्हें अनौपचारिक रूप से घर के दायरे में ही उपलब्ध कराई जाती थी। इस लिए स्त्रियों के लिए बहुत-सी ऐसी पत्र-पत्रिकाएँ उस समय निकलती थीं जो स्त्रियों की शिक्षा व सामाजिक सुधार से जुड़ी थीं, किन्तु उन्हें स्त्रीवादी कहना मुश्किल जान पड़ता है। अकादमिक स्तर पर और स्त्री अध्ययन

संस्थानों द्वारा इस प्र क्रया में बिखरे हुए स्त्री साहित्य का दस्तावेजीकरण व संकलन कया गया है। इसमें बँगला व मराठी भाषा में स्त्री-आत्मकथाओं की पर्याप्त मात्रा है पर हिंदी में इसका निश्चित तौर पर अभाव देखा गया।

A RETELLING OF A RETELLING: SOME THOUGHTS ON *PANDAVANI* IN CHHATTISGARH

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The theme I explore in my paper treads a thin line between the individual and the society while examining the engagement of the *Pandavani* artiste with something as personal as **one's religion in the public sphere, while negotiating with the societal prescriptions for one's gender. This style of retelling** the Mahabharata originated in Chhattisgarh and has traditionally been male-dominated.

However, the best known exponents of the *Pandavani* today are women- retelling select episodes and even talking of contemporary social issues through the characters in the epic.

I see this **story-telling and retelling exercise as symbolic of women's attempt to make a foray** into the public sphere through a political statement. The act of retelling in itself is political because it is an attempt at history writing and the often autobiographical nature of the **performance is a step towards the articulation of one's identity. One of my aims in this paper is to examine the transforming nature of the private and public sphere in the contemporary through an engagement with something like the Mahabharata-which is in essence 'historic'.**

The *Pandavani* has now travelled the world and is something of an 'exotic' experience for the middle class in India. The rural and semi-urban audiences remain, but the fame of and demands on the popular artists often do not allow them the luxury of going back to their roots in rurality. The site of the performance is also often far removed from its original village chabootra to being an airconditioned, sound proof, several-hundred-seater conference style **auditorium, where the artist tells a 'story' to the appreciative, sometimes even 'foreign', audience.**

Spivak's opinion that the privileged hear what they want to hear, seems significant to me here because of the very question it raises; it is important to know who speaks, but also more important to know who will listen. I attempt to take this a step further to- what **'they' understand. With changing audiences and changing expectations from the Pandavani performance, the paper tries to capture not the performance, but the ideas it generates-during and after.**

THE AFTERLIFE OF RANI DURGA VATI: A POLITICO-CULTURAL NARRATIVE OF A REGIONAL ICON

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In the year 1983, the Government of Madhya Pradesh renamed the University of Jabalpur as the Rani Durgavati Vishwavidyalaya. On 24th June, 1988, the Government of India issued a postal stamp commemorating Rani Durgavati on her death anniversary. Rani Durgavati appears in the standard text books of Indian history as another resistant Indian „Hindu“ ruler of Gondwana Kingdom, who fought against the then invading Mughal army under Akbar in the 16th century.

Indian nationalism, as we know, has always projected “regional” icons as „national“ icons in order to mobilize people during the anti-colonial movement. Rani Durgavati thus portrayed the nation’s chaste wife, warrior mother and the „Virangana“. Post-independence, the importance of these regional turned national icons gradually faded away. The exception, I think, is the case of Rani Durgavati and her present iconographic representation in central India by different political parties. In 1992, a section of tribal population of the Madhya Pradesh started for the first time their own political party called Gondwana Ganatantra Party (GGP), an offspring of Gond Mahasabha. Their main aim is to make people aware of their indigenous-self and their rich heritage and avoid conversion to Hinduism. Rani Durgavati is their sovereign Gond queen and symbol of their distinct existence – the saviour of their rich heritage. GGP also demanded the construction of Durgavati statues in the Gond populated areas.

Apart from these strictly formal forces, an organization called “Rani Durgavati’s Army” has been recently founded by some local women in the district of Dindori for the purpose of women empowerment. The afterlife of Rani Durgavati has yet not been adequately studied so far. This study seeks to explore the many lives of Rani Durgavati in post-colonial Indian democracy, through the oral narratives of the Gonds, in the contemporary political scenario. In other words, the paper intends to engage with this complex nature of assimilation and integration of Rani Durgavati in the regional politics of Madhya Pradesh and Chattisgarh.

LEGAL CHANGES IN EZHAVA SOCIAL REFORM MOVEMENTS: CASTE/COMMUNITY IDENTITY, KINSHIP AND SEXUALITY OF WOMEN

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The historians in Kerala largely neglect the traditions of matriliney within Thiyya and Ezhava communities of Kerala. Similarly the feminist studies on the topic largely deal with Nair matriliney in Kerala. The primary data of this paper includes Thiyya magazine, *Mitavadi* and Ezhava magazines like *Vivekodayam*, *Sahodaran*, *Sanghamitra*, *Sahodari*, *Sthree*, etc. Apart from these magazines, I have looked at biographies and autobiographies of Thiyya and Ezhava reformers; and archival materials like governmental records, petitions, regulations and census reports. This paper examines the ways in which men and women from Thiyya and Ezhava communities have engaged in the discourse around matriliney, legalization of marriage, divorce and inheritance. This would bring out the question of women and community. Ezhavas are a numerically significant Hindu community in Kerala constituting about 25-28 percent of its total population. It is, in fact, an umbrella term used for a number of backward communities, the most prominent among them being the Thiyyas of Malabar. In mainstream histories and discourses of Kerala, the Thiyyas of Malabar are seen as the counterparts of Ezhavas in Thiruvithamkoor and Kochi. This association, generally accepted as a norm in current political and governmental discourses, has in fact a history of less than 150 years. The paper looks at the engagement of Thiyyas of North Malabar Thiyyas and Ezhavas of Thiruvithamkoor Ezhavas who were active in the reformation process as **per available records. The paper argues that the Thiyya and Ezhava reformers' justification of valid a marriage system and the articulation of their matrilineal system which was akin to the patrilineal system can be seen as an attempt to forge a community identity by uniting all sections of the caste through a common law of inheritance. The paper also points out that Thiyya reformers' normalization and acceptance of patriliney among Thiyyas has in fact overshadowed the question of women as well as the question of community identity.**

CHALLENGING LIVES, BELIED HOPES: READINGS OF AUTOBIOGRAPHIES OF BENGALI WOMEN POLITICAL ACTIVISTS

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This paper will focus primarily on the autobiographical accounts of women belonging to the revolutionary groups, the communist party and the Congress in undivided colonial Bengal. The political trajectories of many political workers during the final two decades of the colonial struggle are far from simple as they encountered and negotiated different political ideologies and socio-political structures. Thus we see in their writings their beliefs, doubts, frustrations even as they moved from one political formation to another. Among others I will examine the memoirs of Santisudha Ghosh (*Jiboner Rongomonche*), Manikuntala Sen (*Sediner Kotha*) and Bina Das

(*Srinkhol Jhonkar*) and also some oral testimonies that have been archived over the past six decades.

It is customary to trace family influences in the lives of the women political workers as the motivating factor and locate in the personal sphere the originary moment for their political work. **I refrain from using the term 'political consciousness' here because women's involvement in the various political movements in colonial India is usually understood in terms of an emotional response, a hysteric reaction to heart-wrenching events or propaganda for mobilising public opinion.** In this paper I will argue that this is a reductive discourse that plays upon the rational/emotional and the male/female binary. While women and people in general reacted **emotionally to Gandhi's appeal or to Mukunda Das's songs and *jatra*,** in the autobiographies and testimonies of these women political workers we see the tortuous deliberations, the absorption of the various political discourses and then the difficult choices they made even as their political ideologies evolved and changed. Their writings testify to the development of their political consciousness which originated in their awareness of oppressive structures and institutions and the desire to redress the inequalities that structured their own lives and the lives of others. The paper will further argue that this political consciousness and their agency as political workers - as opposed to acting as tools of a patriarchal political formation - is emphatically underscored in their critique of their own agenda and actions and the politics of the various groups.

The paper will focus on the writing of the history being lived and constructed in these autobiographical narratives even as many women political workers who worked with heroic zeal in villages and towns were excised from hegemonic popular historical narratives. It will examine the formation and articulation of the ideology of the authors, the construction of their subjectivity and their impact on the political movements and how the political structures framed their identities as subjects and agents of history.

FROM 'SOCIAL WORKER' TO 'PROFESSIONAL': 'HER'STORY IN POLICE IN INDIA

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The police in the contemporary society is the most visible part of bureaucracy symbolizing authority, stability and order. Sociologically speaking police and policing is defined in terms of means applied not in terms of end. One single universal means deployed by the police to maintain status-quo in the society is the use of 'Coercive Force'. **Thus the image of police traditionally and historically has been that of a 'Crime Fighter'. The police is seen as one having excess power and of being brutal.** Thus by and large, policing is regarded as a male bastion. However women have intruded this male bastion and have tried to carve out a niche for themselves.

The paper traces the historical evolution of women in police from the ancient period to contemporary times by referring to biographies, autobiographies, archival records, oral history,

testimonies and in-depth interview of women police personnel. The paper traces the socio-political and legal causes which led to the emergence of women police in India during the colonial and the post-colonial period. From the very beginning, women police performed protective and preventive role and dealt with women and children only. The paper explores how women have negotiated within the patriarchal structure of the police force. It addresses the gender inequalities and discrimination women in police suffered ever since their formal entry into the police force. The paper traces the intersection between class and gender in understanding the professional lives of women police personnel in India. In India women police officers are gradually becoming more integrated into the police force by passing through the five distinct stages namely 'entry', 'separated restricted sphere', 'take-off', 'reforms' and 'hybridized practices'. Thus the paper attempts to document 'her' story in police and analyses the evolution of 'her' role from that of a 'social worker' to a 'professional'.

ORAL TRADITIONS AND WOMEN IN NAGA SOCIETY: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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This paper tries to problematize history writings in Naga society. Exclusion of women's history while writing history has been a common thing which many writers cannot escape from it till date. With the few works on history of Nagas, the exclusion and silent has been challenged lately by few feminist, scholars and activist in their works. History writing has been unjust to women and her- history. Like many histories, the history of Nagas need a reconstruction as the history has ignored the contribution of women. Due to gender disparities it is more difficult to write the history of Naga women. Oral traditions play a very important role in the reconstruction of Naga history in general. Women from different classes and status of society need to be studied as that will lead not only to study and learn a new person but also help in exploring different questions. Women in traditional Naga society from different economic status has contributed in different ways in the civilization process which need to be studied and explored. This paper will also try to highlight the different contribution of women to the society from time immemorial. From different areas and fields, **women have been an 'identity carrier' throughout history yet their history has been ignored and silent for long.** With no written records like other regions, **Naga Women's contribution in agriculture, handloom weaving, religion, etc., will be critically studied** by looking deeper into the context oral traditions. One needs to challenge the traditional concept of history, silent and selectivity to reconstruct the history. This paper will put Naga women at the heart of debate.

DOCUMENTING GENDER PARTICIPATION IN YOUTH MOVEMENT: A STUDY OF THE ASSAM MOVEMENT (1979-85)

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Gender politics has been diverse in the contemporary period both in assertions and terminations. But it remains an essential part of democratic politics. It is found that mainstream theory and research of social movements ignore by and large the gender role and participation in such movements. However, feminist research demonstrates that gender is an explanatory factor of social movements. Accordingly, documenting gender role in social movements is essential to understand the women participation in these movements. Youth movements have been a major feature of the politics of Assam, the most conflict-ridden area of North-East India. It is evident from the efforts of the youth of Assam in organizing people for some aspects of social actions in the state. Since youth movements have been prominent in the politics of the state therefore, there is a possibility that the political attitude and the behaviour of the youth might have influenced the gender aspect of the politics of the state. It is necessary to examine gender participation in youth movements in Assam in order to have an understanding of this very important aspect of democratic politics of the state. To facilitate this, we plan to analyse the **politics of the "Assam Movement" led by All Assam Students' Union (AASU)**, the prominent student union of Assam. There is an urgent need to examine this aspect of the politics of Assam so that we can arrive at a better documentation of the increasing gender participation in these movements of the state.



SUB-THEME – 11:

**WOMEN'S MOVMENT'S ENGAGEMENT
WITH POLICY**

ABORTION AS A REPRODUCTIVE RIGHT: ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

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The question of women's rights to abortion is the most intractable issues of the present day society. Abortion debate is focused upon the women's rights. The issue of abortion has been a subject of an intense debate during the last few decades of the twentieth century. The demand for legalization of abortion had started with the spread of the women's rights movements. The supporters of women's rights movements sought legalizing of abortion because illegal abortion had become a major public health issue. The other reasons for seeking legalizing of abortion were linked with the demands for women's right to education, employment, equality and freedom at par with men. It was being argued that forced motherhood was a major obstacle to the fulfillment of women's aspiration for freedom and equality.

The U.S. Supreme Court's decision on Roe vs. Wade legalized abortion without restrictions in 1973. Though the issue has remained contentious and subject to subsequent alterations through judicial and legislative actions, however, it is worth mentioning that Roe vs. Wade judgment inaugurated a new beginning for women's freedom, a major gain in their struggle to achieve equality with men in decision-making about reproductive health and control. This was a vindication of a woman's right to autonomy of her body and control over reproduction necessary for her to be a self-determining adult human being (person). Legalization of abortion has not only saved pregnant women's lives from death and injury but also enabled women to participate more actively in the social, economic and political life. Women's liberation movement has focused on some important points for women's rights to provide opportunities for women to participate more fully and actively in the social and economic life.

In India, the medical technologies which offer to detect the abnormalities of fetus, where it is suspected that the real aim is to discover the sex of the fetus which is the 'misuse' of the advantageous facility of such technologies. In a society where value is given to sons, daughters have been aborted as a result of such tests. Whose choice would that have been? In the present paper, I would like to support reproductive freedom as a basic right for women. At last I would like to conclude that motherhood should be voluntary and not because of any external pressure and women should not be forced to kill their potential daughters either.

TECHNOLOGICAL IS POLITICAL: NAVIGATING POLICY QUESTIONS IN THE INFORMATION SOCIETY

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The optimistic confluence in the 80's between rural women's movements encountering Freirian methods of organising through sanghas (collectives) and women's rights femocracy, gave birth to state-supported programmes to promote women's local organising and public participation. The approach seemed to offer new pathways for institutionalised feminism, with an indigenised flavour. In the 90's, with the emerging vocabulary of gender mainstreaming, the legacy of sanghas presented the state with a convenient berth; SHGisation was invented as an efficacious tool for a shifting macro-economic discourse. By the mid 2000's, it was eminently clear that the public discourse on women's rights was becoming increasingly fragmented. The political economy of survival for poor rural women was witness to a crisis of livelihoods, inaccessibility of quality public services, a rise of vote-bank politics, organised corruption in local governance, etc, alongside legislative and policy changes that ushered in new 'rights' and potentially, new spaces for gender justice. State-led SHGisation in some states was taking the power out of empowerment processes that progressive groups had carefully nurtured; state sponsored groups like Kudumbashree in Kerala were beginning to be organised along religious lines; micro-finance took away the time and space for political organising.

At this juncture, marked by a loss of shared frameworks and vocabulary to reclaim women's citizenship and solidarity, a new lease of neo-liberal life is emerging, in the IT dream. As IT becomes the most favoured idiom for nation-building, market-led rhetoric on mobiles-for-women is making inroads into rural life. Re-engineering governance through a new techno-led architecture, the Indian state has sought to actively suppress the democratic promise of technology, using it to centralise power and delegitimise citizenship claims of the majority (both directly, as in the case of 'compulsary' registration under 'Aadhar', and tacitly, through a privatisation of the governance architecture).

The proposed paper is a reflection of IT for Change's engagement with sanghas of Mahila Samakhya Karnataka and with broader social movements, in the past few years. It will explore the challenges of democratising a 'public goods' discourse on IT through practice, dialogue and research, looking at the complicated terrain of democracy, women's rights and pluralism, as information and communication become hugely contested arenas, in the network society. The paper does not claim to offer answers, but raise the questions that will need to be on the agenda of women's movements, in explorations for frameworks and vocabulary that can shape a progressive practice of solidarity in the contemporary context.

WOMEN AND LIVELIHOODS: CASE STUDIES FROM JUNGLE MAHAL

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West Bengal once pioneered the Self Help Group movement in the country with the initiation of Swarna Jayanti Gram Swarajogar Yojana (SGSY) by the Government of India. Today as the country stand in the crossroads of numerous poverty alleviation programmes which looks at providing a sustainable and holistic approach towards increasing livelihoods and bringing each and every rural woman under the ambit of a SHG. NRLM or the National Rural Livelihoods Mission (NRLM) is one of the major programmes that has been envisaged by the Ministry of Rural Development for the same.

This paper will look at the experiences of women and their engagement in the ground preparations towards rolling out of NRLM and similar livelihood programmes in the two districts of Jungle Mahal in West Bengal , Paschim Medinipur and Purulia. The area, infamously characterised as the hotbed of the present phase of Maoism, has largely restored normalcy and **it's but a surprise to find women creating sustainable livelihood models in the same villages** which once produced much feared women Maoist guerillas who have now surrendered or are under rehabilitation. Paschim Medinipur has one of the highest number of SHG groups in a district numbering to 32000 approximately yet most of them lie dormant.

Much of the discourse around womens' movements in the country have featured around equality and gender injustice meted out in the urban spaces. But often visiting the remote tribal hamlets in the heartlands of eastern India, the authors encountered a different and strong **womens' participation as well as enthusiasm in creating models that would be replicable across** the two districts on a fuller scale. Through experiential narratives of SHG members , women panchayat functionaries as well as bureaucrats , the paper would like to bring forth that women still and can play a central role in influencing the creation of a gender just and equitable livelihood policy framework at the district level and also play a significant role in reducing the post-conflict tension. In the light of the Maoist conflict, the paper would also like to draw attention to the role of women movements in Jungle Mahal and the significance of a woman Chief Minister in a state which has mostly seen upper class caste elite bhadrals as heads of the State.

WOMEN AND ALTERNATE POLITICAL SPACES - FOSTERING WOMEN'S ENGAGEMENT IN FORMAL POLITICS IN INDIA

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There has been a huge focus on representative politics in recent times where the State has begun to provide opportunities for women to enter formal political institutions. The new dominant **paradigm of 'engendering democracy'**, has led to the **idea of inclusion of women in existing democratic structures**, without much emphasis on how these existent democratic spaces can translate into political influence for women. While representative democratic arenas have **consistent attention from the State**, **women's engagement in active politics requires a much more rigorous approach and closer attention to other alternate spaces outside the formal institutions of the State.**

These alternate spaces have been studied and explored during fieldwork with women from different socio-economic strata in Delhi. This paper **draws on critical analysis of 'power' and 'politics' based on current sociological/anthropological discourses on women and governance.** It looks at how women can use alternate democratic spaces to build their political engagement. The paper suggests looking **at different indicators for women's political activity other than conflict and public politics.** Hence, it attempts to explore co-operation and negotiation as tools to assert political power within and outside these alternate spaces. The paper critically **examines women's domestically oriented roles, needs and issues; their political engagement being different from that of men.** It thus attempts to delve deeper into the idea of gender-based politics and re-engaging **with the definition of women's issues.**

The paper is an outcome of an action research, which was undertaken as a part of a social **campaign in Delhi. The campaign focused on aggregating women's voices and their issues for the assembly elections in 2013 and communicating these issues to the election candidates.** These informal/local alternate spaces for deliberations were created as a part of the campaign activities. The data was collected by conducting interviews with women and observing their participation in the alternate spaces. The paper argues for the potential such spaces carry to foster political participation of women and build pathways for them to enter into formal politics.

STATE AND SECURITY LAWS: WOMEN'S PERSPECTIVE WITH REFERENCE TO STATE OF MANIPUR

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The social security legislations in India derive their strength and spirit from the Directive

Principles of State Policy as contained in the Constitution of India. Although the Constitution of India is yet to recognise social security as a Fundamental Right it does require that the state should strive to promote the welfare of the people by securing and protecting as effectively as it may, a social order in which justice, social, economic and political- shall inform all the institution of national life. There is now wide acceptance of the fact that modern armed conflict has a disproportionate impact on women and girls even though most are not directly engaged in combat. The long years of conflict in various parts of India have left several communities deprived of the peace and development of their life. Arbitrary application of security laws at the national and state levels directly affected the life of women and children in every part of the country.

The Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act, (AFSPA) was passed on September 11,1958, by the Parliament of India. It is a law with just six sections granting special powers to the armed forces **in what the Act terms as 'disturbed areas'**. **The Act has been at the heart of concerns about** human rights violations in the regions of its enforcement, where arbitrary killing, torture, cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment and enforced disappearances have happened.

Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act, 1958 empowered only the Governors of the state and the Administrators of the Union Territories to declare areas concerned State of **Union Territory as 'disturbed'**. By **Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers (Amendment) Act, 1972** conferred such powers concurrently upon the Central Government. It was considered desirable that the Central Government should also have the power to declare **areas as 'disturbed to enable its armed forces to exercise the special powers. The territorial** scope of the Act also expanded to the five-states of the North-East- Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Nagaland, Tripura and to the Union Territories Arunachal Pradesh and Mizoram. In addition, **"The Armed Forces (Assam and Manipur) Special Powers Act, 1958 was substituted by ' Armed Forces, (Special Powers) Act, 1958** getting the acronym of AFSPA,1958 .

On 2nd November, 2000, in Malom, a town in the Imphal valley of Manipur, ten civilians are shot dead while waiting at a bus stop. The incident known as the Malom massacre was allegedly committed by the Assam Rifles, one of the Indian Paramilitary forces operating in the state. The victims included Leisangbam Ibetomi, a 62 year old woman and 18 year old Sinam Chandramani a 1988 National Child Bravery Award winner. Iron Chanu Sharmila-**also known as the 'Iron Lady'** of Manipur or Mengoubi (the fair one) is a civil rights activist, political activist and poet from the Indian State of Manipur began a hunger strike on 2nd November, 2000 which is still ongoing, **having refused food and water from more than thirteen years. She has been called 'the world's** longest hunger striker. Sharmila, who was 28 at that time, began to fast in protest of the killings, taking neither food nor water. Three days after, she began her strike, she was arrested by the police and charged with an attempt to commit suicide, which is unlawful under section 309 of the Indian Penal Code (IPC), 1860 and later was transferred to the judicial custody. Her health deteriorated rapidly, and nasogastric intubation was forced on her in order to keep her alive while under arrest. She has been regularly released and re-arrested every year since her hunger strike began. This paper will discuss lot more on her demand to the Indian Government for complete repeal of the AFSPA which has blamed for violence and violated the Human rights in Manipur and other parts of North-East India.

SEXUAL ASSAULT AND LAW: A STUDY IN THE GAUHATI HIGH COURT

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The proposed paper is based on a study of the legal constructions of sexual assault in India. It attempts to study the existing laws on rape and sexual assault and their implementation through an analysis of some court cases of sexual assault in the Gauhati High Court.

Although the Constitution of India has guaranteed equal rights to all, but still it is evident seen **that women's access to justice has been severely curtailed in the name of 'private' issues. Continuous struggles of women's groups have led to several amendments to the existing laws** and introduction to new ones. Studies, however, show that the implementation of the laws still remains partial and conservative, and convictions in rape cases remain less.

The issues that come to our minds when we mention "women and law" are rape, dowry death, and sati. What is common to all these concerns is the issue of violence - brought about by an unequal social order, and also importantly, by the law's violence. In looking at the theme "Women and Law", our concern has been to look at women's life worlds, in some parts, and the extent to which the law has touched them. Where the quality of law has touched lives with its engagement- legislative, interpretive, positive, restitutive, punitive (punishments to people) – is of critical significance.

Law, with its structural limitations, has been considered by some feminist to be an instrument of change. There is a range of legislations to protect and empower women. **The law reforms dealing with women's issues in India has been the result of social reform movement starting since the beginning of the 19th century.** Though law reform in India is quite visible, less attention is paid to legal feminism, which argues for the necessity of incorporating women-centred values in all major social institutions including law. This has led feminists to argue for **patriarchal instances of law's oppression of women.**

The commonality of **women's experience of sexual violence has provided the immediate entry point of feminist intervention into the issue.** Whatever the analysis of patriarchy and its relationship to class, caste, community or race, feminist politics is able to relate directly to sexual violation – experienced in different ways and to differing degrees – but an intrinsic part of **women's lives.**

It is the above discussed context that the present proposed paper contains an understanding the existing laws on rape in India, with an analysis of some of the cases of Gauhati High Court. The analysis of the judgements has provided an in- depth understanding of the laws and the problems therein and the solutions that the feminists seek to bring about changes in the same so that women also get equal access to justice and lead a life with dignity.

HEALTHCARE POLICIES AND THE STATUS OF WOMEN'S HEALTH IN INDIA: DEBATES AND DILEMMAS

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Until quite recently, when it has come to women and health/ women's health, it has never been much beyond the reproductive process and family planning program. The concern for women's health has been most usually centered on the child bearing procedures which resulted on the policies and programs of the same nature and were not set within an integrated approach to their health. The discussions on women's health have referred only briefly to the health problems apart from reproduction or to post-menopause. However, there has been an awareness for women's health needs and concerns particularly since the 1990s with the initiatives such as health sector reforms, health financing etc. There have been also a number of policy shifts and changes with direct and indirect implication for women's health. Nevertheless, women's actual access to healthcare services demonstrates quite a contradictory and complex situation. The initiatives which have been taken to address women's health needs generally fail to consider non-reproductive aspects of women's health status (before, during, after or outside of the child-bearing experience), the complex of social, economic and political factors. In this background, this paper explores the debates and dilemmas about the impact of health care policies in the context of women in India and the role played by the women's movement in addressing these issues. The paper analyses the role played by the pro-women healthcare policies and schemes, women's accessibility/ inaccessibility, availability/ non-availability, the engagement of women's movement with health care policies and the status of women's health in India.

MARGINALISED WOMEN'S EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN'S MOVEMENT, PROGRESSIVE LAWS AND EMPOWERMENT: SOME METHODOLOGICAL ISSUES

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Any effort to promote equality between men and women must take into account several factors. Sen and Grown wrote as early as in 1985, "Only by sharpening the links between equality, development and peace, can we show that the 'basic rights' of the poor and the transformation of the institutions that subordinate women are inextricably linked. They can be achieved together through the self - empowerment of women."

There are differing viewpoints on empowerment and its place in development and women's equality. Feminist literature on empowerment indicates that there is fair amount of emphasis on "process" and on recognizing the "agency" of women (Malhotra & Schuler, 2005). Empowerment is seen as a process of change towards greater equality or greater freedom of choices and

action; it is a process of consciousness raising, questioning the dominant analysis and tacit acceptance of why men and women are unequal (Malhotra & Schuler, 2005), (Batliwala S. , 1994), (Kabeer N. , 1999). At the same time, there has been a growing body of literature in development discourse that assumes the posture that empowerment has instrumental value. This posturing views empowerment as a means to lead to better development outcomes such as provision of basic services, pro poor market development, improved local governance, improved national governance and access to justice and legal aid (Narayan, 2005), (Keefer & Khemani, 2004), (Pralhad, 2004), (Parameswaran, 2005).

India has recently had several progressive laws that have a significant bearing on negating the effects of a discriminatory regime in legal jurisprudence. In the eyes of the law gender inequalities in these specific arenas cannot be upheld. The extent to which some of these laws have been able to impact women and the process of accessing justice is one of the key axes that needs to be studied.

Social Work research is typically done in one of the five paradigms: Positivism, Post Positivism; Critical Theory, Constructivism and Grounded Theory. (Morris, 2006), (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011), (Patton, 2002).

Being a practitioner activist that has worked from the feminist empowerment position, I choose to draw from the theoretical foundations of critical theory and constructivism to develop methodology.

This paper seeks to present the methodological issues that have to be confronted to draw out the voices of and meaning of empowerment from the stand point of marginalized women, viz, those women who have had to use either one or **several of the laws aimed at women's equality**. In capturing the voices of women who have experienced violence or denial of rights and have sought justice, the aim is to draw out the agential role of women in a specific context. In the end the paper seeks to **understand how progressive laws can enable women's empowerment**. **Building space for qualitative feminist methodologies in social work and women's studies is challenging.**

MAHILA ASHRAM AND NARI NIKETAN, KARNAL: A STUDY OF GENDER RESPONSIVE BUDGETING

Jaskiran Munder

Analysis of government policies related to the establishment of Mahila Ashram and Nari Niketan shows that that these type of structures are constructed for rehabilitation of such women those are deserted from society due to any reason. But when the conditions of women are observed in such so called protected areas made for women development, the researcher remained felt fully **helpless**. **The question here raised is that are such typed institutions really working for women's rehabilitation in society?** If so is the budget given for such institutions sufficient for making them independent? What kinds of facilities are provided to the residents of such institutions? Are the

residents of such institutions are satisfied by various facilities given to them? Is the official working in such institutions are gender sensitized?

This paper analyses Mahila Ashram and Nari Niketan through a gender lens to show how the government left the concept of empowerment and take women as passive agents as receiver not active participants. It is also a reason that why government provide insufficient budget that the situation of women not changed. Another reason is that planners too internalized the gender roles made for women in patriarchal society, thus fulfilling **women's practical gender needs** rather than strategic gender needs. It is critical need for women to assign budget to such institutions with gender responsive budget. This may help a situation where the government is not able to change the situation of too few women.

LITTLE DONE AND VAST UNDONE: CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENTS OF 2013 AND WOMEN'S BODILY AUTONOMY

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The Criminal Amendment Act, 2013 introduced various new provisions in the Indian Penal Code, 1860 (IPC) to effectively deal with the sexual offences and offences against women. This paper would scrutinize the new amendments under IPC and other related statutes to put in perspective the efforts made by the amendments. We would argue that the amendments are a classic illustration of *little done and vast undone* from the perspective of autonomy of women. The paper would argue that the recent amendments affirms the paternalistic notion of the state visualizing women as passive subjects to be protected without providing them with any autonomy.

The first part of the paper will address the issue of matrimonial offences in the IPC. The paper will argue that how criminal law remains etched with a contradictory policy criminalizing adultery in such a manner that the women is denied even the autonomy to be considered as a victim as **"husband" remains the only possible victim of the offence of adultery. Strangely, the new law does not even touch the law relating to adultery despite the Supreme Court's exhortations to amend the law to suit the changing times.** There remains a vast gap of unsaid amidst the said as far as the offence of adultery is concerned which reinforces a non-autonomous woman subject in the eyes of law. Curiously, another *unsaid* in the new amendments is the non-criminalization of the offence of marital rape due to the presence of **'spousal exception' providing permanent immunity to husband raping his wife.** This issue stands unaddressed in spite of the **Verma Committee's recommendation to criminalize marital rape.** The second part will address the inadequate conceptualization of rape in matrimony in the new laws.

Lastly, the paper will argue that the new amendments reinforce the stereotype of Indian women as passive subjects to be saved by the paternalistic state. This can be understood by the **reinforcement of concepts such as 'modesty' in the text of IPC.** The argument is centered on that

how the legislative text and judicial discourse interpreting the text become instrumental in **reinforcing the archaic ideas of 'modesty' and prudishness essential for the women to be** visualized as the proper subject of the rape laws. The last part of the paper will compare the existing paternalist values under IPC and their connection of the judicial discourse which obfuscates the proper understanding of women as subjects of rape. The paper is a critique of the essentializing narrative of both legislative and juridical text in constituting the subject of rape. This part will also analyse as to how far the statutory age of consent is in consonance with the autonomy of women and her sexual agency.

INTERROGATING THE CHILD MARRIAGE AND THE AGE OF CONSENT CONUNDRUM

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In light of the recent judgement by the Additional Sessions Judge Kamini Lau that "The legal system cannot be used to punish youngsters in love who are on the verge of attaining majority and this court cannot ruin their lives by taking a hyper-technical view, especially so when the age gap between these youngsters is within acceptable limits and does not reflect an exploitative coercive situation", calls for revisiting the age of consent debate. This is especially needed in the context of increasing child marriages in India, where young girls (and boys in a few cases) who have not attained majority are coerced to marry older men.

Closely linked to the debate on age of consent and the age at marriage is the issue of child marriages. India has had a history of campaigns against child marriages. Several prominent figures who played a significant part in the Indian renaissance in the 19th and 20th centuries took cognizance of the detrimental effect that child marriages had on young girls and took initiatives to counter the problem. The likes of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Ishwar Chandra Vidyasagar, Savitribai Phule and Sir Syed Ahmed raised their voice against the practice of child marriage and advocated reforms in the social and legal realms to counter this problem. However the problem continues till today and the latest NFHS (2005-2006) data reveals that 47.4 % of women aged 20-24 in India were getting married below 18 years. These figures are merely the tip of the iceberg. There are many unreported cases of child marriage and the social acceptance around the issue of child marriage is a serious concern.

In this light the paper will attempt to explore how the policies have evolved on the issue of child marriage and the current situation, highlighting some of the significant case laws and a critical assessment of the legislative framework that is in place. The paper will also capture the debates over age of consent and the age at marriage, underscoring the implications of the same. The state needs to revisit the age of consent set at 18 years as per the law and understand the nature of criminalisation that it can trigger in cases of consensual sexual acts among people below that threshold.

Moreover in the current environment of cultural revivalism there is heightened moral policing and honour crimes against relationships of choice that break barriers of caste, class, religions; this is a major concern and one that impinges upon the rights of young people to make choices with regard to sexuality and relationships. The need of the hour is a strong political will to holistically address the child marriages, age of consent and age at marriages within the larger framework of discrimination against the girl child. Mere criminalisation of young people and their families for choice of partner in marriage or love marriages is not a solution. The policy initiatives have to recognise and address the challenges that women and young girls in our country face.

GENDER, AGE AND CLASS: INTERROGATING POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR THE ELDERLY

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Population ageing is one of the most important global trends of the 21st century and older persons are receiving increased attention from the public and the media as well as from policymakers. In 1950, there were 205 million persons aged 60 or over throughout the world. Fifty years later, the number of persons aged 60 or over increased about three times to 606 million. The 2001 census has shown that the elderly population of India accounted for 77 million. While the elderly constituted only 24 million in 1961, it increased to 43 million in 1981 and to 57 million in 1991. India is one of the few countries in the world where males outnumber females. According to the National Policy on Older Persons men tend to outnumber women in India even after age 60 and there would be estimated 57 million male and 56 million female elderly by 2016. This phenomenon among the elderly is intriguing because female life expectancy at ages 60 and 70 is slightly higher than that of males.

As far policies of the Indian state are concerned, the National Policy on Older People accepts that **due attention should be given to the concerns of older women. However, the 'Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizen's Act of 2007' is not concerned with the all pervasive sexism that is built into the lives of elderly women.** In fact, the failure of the act to look into the situation of widows who neither have children nor property indicates towards its failure to integrate gender as a component of discrimination against the elderly.

In the backdrop of the above, this paper is an attempt to look into age based discrimination and sex based discrimination as two axes that structure the lives of older women. The paper is divided into three main segments. The first part deals with the theoretical critique of the **women's movement by elderly activists of the movement itself. It begins with Barbara Macdonald's 1985 claim that the invisibility of older women in the feminist movement betrayed its goal of equality.** Drawing on the Indian experience, the paper draws attention to the fact that **women's movement in India has effectively engaged with the question of violence faced by elderly women inside the household, but has been silent on other related and crucial issues.** In the second section of the paper is an attempt to draw attention to the web of discrimination

created through a structure that is informed by ageism and patriarchy. This section draws upon the experiences of older women residing in the Old Age homes in Guwahati city and look at how class, gender and age intersect in creating invisibility of socially marginalized groups. The final part of the paper is a critique of the **National Policy on Older People, 'Maintenance and Welfare of Parents and Senior Citizen's Act of 2007'** and **Assam State Policy for Senior Citizens** (draft) from a gender lens. That none of these policies holistically look at elderly women is noteworthy. The problems of older women are not the exclusive product of the ageing process but are a fall-out of the subordinate status of women throughout their life cycle. In a country like India where customary law and institutionalized gender inequality combine to drastically restrict the human, physical and financial resources available to widows and ageing women, one needs to aware of how a policy for the elderly will not cater to all until and unless we have laws that grant equal rights of inheritance, occupancy and disposal are not granted to women. The wider and broader policies on improving education, bringing empowerment, dealing with gender discrimination, cultural disparities across religious groups, geographic locations remain central in dealing with issues of elderly women. Implicit in the paper is an espousal of an intensive engagement of the **women's movement with issues of ageism.**

GENDER, AGE AND CLASS: INTERROGATING POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR THE ELDERLY

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GENDER BUDGETING: A NEW ARRIVAL IN THE CONTEXT OF GENDER EQUALITY - A CRITICAL ANALYSIS IN THE CONTEXT OF WOMEN'S HEALTH SCENERIO OF ASSAM

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Gender budgeting is a comparatively new approach in India, introduced by the government in 2005, when the Ministry of Finance mandated all ministries to establish gender budgeting cells and asked ministers and departments to submit a report highlighting budgetary allocations. Gender budget is a budget that acknowledge the gender patterns in society and allocates money to implement policies and programmes that shall help to reduce gender inequality. Gender budget initiatives are known by a range of different names. These are mainly referred to as, **'women budgets' 'gender sensitive budget' and 'applied gender budget analysis'.** Gender budget mainly addresses gender- specific barriers that prevent women and girls to access public goods and services and try to establish gender equality in the society. But here the question come how much this gender budgeting policies could able to touch the marginalised women. Are they properly aware about such an approach? This study will try to see how excluded sections specially poor marginalised women can able to get benefit from this kind of policies. Meanwhile

this study will also want to look the awareness gap between the marginalised and affluent sections of women. Gender Budgeting in health sector is another significant perspective of overall gender sensitive budget. Therefore it has been seen that since the last decade government is trying to implement various health policies and programmes for women. Indeed various policies and programmes have been executed for economically, socially marginalised women. But it has been seen that maximum poor women are not aware about it. Sometimes they can not even take benefit from these policies. A gap has been seen between the implementation of policies and exercise of them in true sense. This paper will also try to look inequality in terms of health service distribution in the context of Assam.

WOMEN, ENTITLEMENTS AND THE NEOLIBERAL AGENDA: RESISTING THE PRIVATIZATION OF RIGHTS

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Women from adivasi, dalit, shepherds and peasant communities across different contexts are organizing towards asserting their rights to land, forests, resources, food, culture, knowledge, and livelihoods.

This essential struggle has been subverted and hijacked by the neoliberal frame that seeks to individualize and privatize the assertion of rights. It diverts, reduces and circumcises the rights framework to that of mere entitlements for women, operating through legislations and government programs that range from the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act to the National Rural Livelihood Mission. The neoliberal legislative, economic, and social framework essentially isolates women from organizing against the systemic plunder of their lives. Each of **these measures are pitched on the identical discourse previously articulated by the women's and rights movements, now dubiously morphed into 'engendering', 'empowering', 'gender – equal' and women centered programs. They ride on the category of "women" to serve and provide an amicable mask to the patriarchal corporatization of women's autonomy. Since the early 1990s,** the state of Andhra Pradesh has been a testing ground for numerous such programmes and policies that have subsequently become models for national programmes.

The paper critically questions the current models of women's 'empowerment' and 'development' and celebrates the diverse movements of women resisting new forms of insidious violence and exploitation. It maps the historicity and political implications of these programmes and policies within the context of Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, through the voices of dalit women from Chittoor district leading land struggles against landlords in their village, shepherd women from Medak district asserting their rights to their commons through resisting the real estate and pharmaceutical industries, and adivasi women who are in the forefront of the movements of indigenous people to autonomy and control over their territories, resources and way of life.

TO VIOLATE WITH IMPUNITY: LEGAL CONSTRUCTIONS OF MARITAL RAPE

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Law is one of the important tools through which the state claims to ensure that women are treated as equal citizens. However, literature shows that though everyday women across India face myriad forms of gender based violence, the law has not proved to be an efficient mechanism to control such violence. Further, it is also well documented that not all violence is condemned by the law. One such violence is that of marital rape/marital sexual assault. Though **'The Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act 2005'**, does include sexual abuse within the definition of domestic violence yet it does not clearly mention marital sexual assault. On the other hand the new Criminal Law (Amendment) Act, 2013 continues to uphold legal exemption of sexual assault within marital institution. This paper attempts to understand such exemption of marital sexual assault from Indian legal lexicon.

Legal constructions of sexual assault within marital institution is traced through content analysis of legislations on sexual assault, past and present, observation of domestic violence cases at two Mahila Police Stations (MPS) at Odisha, and through in-depth interviews of legal personnel from Odisha. This paper brings forth how despite campaigns and sensitization by women's groups patriarchal notions continue to influence legal understanding of marital "rape". Patriarchal and parochial notions such as wifely duties, marriage as inherent consent to sex, wife as property, divine ordinance, and others are invoked to justify the exemption of marital "rape". The emphasizes is on the understanding that while certain legislation may include sexual abuse within domestic sphere as violence yet given the history of legal interpretations of law in India there is a need to amend the existing laws on sexual assault and bring in a comprehensive legislation against marital "rape".

ENGENDERING RIGHT TO FOOD AS WOMEN'S HUMAN RIGHT

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This paper is based on our engagement with lobbying during the National Food Security Act (2013), following the decade long battle in the Supreme Court, CWP (196 of 2001) PUCL vs Union of India and ors, and specifically our engagement with the Anna Suraksha Adhikar Abhiyan (Gujarat) and SCA 3055 of 2008 in the High Court of Gujarat, with the implementation of the MGNREGS as part of the feminist collective ANANDI.

The paper discusses several key agendas set by feminist organisations (ANANDI and partner sanghatans) in course of the struggle for Right to Food as women's human right and the responses of the state, political voices, campaigns to these demands. We limit the discussion on the right to food in this paper to the context set by programs, the courts and the legislation.

We argue that the legislations of NREGA and NFSA emerge from the large scale engagement with program and policy of rural women on the ground. These legislations and programmes have emerged as a strong area for women to contest entrenched social, economic and political powers and assert their citizenship. Our empowerment and human rights approach in organising tribal and rural women have been greatly strengthened by the engagement with these legislations.

The paper describes some contexts, actions and nuances of the debates that we have engaged with executive, campaigns and policy makers in relation to their significance to women's human rights. The largest programs covered under the legislation include the MGNREGS, Public Distribution System, ICDS, Maternity Entitlements, Mid Day Meal Scheme, while the courts also covered the Pensions (IGNOAPS) and Shelters for homeless.

The specific contribution of feminist organising around these issues has been to include - recognition of all women as the head of the households, make visible single women as heads of households, demanding decentralised procurement and distribution which affect a large number of women farmers universal food and nutrition security and resisting cash transfers in place of food. The legislation also guarantees universal maternity entitlements, which is one the most significant new measure in the legislation, for which the struggle to make it unconditional-restriction upto 2 child and age continue to be threatened by the population control lobbyists. **The struggle to get an explicit recognition of women's reproductive work and linking the maternity entitlements to wages** could have been strengthened by greater engagement of feminists. The paper seeks to reflect on where the larger feminist movement falls short of engaging on these issues and its implications for broad based feminist solidarity and organising within the context of the new globalised market economies.

WOMEN RESERVATION IN INDIA

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Women's reservation not only addresses the notion of descriptive representation but also substantial representation. It has been argued that reservation will bring about a critical mass of women into legislatures which will gradually change the nature of political behaviour, institutions and public policy that will radically transform legislatures.

The debate on women reservation in India goes way back to the colonial times. It has come a long way from being regarded as unequal. Today it is seen as a tool of empowerment for women. It has opened up a space for women in politics which was hitherto unknown. The

present study shall attempt to trace the trajectory of how the question of women reservation has been looked at from pre-independence days to right upto 1992, when the 72nd and 73rd Amendment Acts came into force. These Acts brought with them 33.3% reservation for women in rural and urban local bodies respectively, subsequently bringing a large mass of women into the folds of politics. The paper also attempts to look at how the Indian State has looked at women reservation within the ambit of women rights in India, by studying the three most important reports concerning women rights and status in independent India viz. **National Planning Committee Report on Women's Role in Planned Economy, 1947**; Committee on Status of Women in India, 1974; and; National Perspective Plan, 1988. Lastly the paper shall attempt to compare the participation of women in Parliament and State Assemblies with their participation. In rural local bodies, in order to show that reservation has been instrumental in enhancing the participation of women in decision making bodies. However, the paper ends on the cautionary note, that, political representation needs to be taken along with other factors to ensure effective political participation of women.

WOMEN'S HEALTH MOVEMENT AND POPULATION POLICY: AN EXPLORATION OF THE HISTORICAL ENGAGEMENT

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Health policy in India especially in the area of women's health has always tried to balance a thin line between target-driven population-control goals on the one hand, and issues of individual reproductive rights on the other. Over the decades various changes have occurred in relation to the population policies and reproductive rights issues of women. Even the semantics of the health policy was reminiscent of its agenda; it shifted from Family Planning then Family Welfare and then shifted to Safe Motherhood and Child Survival programme and then the Reproductive and Child Health programme. This was the result of the struggles of women's health movement in the country. According to C. Satyamala, "the women's health movement in post- independent India has its genesis in the 1980s as a coming together of different streams of consciousness". She describes one has been from the autonomous women's movement and the other stream was the liberal stream from the voluntary health sector.

In the early 1980s, the movement was at its peak with the issue of sharp increase in the use of sex selection and sex determination tests with use of reproductive technology. Another major issue raised by the feminist movement was the unethical introduction and testing of hazardous contraceptives on the Indian women. Over the decade there has been a continuous struggle to keep hazardous contraceptives off the family planning programme including Depo-Provera, Anti-Fertility Vaccine, EP drugs, Quinacrine and the latest in the list is emergency contraception. **The campaigns were brought together by groups working on health issues, women's issues, people science groups using different methods of advocacy and sustained media campaign. Another sustained campaign was against the 1992 two child norm policy recommended by the National**

Development Council's Committee on Population in 1992. Scholars have argued that the two child norm for elected representatives goes against the very ethos of the governments promises of bringing women, weaker sections and younger members in panchayat institutions. This paper examines the engagements of the women's health movement in India with the issue of population through a political process framework. Through this the paper examines the changes that have taken place within the women's movement and the population policies in the country. Then it finally concludes raising questions both on the women's movement and the population policy based on the data. The paper is based on my ongoing PhD work and will draw from the data collected for the same. It will largely draw and analyse from secondary sources and discussions attended related to the women's movement and the population related issues.

WOMEN'S MOVEMENT IN MANIPUR

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Women are the vital element of society. Today, they are not merely wives and mothers, but also leaders of our society and machineries of civilization. The position and status of women in any society is an index of the socio-economic and cultural achievement of that society. Education is a major instrument for raising the status of women. Nowadays, most of the women are coming forward to work in order to create a meaning for them or out of economic necessity. Women have become more achievement-oriented, career-minded and economically independent, they want to wider their sphere of work and enjoy achievement.

Women play a very important role in the social life of Manipur. Women participate in multifarious activities of socio-economic and political matters. In Manipur, the role of women in social movement can be traced back to the pre-British period when Manipur was under monarchical system. But women's movement emerged in an organised manner from the early part of the 20th century. Women's movement in Manipur is norm oriented type and connected with reformations. Social movements came into being as reaction to the discontent, dissatisfaction and contradiction in the then society of Manipur. One was in 1904, which was popularly known as the first "Nupilal'(women's war). It was against the unjust British administration. In 1925, a movement was launched by the women against the increase of the water tax rate. In this movement, the main leadership and participation was always from the side of the market women. The most significant positive result of their activities was that it renders a great help to the growth of political and national consciousness in the state. In 1939, Anisuba Nupi Lal, which translates as the Second Women's War and the chain of events commenced had all the characteristic of a Civil War. The excessive export of rice which culminated in a near famine situation kind let the fire to a population of discontented elements of feudal and colonial expression. In fact, much beyond the immediate cause of the movement there was deep rooted historical causes which erupted at the opportune movement of the history. The outbreak of women agitation was a turning point in the emergence of new trend of political and national consciousness in the state. In this paper, an attempt is made to analyse the role of the Manipuri

women in improving their socio-economic and political status and maintaining its traditional norms in the society.

WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS' ENGAGEMENT WITH POLICY: 'CHALLENGING THE ELEPHANTS' AND 'ENGAGING THE DEMONS' IN THE SOCIAL PROTECTION DISCOURSE

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Taking the specific example of the social protection discourse, this paper highlights that engagement with policy is not only about research and ideation, but is about entrenched power struggles. **'Social Protection Floor(s)', a significant outcome from global dialogues, is in a** perverse kind of way, also the acknowledgement of the failure of the dominant economic growth paradigm, which necessitates State obligation for addressing inequalities.

To start with, this paper highlights how the social protection discourse remains within a labour **framework, as workers' movements have been instrumental in shaping it. In India this is** reflected in the campaigns for the right to food, employment guarantee and pensions. I also highlight feminist attempts at engendering this discourse, such as the first ever consultation in **India (organised by the Programme for Women's Economic, Social and Cultural Rights)** that brought together various perspectives on social protection. Diverse players, through a rich process of learning, exchange, engagement and negotiation, brought to the fore issues like – identity and citizenship, substantive not formal equality, coexistence of human rights and empowerment approaches in policy, **recognition of all women as 'workers' and as individual** rights bearers, advocacy for universal but not uniform policy, freedom from violence as social protection, and the importance of feminist organising.

My reflections from being part of these processes is that the undercurrents of tension – between **the labour and feminist perspective, between people's movements and NGOs, between castes** and communities, between generations – **are all part of the 'elephants in the room', which we** have not debated enough. **I aver that even within progressive people's movements which have** found voice in planning, policymaking and data systems, feminist concerns have struggled to find a space, because of the prioritisation of larger strategic battles against globalisation – such as the question of whether food subsidies should be in cash or kind. Moreover, even feminist concerns that were adopted in policy – **such as the easing of women's care work by public** provisioning of school meals – were never articulated as feminist battles won. Rather, what got **celebrated was the 'policy win' of getting household Ration Cards in women's names, which** perhaps serves a practical purpose, but at a deeper level perpetuates women's so-called **'reproductive' roles without analysis.**

Finally, while recognising that 'social protection' itself is contested, I highlight efforts, challenges,

and opportunities for women's movements to claim and engender the social protection discourse for not only enhancing access to public services, but to also challenge structural issues such as the gendered division of labour. For the way forward, I draw upon the current feminist discourse on 'gender mainstreaming', where 'naming and challenging the elephants', as well as 'engaging the demons', are at the heart of strategising, feminist organising and movement-building.

**POLITICAL REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN: TRACING THE DEBATE ON
WOMEN DOMESTIC WORKERS' COLLECTIVIZATION IN WEST BENGAL:
POSSIBILITIES AND CHALLENGES**

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The dynamics change when a poor woman has a role reversal: from her own domesticity she **steps out to become a domestic worker in someone else's household. Domestic work is** considered as an important category of labour worldwide and India ratified the ILO (International Labour Organisation) Convention 189 in 2011. In the absence of any accepted statistical definition of domestic workers, various researchers, activists and policy-makers have conceptualized domestic service in different ways. Domestic work in India has a long history where men and women used to work at the households of the affluent. Domestic work is difficult to define because in common parlance it is an overarching term which includes any work required in a household which ranges from cooking, washing to baby care. Moreover due to societal gender stereotyping household is considered to be the domain of the female. Domestic work has a feminized workforce. Domestic labour operates mainly within the confines of home hence it is dispersed and fragmented; thereby making itself difficult to map and collectivize and it entails manifold problems, from labour rights to gendered nature of exploitation. The denial of basic labour rights to domestic workers has to be understood in a larger socio-political context. The gendered and class aspects of domestic work, combined with the general devaluation of **care work, explain the State's approach to the concerns and legislation on domestic workers.**

Gender, collectivization and informality are the three dimensions of this research. This research intends to probe whether there have been any efforts in West Bengal regarding the collective articulation of rights of domestic workers and whether it has any impacts unionisation. It also intends to probe the national and international legislations or conventions on domestic labour, including ILO(International Labour Organisation) Convention 189 as well as The Unorganized **Workers' Social Security Act, 2008, Domestic Workers' Social Security Act 2010, Sexual Harassment at Workplace Act 2012**, inclusion of domestic work under Minimum Wage Act by some states, and the extension of the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna scheme to cover domestic workers, providing them with health insurance But unionization of domestic workers is not discussed so much in all these conventions or legislations. States like Maharashtra Kerala, **Tamilnadu have taken initiatives regarding domestic workers' unionization and collective rights** and have set examples. Such initiatives will also be discussed and studied. Through these in-

depth studies the research would try to gauge the possibilities and challenges of collectivization of domestic workers in West Bengal. Some of the issues the paper hopes to raise include: the trade union movement and its stand on domestic workers, regional efforts at unionization of domestic workers and reasons for success or failure and the different national and international legislations and policies that impact or have the potential to impact the lives and livelihoods of domestic workers.

**"WE WERE NOT GETTING OUR RIGHTS AND FACILITIES AT THE RIGHT TIME":
UNDERSTANDING EVERYDAY ACTIVISM AMONG THE WOMEN WORKERS OF DOOARS
TEA PLANTATIONS**

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Much has been written about protests, feminist and otherwise, in India in which women activists have spearheaded social action and/or have been part of the protesting masses. But local protests are often not initiated by professional activists but outcome of local situations and people. Much of the literature on activism of women and other oppressed categories situates movements within organisations such as NGOs or social movement bodies with a clear set of aims if not ideology. These are usually not one-off protests but long drawn-out movements with regular meetings and events. While recognising the role of these organisations is important, however, what about those protests located outside the framework of organised protest movements? While understanding activism and its organisation is undoubtedly important, often not much sustained attention is paid to what we can term **'the activism of everyday life'**. These are protests which arise spontaneously usually outside the framework of an organised protest and organisations guiding it, from the realities of the everyday life and its meanings and boundaries, sometimes challenging the established hierarchies and norms but hardly every mounting a conscious critique against these. They are one-off, remain limited in their demands and reliant on actors of the everyday life to take them forward.

This paper explores such everyday forms of activism which are engaged in by women who do not identify themselves as activists. Drawing on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in a tea plantation in Dooars the paper explores women's activism and problematises the concept of movements that lie in the grey area between organised social movements and everyday invisible agency. The women who were in forefront of these protests are workers in the plantation, who **took the initiative to ameliorate their own and by extension their fellow worker's situation**. Through illustration of such protests it shows how the participating women in their performance of the protests often subvert certain everyday norms such as accessing official and public spaces, being aggressive, etc. But in acting these out the protestors frequently seek legitimacy through certain wider understandings of socially recognised gender roles such as motherhood or as victims of violence or violation. Even within these limits do these acts of spontaneous protest establish the protestors as political citizens? Do the protests remain confined to its material

demands or do they influence policies and ways of governance? Through such actions can they legitimately demand certain services from the state and its agencies? Do these protests challenge the very gender norms and roles within which the protesting women are often embedded and thus interrogate the very performance of gender itself? Finally do these protests succeed in carving out a space of reconfiguring prevailing marginalisation and forge new forms of political citizenship?

MICROFINANCE: RESCUING OR BETRAYING GENDER FROM THE POVERTY TRAP? CASE STUDIES OF THREE DISTRICTS IN WEST BENGAL

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Alleviation of poverty, the core of all developmental efforts has remained a very complex and critical goal for developing countries. Experience has shown that many of the poverty alleviation programmes have not achieved the expected success. In almost all plans for poverty alleviation and social change, disadvantaged women became a "target" in development activities rather than a group to be co-opted as active participants. Lack of capital is a serious constraint to the development of poor women in rural and urban areas who find little or no access to credit. Credit can help women to take-up farm and allied activities, enabling them to respond to the opportunities created by the process of development.

In the present context, microfinance is emerging as an instrument for poverty alleviation and an **important means for attaining women's empowerment. Its appeal is based on the widespread assumption that simply 'reaching the poor' with microcredit will automatically establish a sustainable economic and social development trajectory animated by the poor themselves.**

There exist broadly two very different systems for financial intermediation. One is Self-Help Group System and another one is Microfinance Institution System. To truly understand the complexity of the concept of gender– poverty trap and local economic and social development **policies and its relation with women's empowerment and role of Microfinance to address this intricacy**, the paper makes an effort to assess the benefits of microfinance through Self-Help **Group System on women's empowerment and role of Microfinance Institution System on the basis of primary survey undertaken in the districts of Coochbehar, Malda, North 24 Pargana in West Bengal across different social groups.**

It is unlikely that only one intervention such as the provision of credit only will completely alter power and gender relations. Women often value the non-economic benefits of a group lending programme that is SHG programme as much or more than the credit. Some of the most valued include expanded business and social networks, improved self-esteem, increased household decision-making power, and increased respect and prestige from both male and female relatives **and community members. When loans are channeled through women's groups and combined with more investment in social intermediation, substantial shifts in decision-making patterns do**

emerge.

At the same time this paper argues that Microfinance Institution Model may well generate some **positive short run outcomes for a lucky few of the 'entrepreneurial poor', the longer run aggregate development outcome very much remains moot.** Microfinance may ultimately constitute a new and very powerful institutional barrier to sustainable local economic and social development, and thus also to sustainable poverty reduction. This paper may suggest that the current drive to establish the central role of microfinance in development policy cannot be divorced from its supreme serviceability to the neoliberal agenda. In this regard, this research paper also makes an effort to compare the role of microfinance channelized through self Help Groups and Microfinance Institution on women's empowerment and poverty reduction.

WOMEN'S ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT IN KARNATAKA: FOCUSING ON SELF-HELP GROUPS AND NGOS

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Women's empowerment means that women have the power to choose their decision freely and decide their lives according to the decision. Among many areas of women's empowerment, it is very important for women to gain economic power and independence. Improving economic empowerment effects on women's ability to make decision, increasing of self-confidence and better status in inside and outside household.

Women's status in India is poor due to social and religious traditions, and they have weak power to control their lives because of their lack of economic empowerment. In this respect, there are appraisalment that microfinance in India leads to economic empowerment through not only satisfying financial needs of the rural poor women but strengthening collective self help capacities of the poor. Therefore, I will examine movement for female economic development specially focused on microfinance emerging as influential organization that can settle poverty among many ways to lead women's economic empowerment.

The women of the southern India, which includes Karnataka, are evaluated to have more independence than the northern India, and the attitude toward women is taken to be more **friendly as well. For that reason, I would like to explore the situation of women's economic empowerment in Karnataka among other states.**

The presentation would be divided into three parts. The first section will examine how microfinance has recognized as a strategy for economic empowerment of women. Therefore, the following will be inspected the definition of microfinance and the impact of microfinance with respect to poverty alleviation and economic empowerment of poor rural women. In the second part, the role of self-help group (SHG) and NGO as microfinance facilitator will be treated. Rapid

expansion of SHG formation has been now considered as economic empowerment movement among women across the country because its operations are closely related to microfinancing programme. Therefore, this part will focus on the definition of self-help group (SHG) and the practice of SHG and NGO as microfinance facilitator. Lastly, I want to provide the impact of SHG and NGO as microfinance facilitator. The influence of the economic empowerment of women as **the microfinance facilitator of SHG and NGO will be based on Sabhlok's study.** The study of Sabhlok shows the result of field study of Kolar of Karnataka and Sonipat of Haryana regions, and it can be seen as comparing NGOs in Karnataka and Haryana regions. Therefore, this section will discuss the operation result of NGO and SHG in Kolar region of Karnataka.

WOMEN'S MOVEMENT'S ENGAGEMENT WITH POLICY- ARUNACHAL

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Gender discrimination is universal and knows no boundaries. However, because gender is a social construct, discrimination against women and girls varies from country to country and **within different religions and cultures.** Tackling gender discrimination requires women's full, equal political participation; their social and economic empowerment; sexual and reproductive healthcare and rights; equal access to education and justice; and security, including from all forms sexual and gender-based violence. Multi-sector initiatives that include protection, educational support, livelihood activities, legislative implementation and healthcare have proved successful and should be scaled up. Some of these will have an immediate effect, while others will require long-term investment.

Arunachal Pradesh is a land of ethnic diversity with 26 major tribes and more than 100 sub-tribes, where female population comprises 48% of total population of the state. Though strategically very important, it is one of the most backward states in the country in the traditional sense of economic parameters. The long isolation and separation from mainstream of the country, posed formidable problems to the socio-economic development of the state. The welfare and development measures need to be directed towards empowering the socially disadvantaged groups especially women. Across all the districts and the State, the gender gap in literacy is apparent. As late as the year 2001, there is a difference of more than 20 percentage points between male and female literacy rates. Seven districts (West Kameng, Papum Pare, Lower Subansiri, West Siang, East Siang, Lower Dibang Valley, and Lohit) have higher literacy rates for women than the State average. However, in Kurung Kumey district, only one out of six **women is literate (female literacy is at 17.45 per cent).** Women's literacy in Tawang, East Kameng, Kurung Kumey, Lower Subansiri, Upper Subansiri, Upper Siang, Dibang Valley (New), Changlang, and Tirap are all below the State average (43.53 per cent). As per 2011 Provisional Census literacy rate of the state increased to 66.95 percent which when segregated 73.69 percent is of male population and for women is 59.57 percent.

Many a different policies are initiated by government targeting women but most of the women **especially rural populace is not aware of government's policies and** programmes. Thus along with announcement and initiation of policies there is dire need that those schemes be augmented with proper awareness to the stakeholders. A state where patriarchy had been the dominant factor in socio-economic life of the society since **ancient period, Women's groups, activists and** scholars can be partners to initiatives in development programmes targeting women. For proper **percolation of government's initiation through launching of programmes and schemes, Women's** groups and organizations can be more vocal to create stages for awareness and should participate more for sensitization and formulation of policies for positive intervention by the **government. This paper will look into works and initiation of various women's groups prevalent** in the state initiating the stage for proper implementation of government policies for women.

