



Newsletter

Indian Association for Women's Studies (IAWS) • January 2012 • Volume II, No. 8

Contents

Editor's Note

Editorial	1
Election Results	3
New EC / Office Bearers	3
IAWS XIII National Conference Reports	6
• Plenaries	7
• The Sub Theme Reports	10
• Features and Events	17
• GBM Resolutions	18
Research in Progress	20
Book News	24

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Due to some unforeseen circumstances this issue of the Newsletter, the last one to be published from Chennai, got unduly delayed and my sincere apologies. This issue is a special issue on the XIIIth National Conference of the IAWS held in Wardha (January, 20-24 2011).

The Conference was attended by 1200 participants including 300 local participants comprising mainly of students, staff and volunteers from the Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtria Hindi Viswavidyalaya (MGAHV), Wardha. Participants included scholars, students and activists from various parts of India and also some international participants.

About 270 papers were presented in ten sub-theme sessions that were held as parallel sessions. The plenary as well as the cultural programmes were well-attended with lively discussions. The sheer number of papers presented and lively discussions in each session along with the enthusiasm and commitment of the student volunteers and participants ensured the success of the conference. It was also a memorable conference in the sense that the participants directly witnessed the power of the state to crush popular movements and its resistance politics.

During the Conference the organisers and some participants were intimidated and harassed by the Maharashtra Anti-terrorism squad. IAWS strongly resisted and protested this highhandedness of the state (see, *Economic and Political Weekly*, Vol XLVI, no.5, January 29,2011).

In this issue we carry a detailed report on the proceedings of the conference along with resolutions

passed at the General Body Meeting of IAWS held on 24th January 2011. Some photographs of the conference are also included.

In addition, in this issue we carry the regular book news and a research scholar's contribution of her research in progress.

The election to the Executive Committee of IAWS was held in October 2011 with an unprecedented response from the members. While 30 members were nominated 21 among them consented to stand for the election. This issue warmly welcomes the elected new EC (2011-2014) members. Details of the EC members and their profiles are provided in this issue. Dr.Meera Velayudan has assumed the responsibility as editor of the newsletter and henceforth members are requested to send queries and inputs for the newsletter to her address in Ahmedabad (C-22, Amaltas Appt.,B/H Fun Republic Cinema, Satellite, Ahmedabad 380015, Gujarat). The outgoing EC would like to take this opportunity to

thank each and every member for their support and co-operation in carrying out various activities of IAWS. We are happy to note that during this period (2008-2011) 320 new members have joined the IAWS of which 215 are life members.

Editing the newsletter has been a rewarding experience for me as I received support and encouragement from both within the IAWS EC as well as from other friends especially from the members of the editorial committee. My sincere thanks to all of them. There were several lapses in bringing out the newsletter on time and especially in posting them. The non-receipt of the newsletter and the escalating postage costs continue to be problems that require immediate attention. As a way of suggestion, I request the members to furnish details of your current postal and email addresses to the present editor (Dr.Meera Velayudan) and indicate if you wish to receive a hard copy of the newsletter by post.

S.Anandhi, anandhister@gmail.com

THE INDIAN ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN'S STUDIES (IAWS)

SUBSCRIPTION

The subscription for different Membership categories is as follows:

	<u>Ordinary</u>	<u>Life</u>
Individual	Rs.700/- for 3 years	Rs.1,500/-
Institutional	Rs.5,000/- for 3 years	Rs.10,000/-
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- The ordinary/student memberships run from 1st April of year one to 31st March of year three.
- Members having a current ordinary membership may upgrade this to life membership by paying the difference of Rs.800 and filling-in a new form.
- Subscription must be made out to the 'Indian Association for Women's Studies' through a Money Order/ Demand Draft (or a cheque payable at par in Mysore).
- Please ensure that the Membership form is completed in all respects and that it is sent to the following address: **Nandini Manjrekar**, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Post Box : 0313, Deonar, Mumbai - 400 088. Email: nandini@tiss.edu

IAWS

The New EC - 2011-2014

President	:	Ilina Sen
Vice President	:	Ritu Dewan
General Secretary	:	Indu Agnihotri
Joint Secretary	:	Kumkum Roy
Treasurer	:	Nandini Manjrekar
Editor	:	Meera Velayudan

Regional Co-ordinators



Western Region	:	Chhaya Datar & Nandini Manjrekar
Eastern Region	:	Samita Sen (Ex-officio, Former General Secretary, IAWS)
Central Region	:	Ilina Sen
Northern Region	:	Kumkum Roy
Southern Region	:	Shaila Desouza

Life members Elected

☞ **CHHAYA DATAR** (Mumbai) chhayadatar@vsnl.net

Chhaya Datar is located as professor at the Centre for Women's Studies, Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. Although academic by profession, her real passion is working with women at the grassroots in rural areas. Her focus is on creating women's rights over land and water, for livelihood assurance. Her career profile spans from being a housewife to embarking on feminist activism and then continuing to be fervent promoter of women's studies in the Indian Universities. Grounding for her feminist activism was paved when she became one of the founding members for 'Forum Against Rape' and 'StreeMuktiSanghatana'. Her interest in the rural development arose with her deep awareness of environmental destruction and need to follow ecological principles while pursuing development agenda.

☞ **ILINA SEN** (Wardha) sen.ilina@gmail.com

Professor of Women's Studies, Mahatma Gandhi Antarrashtriya Hindi Vishwavidyalaya, Wardha, Ilina did her PhD at JNU on the Declining Sex Ratio in India. She has been researcher/ consultant with CWDS, UNICEF, Action Aid and UNDP. Active in several NGOs and committees to formulate or review state policy on issues of gender, education and population in MP and Chattisgarh, she has also been working, since 1991, with Rupantar, a Research and Study Centre at Raipur, on primary education, sustainable development and gender. Author of 'A Space Within the Struggle': Women's Participation in People's Movements. (edited) and Sukhvasin: Migrant Women of Chhattisgarh, she has also compiled two reports on Chattisgarh, on women and globalization and a status study respectively, for the NCW.

☞ **INDU AGNIHOTRI** (New Delhi) indu@cwds.ac.in

Indu Agnihotri is Senior fellow and deputy Director at the Centre for Women's Development Studies (CWDS), New Delhi. She has taught history in Vivekanand College, University of Delhi. She completed her doctoral research in Economic History from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Since the 1990s she has been facilitating the teaching of women's studies which includes developing of UGC sponsored refresher course in Women's Studies, syllabi for post graduate and M.Phil in women's studies and the short term courses conducted by CWDS. Since 1970s she is associated with the women's movement and founded the All India Democratic Women's Association (AIDWA) in Delhi. Indu has published several research papers in books and journals and also popular articles. At present she is involved in a countrywide research study on Gender and Migration.

☞ **RITU DEWAN** (Mumbai) dewan.ritu@gmail.com

Ritu Dewan heads the Centre for Gender Economics in the Department of Economics, University of Mumbai. She has over 70 publications, including 20 books and monographs, encompassing a wide range of issues including Gender Studies, Development Economics, Labour Markets, Environmental Displacement, Peace Studies, etc. Prof. Dewan was a member of the Feminist Economists' Group for Engendering the 11th Five Year Plan appointed by the Planning Commission, Government of India, and is currently also a member of the Planning Commission sub-group on 'Gender and Macro-policies' for the 12th Five-Year Plan. She is a Consultant with the UNDP, Government of Maharashtra, etc. Her research focus is generally the result of the demands of several on-going movements.

☞ **KUMKUMROY** (New Delhi)

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Kumkum Roy studied History at Presidency College, Kolkata and at the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She has been teaching History since 1983 and is presently at the Centre for Historical Studies. Her thesis *The Emergence of Monarchy in North India*, explored the linkages between changing gender and kinship relations and state formation. Her other publications include an edited volume titled *Women in Early Indian Societies* (1999,

New Delhi, Manohar), and, more recently, an anthology of essays, *The Power of Gender and the Gender of Power* (2010, New Delhi, Oxford University Press). Her areas of interest include histories of social and political institutions, and mainstreaming gender within existing disciplines. She has also been engaged in pedagogical discussions, especially related to the teaching of history at all levels, from the school to the university. Currently, she is honorary director, Women's Studies Programme, Jawaharlal Nehru University.

☞ **MEERA VELAYUDHAN** (Ahmedabad)

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Currently Senior Analyst, Gender & Culture, Centre for Environment & Social Concerns, Ahmedabad, Meera has a PhD in History. Focusing on strategies of organisation of women, her major work includes an ILO study on women workers struggles and structural changes in the coir industry in Kerala, an ICES (Colombo) South Asia study on 'Re-imagining the state: Gender and governance'. Her current focus is on policy analysis on women's land rights. Meera is a member of the Working Group on Women & Land Ownership and has earlier worked with ICSSR (Women's Unit), Centre For Women's Development Studies, UNICEF and Gender Resource Centre. Her publications are in the areas of women's struggles, law & gendered identity, engendering the planning process, women's land rights. She has been a member of IAWS since its inception.

☞ **NANDINI MANJREKAR** (Mumbai)

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Nandini Manjrekar has a MSc in Pure Mathematics from the University of Mumbai. An interest in examining education led to engaging with it as a discipline, and she went on to do a MPhil and PhD in Education from the Centre of Advanced Studies in Education, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. Her research attempts to bring feminist perspectives to the study of education and her research interests include sociology of education, gender and schooling and critical curriculum studies. From 1996-2006, she was on the faculty of the Women's Studies Research Centre, Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda. From 2006 she has been at the Centre for Studies in Sociology of Education, Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai, where she is currently Associate Professor. At TISS, she

teaches courses in sociology of education, gender and education, and ethnography to Masters students in Education, Media Studies and Women's Studies. She is on the academic advisory board of the Women's Studies Department, National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), New Delhi.

☞ **SHAILA DESOUZA** (Goa) shailagoa@yahoo.com

Shaila Desouza has been working in the area of Women's Studies for the past 20 years, during which she has been involved in research, extension work and teaching. She has received formal training in Fine Arts (from Madras University) and Social Work (from Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai). Her PhD also from TISS was on Organising Women for Empowerment. Shaila Desouza has been the recipient of the Women and Development Award 2000 - 2001 from the Simone de Beauvoir Institute in Montreal Canada and was a Fellow at the Salzburg Seminar 2006, Austria. She has several international and national publications to her credit on women's issues particularly relating to health, development, violence and empowerment. Shaila is the editor of a book titled 'Women's Health in Goa: A Holistic Approach'. She has served on the advisory boards of several Government initiatives for women, as well as NGOs working for women and children.

Institutional Category

SNDT Women's University, Mumbai

☞ **VEENA POONACHA** (Mumbai)
veena_poonacha@yahoo.co.uk

Veena Poonacha represents the SNDT Women's University in the Institutional Member category. The SNDT Women's University, Mumbai, has the distinction of having pioneered the entry of women's studies in the University system and the establishment of the Indian Association of Women's Studies. She is currently Professor and Director of the Research Centre for Women Studies (RCWS), the Hon. Director of the Centre for Rural Development (CRD) and Project Director for the Avabai Wadia Archives for Women in the SNDT Women's University. She was the General Secretary of the IAWS from 2002-2005, a member of Task Force on Micro Finance for Maharashtra in 2009, and is currently the gender specialist for the Tejaswini Project of the Mahila Arthik Vikas Mahamandal, to promote Self Help Groups in Maharashtra. Dr. Poonacha's research interests have been very varied. Apart from her personal interest in social history and research methodology, she has undertaken research on varied subjects for national and international agencies.

Books on Women's Question

**Bharat Ratna
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar
& Women's Question**

Compiled & edited by
Lalitha Dhara

**Phules &
Women's Question**

Compiled & edited by
Lalitha Dhara

**Chhatrapati Shahu &
Women's Question**

Compiled & edited by
Lalitha Dhara

**Kavya Phule by Savitri
Jotiba Phule**

Translated into English by
Ujjwala Mhatre
Editor : *Lalitha Dhara*

Each book costs between Rs. 45\ - to Rs. 65\ -

Contact no. : **Lalitha Dhara - 981 9683 940**, Email : **lalid02@yahoo.com**.

**XIIIth National Conference of the
Indian Association for Women's Studies, Wardha
January 21-24, 2011.**

**Resisting Marginalisation, Challenging Hegemonies:
Re-visioning Gender Politics**

One of the important objectives of the XIIIth IAWS conference held in Wardha between January 21-24, 2011 was to engage the women's movement and women's organisations in meaningful dialogues in order to articulate, analyse, understand and seek answers to the struggles and movements of dalits, tribals and women for some kind of equitable society. The objective of the conference was to interrelate, collaborate, create coalitions, and seek to challenge hierarchies and divisions in our theoretical understanding as well as in dealing with practical matters. The plenary and subtheme sessions at this Conference were attuned to understanding marginalisation and hegemony and the ways in which women and other marginalised groups are offering powerful resistance to the social, economic and political processes underway. Thus the need was to explore how intersecting systems of oppression may create new conversations and further perhaps new political configurations. These issues have been foregrounded through the special panels on South Asia and on the local situation, in this case, Central India, apart from sessions on marginalised knowledges of dalit, adivasi/ tribal and minority women.

Through its plenary panels and sub-themes, the organisers of this Conference invited participants to focus on a contemporary gender politics that captures the resistances and challenges that come from the margins. The subthemes of the conference have highlighted the trajectories such as state, natural resources, labour, body, markets, culture and ideology, conflict, language, sites of law, boundaries of relationships and the interfaces of these arenas.

There were four plenary sessions addressing issues of marginalisation, mobilisation, resistance and challenges and ten subtheme sessions in addition to the Madhuri Shah Memorial Lecture, the presidential address, a felicitation session and cultural programme. A significant addition to these was the pre-conference workshop for students on

women's studies pedagogy, curriculum and on sharing experiences and concerns.

Participation

The ten sub-theme sessions saw around 270 papers being presented in parallel sessions conducted on three days of the conference. One of the indicators of success of the conference has been the widespread participation in the conference with a total registration around 750 participants, with 500 outstation and 250 local participants. This included around 400 student participants. The participants came from different parts of the country, including the states of Jammu & Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, Orissa, Assam, Meghalaya, Manipur and Goa that need special mention. We had international participants as well with three speakers invited from Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka for the South-Asia Plenary. Around 6 students who were foreign nationals and were studying in Indian universities also attended the conference. In addition to registered participants, we had around 400 local participants from colleges, universities and NGOs at Wardha and its neighbouring locations, who attended the various sessions and cultural programmes in the conference. The final total, including volunteers and participants from the host University, was 1200 on the first three days.

Pre-Conference Students Workshop

About 250 students from different states including Delhi, Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Maharashtra and Pondicherry attended this workshop. The student participants saw gender/ women's studies as one of the outcomes of the women's movement. They stressed that more struggles have to be conducted within educational institutions to start women's studies centres and courses within disciplines and also for starting gender studies courses at postgraduate and higher levels. They discussed their varied experiences of how women's studies courses were conducted in educational institutions.

PLENARIES

PLENARY I

Marginalisations and Feminist Concerns: Resistances and Challenges

This plenary on Marginalisation and Feminist Concerns highlighted issues of marginalisation, especially with reference to gender politics with an emphasis on resistances and challenges emerging from the margins. The three speakers- Dayamani Barla, Jameela Nishat and Chayanika Shah- spoke on their understanding of marginalisation, violence and exploitation and explored the challenges faced by feminist politics. Dayamani Barla, an activist and journalist from Jharkhand voiced the collective exploitation suffered by the adivasis. She spoke about the struggles experienced by the adivasis due to displacement, rampant corruption, and environmental degradation caused by exploitation of natural resources. Part of her lecture was a personal narrative of her struggle for survival, for recognition as a journalist, and her experiences as an activist. Sharing the Jharkhand experience of state exploitation of local wealth and resources she urged the audience to critically engage with issues of development and who benefits from these. Jameela Nishat, the Hyderabad-based poet and activist who is a member of Shaheen, a women's organisation shared the experiences of marginalisation of the muslim women within the community and in the development processes. Jameela spoke about how Muslim women suffer in silence the indignity of multiple marriages of their husbands. In terms of equity, Muslim women remain deprived of opportunities that are otherwise available to others through economic development. The sense of inequity is not just one relating to perception but a result of discrimination. The sexual exploitation, lack of economic opportunities and communal tensions affect the muslim women in specific ways and they have no control over such exploitative conditions. Speaking in an introspective mode, Chayanika urged the feminists to relook at their own privileges that are perceived as natural and normal which inhere with and lead to several sets of marginalisations. She provided examples of disabled women's inability to access communities for lack of mobility, the possibilities of sex workers' communities being excommunicated and the lesbian or bi sexual communities being invisibilised or disallowed. She also pointed out how these awareness might pose challenge to feminist politics and epistemologies. Further she highlighted some of the contradictions and challenges faced by the women's movement in addressing issues such as the Sex selective abortions, domestic violence, conceptualising family, the embodied nature of marginalisation and the feminist critique of technology and

They also spoke about the impact of women's studies on students as well as on main disciplines. The social composition of students has undergone a change with students from diverse backgrounds joining the course in recent times. Some students felt that women 's studies was not just a question of equality of sexes but also an issue of human rights. The students felt the need to develop theories which was in tune with current realities and challenges. They also expressed concerns about marginalisation of the women's studies within social sciences and also in the job market. There were also discussions around issues of paucity of teachers to teach women's studies despite the availability of qualified teachers.

IAWS Presidential Address

In her inaugural address, the IAWS President, Dr. Anita Ghai, emphasised the need to address the deep structural inequalities experienced by many marginalised groups. Dr. Ghai admitted that feminist ways of knowing always involve uncomfortable political questions about the sexual division of roles, power, subordination, gender and patriarchy and there are uncertainties and despair. However, women have no other option but to reflect on the sense of apprehension that is now universal in this perverse era of neo-liberalism and to challenge its hegemony. Dr. Ghai ended her inaugural address by quoting bell hooks, "Hope is essential to any political struggle for radical change when the overall social climate promotes disillusionment and despair."

Madhuri Shah Memorial Lecture

The Madhuri Shah Memorial Lecture was delivered by the noted dalit writer and former professor of Sanskrit, Kumud Pawde. Calling herself a common person/ woman/ writer, she said that all constitutional principles of equality for the common people and, women in particular, had been violated if not crushed, particularly with the onset of liberalisation in the 1990s. The reality is even more disturbing for the rural masses as their rights are being infringed upon in multiple forms. Pawde described how the majority of women had not been a part of the formal process when laws for women were being framed. She pointed out that in the slums, even today, women are considered to be in a paap janma, born subordinates. This is despite the fact that they contribute significantly to their households. In her concluding remarks Pawde emphasised the need for women's studies to engage with these multiple realities and focus on intersectionalities. Further she Pawde drew inspiration from Buddhist philosophy and emphasised the importance of research to eliminate violence from society and to help create a peaceful environment.

body. Pointing out how scripts of marginalisation are written on the body she urged the audience to question some of our 'natural' assumptions related to the issues of sex work and reproductive labour, especially with regard to commercial surrogacy.

PLENARY II

Writing Resistance: Feminist Engagements in South Asia

In the South Asia Plenary on "Writing Resistance: Feminist Engagements in South Asia", three feminist writers, Zaheda Hina from Pakistan, Shaheen Akhtar from Bangladesh and Najeefa Rooby (Penniya) from Sri Lanka, spoke about the contexts of their writings and then read from a selected text to a rapt audience. Listeners were led into multiple journeys, in three different languages, which was also a first-ever occasion in an IAWS conference. The large and attentive audience heard the nuances of languages they were otherwise excluded from and then proceeded to grasp the meaning of the texts in translation. The range of themes chosen by the writers made for a moving experience as Zaheda first spoke about how she became a writer after she accompanied her mother on her first visit to her home in Bihar. Shaheen described the way her work at documenting the lives of women ravaged by the war of liberation led her to write a novel in which women turned the searchlight on the men who led the war and then left the women they had titled biranganas to be cast away from national attention while they went on to wheel and deal in the new political system. Using a powerful feminist lens, Shaheen told the tragic story of what happens to women when the wars are over. Peniya spoke about her experience of finding a voice for herself as a Tamil Muslim woman from Sri Lanka through a number of poems dealing with kitchen, domesticity and the search for creative identity. She began her writing unaware of the society and world at large with its immeasurable problems. But slowly she began questioning things in her immediate surroundings and went on to explore other questions in the world outside and which began to be reflected in her writing. A more lasting experience was made possible through the rush for translated copies of Zaheda Hina and Shaheen Akhtar's works which were in a sense 'released' at the Wardha conference. The works were being sold at the book exhibition next door to the main marquee where the plenary was held.

The South Asia plenary session ended with a stunning performance by Ojas titled "Le Mashale" on Irom Sharmila's unprecedented 10-year-long hunger strike for the lifting of the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (Afspa) from Manipur. Using a minimum of props, poetry

and newspaper reports, Ojas recreated for us the indomitable spirit of Irom Sharmila as she lives out her lonely existence in a hospital room in Imphal where she is being force-fed by the government to keep her alive, while they decide what to do with the Afspa.

PLENARY III

Challenges Facing Women in Central India

The first part of this plenary was a felicitation for five older women from the region who had played a major role in taking forward women's issues and their participation in public life. The histories of the individual women, and their contributions were briefly recollected and the felicitation was done by Pushpa Bhave a veteran activist and academician from Maharashtra. Those felicitated were Malti Ruikar, from the workers' movement in Vidarbha and Mahakoshal; Leela Chitale, freedom fighter and women's rights activist; Suman Bang, close associate of M.K. Gandhi; Nalini Ladke, Amravati's firebrand grandmother; and Seema Sakhare, whose decades-long fight has been in opposition to violence against women in Nagpur and Central India. Ilina Sen was also remembered by friends and well wishers. The second part of the programme was the more detailed sharing of the experiences of some of the remarkable women who have taken forward the challenges faced by women in this region. Saroj Kashikar, leader of the farmers' movement and former MLA from the Pulgaon-Deoli assembly constituency in Wardha District, spoke of women's participation in the farmers' movement. She recalled that she began her work with the limited mandate of mobilising women, but quickly realised that unless women had access to secure political spaces, it would be difficult to mobilise farmers in general for political purposes. Usha Mishra recalled the struggles of women workers and traced the decline of the cotton mills and the coming of ancillary engineering industries in the various industrial estates of Vidarbha in which women found employment in most insecure of positions. She recalled the widespread prevalence of the contractual system, of the automated work units, and how this defeated any access that women might have had to legal redress. Shubhada Deshmukh spoke of the health and livelihood situation of adivasi women from Vidarbha and Chhattisgarh. She highlighted the neglect of the adivasi areas, the preponderance of tendu patta and other forest-produce collection as practically the only sources of money income, of rampant malnutrition, nonexistent health and maternity facilities, wasted lives, and the ongoing conflict in the region. Concluding the session, Ilina Sen spoke of the way in which the Central Indian region was home to major mineral and forest resources, and of the way the state's development priorities in the region were centred

on extraction of these resources, by way of which people were denied access to even common-property resources that enabled them to survive in these conditions.

PLENARY IV

Engendering Youth: Agency, Mobilisation, Resistance

This was the first time that IAWS had organised a Youth Plenary in its national conference. This plenary had four young people in their early careers as media activists, or part of women's organisations, and in doctoral research. Samhita Barooah spoke of her association with the North East Network, a women's organisation working in the North East trying to involve women in creating alternative peace processes. Priyanka Bodpajari, working as a freelance journalist narrated her experiences of listening to the life stories of women in conflict-ridden situations of Kalinganagar and Dantewada where women's bodies became sites of violence. Kamaladevi raised questions about the essence of democratic principles in our country through historically locating Irom Sharmila and her non-violent resistance to the Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act. Karuna spoke about the intergenerational differences and patterns of engaging with the social movements of one's times, and the urgent need for more dialogue between actors in the women's movement and those in other people's movements, more so in contemporary times. The call for combining newer methods of protests, together with 'going back to the streets' and raising issues cutting across margins, were raised by most of the speakers. The youth plenary, worked out to be a good index of the continuing engagement of younger women with movements even as we sometimes bemoan the disappearance of the women's movement from street-based actions.

Panel Discussion

Reviewing Pedagogy and Themes in Contemporary Women's Studies

This panel discussion was specially organized as a need was felt to create a forum where concerns germane to Women's Studies could be expressed. Issues of both pedagogy and epistemology have been confronting the discipline over the last decade and were at the forefront in the last conference at Lucknow too. An almost existentialist crisis seems to be hovering between the needs for the standardisation of pedagogical practices and the constant innovation required in the creation of new episteme through engagement with the diversity of social movements and practices in the rapidly changing social environment in India. Sharmila Rege highlighted the problems of definition of the field where, despite the UGC

initiatives in promoting and financing new centres, the most interesting work in Women's Studies has actually come from outside the established pedagogical centres. The disconnect between curricula of various centres, their lack of engagement with feminist scholarship, the nostalgia of the liberal feminists, were pointed out as areas of concern, but she also hastened to add that the so-called disciplinary crisis was also an opportunity for investing in the discipline and exploring collaborative teaching strategies and creating new methodologies.

Jayashree spoke of the recent UGC initiative to frame a pan-Indian 'model' of Women's Studies curriculum which led to a massive review of the actual curricula taught. She along with others who were a part of this initiative found a glaring discrepancy in the standards and work of the metropolitan centres and those in small towns. Kavita Srivastava spoke of her journey in Women's Studies as a trajectory that moved away from academics into activism; for she felt that it was only when women created experiential platforms of their own could they begin framing new questions and connect their immediate concerns with the larger world. Susie Tharu disagreed with Kavita's binary polarisation of the issues of activism and academics that favoured the former. She insisted that though the two were different, they were deeply connected and actually it was very important to create a space for scholarship for a reflective development of the discipline. The insipidity in Women's Studies that the earlier participants had noted was because academic investment in the required scholarship was not taking place. She strongly felt that a sense of critique was missing from the discipline. In its place, a depressing piling up of data at the expense of subjectively located knowledge was coming to pass. She felt that the need of the hour was to develop a critical, subjective energy which was rigorous and passionate at the same time. Indu Agnihotri was not critical of what had been achieved by Women's Studies so far and felt that for her there was no disjunction between academics and activism. The Women's Movement had created the 'space' for reflecting on women's issues and from the beginning she had felt that there was an almost symbiotic link between the movement and academics. This link, she admitted, was now weakening however. She felt that the discipline was not engaging with the deeper linkages between marginalisation and globalisation and the new courses did not contextualise the history of the movement. The panellists' diverse views generated a lively discussion on the challenges confronting Women's Studies today. Questions ranged from the choice of careers Women's Studies offered to research methodologies to be adopted.

THE SUB-THEME REPORTS

The sub-theme sessions were conducted as parallel sessions on the first three days of the conference. The ten subthemes of the conference have highlighted the trajectories such as state, natural resources, labour, body, markets, culture and ideology, conflict, language, sites of law, boundaries of relationships and the interfaces of these arenas.

SUB-THEME 1: CONTROLLING RESOURCES: THE POLITICS OF EXCLUSION

This sub-theme session began with a critical assessment of India's progress on the millennium-development goals and emphasised the worsening of conditions of existence for large sections of the country which constitute the 'not-shining' 75 per cent of India. Very little attention has been paid to disparities based on caste, class, ethnicity, occupation, migrant status and religion. Indicators like skewed sex ratio, anaemic conditions of women and girls, and the lack of places of worship or burial ground for dalits are not included in our measures, sharpening the politics of exclusion across the country. State interventions, like encroachment upon common land and the new mining policy of India, were discussed in an engaged manner.

The papers presented in this sub-theme raised concerns about the neo-liberal agricultural policies and its adverse impact on women's employment and access to natural resources, the development policies that are consolidating caste and patriarchy as in the case of Nagaland, as in the case of exploitation of tribal women by the non-tribal men in Attapady, Kerala and the exclusion of urban poor especially from public health resources and so on. The continuing prevalence of customary laws that exclude women from equal rights to land and other property, marginalisation of women in the intra-household power-sharing and in the forest management were highlighted. Presentations also highlighted the resistant politics of the queer movement and also critically looked at the politics of exclusions within various movements. Women's participation in mass struggles and its impact on women's everyday lives were also critically analysed. Women in Singur and Nandigram fought valiantly against land acquisition as they intuitively understood that their livelihoods and survival were at stake. However, they are disillusioned after the struggles. Women, in any case, have seldom



been a part of the decision-making bodies. The question whether patriarchy is replicating itself in these resistance movements was discussed. Discussions under this sub-theme raised issues related to the nature and extent of women's role in both production and social reproduction; the conditions of displaced people, the future of Chapter XVI, Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code- whether and how the struggles challenging hetero normativity should be pushed forward; the role of the mass movements in transforming these conditions and the need for questioning both the feminist theory and praxis.

SUB-THEME 2: CONFLICTS AND RESISTANCES: CHALLENGES BEFORE THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

The emergence of different women's political fronts in Bihar, especially All India Progressive Women's Association (AIPWA) and Indian People's Front, Naxalites and the JP movement, was discussed in the sessions. The presentation on the tribal women's leadership in the anti-displacement movements in Jharkhand elaborated on the significance of women's role in these movements. This paper elaborated on the processes of women's collectivisation in opposing the acquisition of land for corporate sector and how they built solidarity with groups in Chattisgarh and Odissa.

Their involvement in politicizing the panchayats towards a subaltern perspectives and needs that were hitherto absent and the challenges faced by them were also discussed. One of the papers focussed on the concerns of single women in particular as the self-help groups, government and World-Bank programmes have completely ignored their concerns. Thus, there has been a conscious attempt of organising single women from Rajasthan and other states under the banner of National Forum for Single Women's Rights. A paper on caste-based private armies in Bihar and the violence faced by



dalit women highlighted how women resisted these by joining the naxalite movement and thus renegotiated their powerlessness. Through the narration of the Khairlanji case another paper critically reviewed dalit feminism and left politics. The presentation on the Khalistan movement critically analysed women's role and identity in this movement and concluded that women were either represented as victims or martyrs or pious caretakers of their menfolk.

The paper on Muslim women's leadership narrated how the Muslim women have come into the public fora in contemporary times via non-confrontationist and constructive approach, drawing in the men of the community, including the clerics and how this has helped construct the pluralistic, non-hierarchical image of the Muslim women to counter Islamisation and ghettoisation. Another presentation cited extensively from the CPI(M) documents to state that though there have been attempts by the party to look at gender inequality within, they have been unable to restructure the party to create spaces for women. One of the papers explored links between armed conflict and domestic violence. It was emphasised that sexual violence in war is a heightened form of violence against women. The cases of Jammu and Kashmir and Manipur were discussed extensively. The paper presenter raised some questions about how to differentiate between domestic violence in situations of armed conflict and in peace time and the differences in the kinds of intervention made by women's movement. How do women's movements engage with violence against women in general and violence against women during armed conflicts?

SUB-THEME 3: SITES OF JUSTICE

This sub-theme looked at the different sites of justice to understand how the facts and evidence that
IAWS Newsletter January 2012

underwrite judgements are gender-biased and how the patriarchal, heteronormative and casteist attitudes affect the final decision. The presentations noted the concerns of the women's movement and their impact on policy and laws, in everyday lives, at the margins, in regions of conflict. The paper on enabling justice in sexual violence elaborated on the ways in which the court addresses and understands sexual violence.

The paper argued that an unproblematic retrieval of experience cannot help us uncover the truth of the raped body and emphasised the importance of differential engagement with pain and subjective experiences in the courtroom proceedings. Another presentation on 'Reading Rape' attempted to unravel the possibilities and the limits of the Khairlanji massacre and the TISS rape case in the socio-feminist context shaped by the Mathura and Bhanwari Devi rape cases.

A paper on women convicted for crimes against women in Nashik jail revealed that the highest number of women convicted for crimes are those related to dowry. All respondents had themselves experienced domestic violence and in turn became perpetrators. The sub-theme also explored the relationship between justice, law and sexuality. The paper on Queer experience with law and private spaces emphasised the need for the queer movement to address violence in private spaces.

The paper on 'Women, Sexuality and Judicial Discourse' elaborated on the judicial discourse to understand how judges resort to patriarchal norms, practices and language to promote stereotypes on gender and sexuality. Several judgements related to dowry murder, rape cases were cited to show how judges and judgements used gendered discourses on sexuality in rendering justice to the marginalised and powerless.

A detailed narration on women in non-normative relationships through customs as practiced in Rajasthan and Gujarat concluded that there is a need to engage with rights of women beyond the boundaries of and the institution of marriage as well as look at the rights for single women and that there is a need to relook at compulsory registration of marriages and such administrative measures that hinder women seeking justice. The paper on customary law and legal rights of Mizo women showed how the practice of divorce leaves women destitute and homeless as maintenance is unheard of in many Mizo villages. Another paper interrogated

abortion jurisprudence to show how medical discourse was privileged over the subjectivity of women.

A presentation on 'Honour Crimes against Women in Rajasthan' discussed how women and sexuality were controlled and produced as honour of family and community which affected their livelihood. A paper on mental health in shelter homes expressed the urgent need to reconstruct mental health going beyond the bio-medical interventions. Discussing the resistance politics of women's organisation in Haryana against the honour crimes a paper elaborated on this widespread crime and the resistance to it. The last paper in this section looked at the issue of violence against dalit women in the rural and urban contexts and observed that the existing laws were not ameliorative.

SUB-THEME 4: COMPOSITE CULTURES AND HEGEMONIC IDEOLOGIES

The papers in this sub-theme had differential understandings of culture and the ways in which they integrated culture also varied. In the session on studying the 'popular' and the 'folk', there were papers analysing the formation and contestation of gendered, regional and sexual identities through popular cultural spaces, ranging from television to cinema to internet.

The papers in this session discussed the constitution of diasporic ('probaashi') Bengali identity through regional television programmes, lesbian identity through literary, cinematic and organisational spaces, gendered identities through internet and regional Bhojpuri identity through women's songs. There were papers analysing how cultural spaces such as women's songs or what was termed as folk songs were sites of consolidation of patriarchal hegemony as well as resistance. There was also an interrogation of what is folk culture to underline how some indigenous scholars have challenged the marginalisation of little traditions but resisted its distinction as folk tradition.

In the session on studying the 'classical', papers attempted to understand and interrogate the classical/high culture. How iconic classical motifs were revised through modern Indian dance and new identities for women were constructed was examined. The political economy of high art was also examined highlighting how women artists have historically intervened into and interrogated the masculine high art and created their own



space. In the session on exploring history, papers traced the cultural discourses exploring historically how traditional dai's knowledge was represented in the western medical discourse as against the trained nurse in colonial India or how women's desire was evoked in the cinematic discourse through studio films of Devki Bose, and how the metaphor of Lakshmanrekha was constituted and negotiated across time and space.

In the session on studying communities and their practices, the constitution of and negotiation by communities was traced through diverse gendered cultural practices. There were papers such as on the conversion of Valmiki to Christianity, tribal community korku- their health related issues and corporate diasporic community in the first world. In the session on reading texts there were textual analysis of women's autobiographies across time and space, and Dalit women's autobiographies read as resources for social history. How Bhakti text was used to create domestic woman out of so called lower-caste women, how autobiographies as a modern genre was evoked across time, space and social location, these were some of the questions raised in the session.

In the session on analysing representations in popular media, there were papers on exploring the production and consumption of media, especially television. The economics of production of television and its links with corporate globalisation, consumption patterns of television serials focussed on women's issues, and constitution of women's question through it such were the issues analysed in this session.

SUB-THEME 5: LANGUAGES, VOICES, REPRESENTATIONS

The presentation on the Marathi film *Jogwa* discussed the social practices rooted in caste-patriarchy: the practice of dedicating girls to the goddess at a very young age, the depictions of the object conditions of living of dedicated women and how they break from it. This was followed by a presentation gender in Oriya Cinema which pointed out how the spectators have no control over the adverse images of women in cinema and that cinemas which portray women in positive lights have not been commercially successful. A paper on the iconography of the Hindu nation, showed how the icons of Rashtriya Sevika Samiti, served as pedagogical tools for the women activists whose images reinforced the Hindu ideals of womanhood. Another presentation focussed on Indian commercials and the representation of women and engaged with the politics of the advertising world.

The poster collection from a 'personal- political archive' of Uma Chakravarti and her discussion on these revealed how these posters could serve as historical resources in reconstructing radical political histories and how art had been central to the left and women's movements especially in Pakistan. In the next session on language and representation, the first paper traced the evolution of English language writing from Bankim Chandra to the contemporary novelists like Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni or Jhumpa Lahiri.

The presentation by Nirantar discussed the content of the school language textbooks from four states Tamil Nadu, West Bengal, Uttar Pradesh and Gujarat to show how these textbooks used the national icons, poetry, fables, historical drama and biographical sketches to construct the identity of the nation and gender. The third presentation in the session took up the issue of representation of the female body in the contemporary newspapers and magazines and argued that women were represented in two mutually exclusive ways: either as heroines able to withstand the raging fires or as victims coerced to submit themselves to the flames. Taking up the concept of 'Unconscious' a paper detailed the role of unconscious in Freud and the works of Sharad Patil in exploring the place of unconscious in ancient texts.

The paper presenter ended with a few provocative questions like the upper-caste women's support to the upper-caste women in episodes like that of Khairlanji or

Godhra. The final presentation in Hindi titled 'Stree Swatantrya Ka Bhartiya Paripekshya' invoked the glorious 'Hindu past', and argued that preserving family was part of the women's liberation movement in India and lauded Gandhi for instilling feminine virtues in the public domain. The last presentation in this session invited lots of criticism and the audience observed that the presentation was devoid of any substantial sources and arguments.

SUB-THEME 6: STATE, NATION AND CITIZENSHIP

The session on women's movements and the state revolved around transitions in the nature of engagement of women's movements with the state. The first paper mapped the challenges before the women's movements and its relationship with the state and it also raised questions of feminist understanding of the state and the new strategies of resistance.

The next paper looked into the aspects of transformation of the state and the women's movements in the post 90's in Maharashtra. The paper highlighted the new model of governance by which the state co-opts feminist NGOs as gender 'experts' in their planning process and how it had left out the people's organisations and trade unions from these processes. Discussing the state's use of the tribals in forming vigilance forces to suppress genuine movements of the people, with reference to the Salwa Judum in Chhattisgarh, a paper brought out the exploitation of tribal women by the state and by the male Judum members.

A paper on the care-work in post 90's in Russia highlighted how the earlier soviet 'culture of work' has been replaced by a culture of responsibility in which there is a conscious restoration of the 'natural order' governing women's lives reversing what the new Russian neoliberal state sees as the legacy of the earlier soviet state. There was also a paper on women's situation in Cuba in post-Soviet era.

The session on women in conflict areas with special reference to Kashmir revolved around trying to understand the situation in the Valley and the kind of problems being faced by the people of the state. This was important to understand how the complex situation can be solved. There were some burning questions. Is dialogue possible? Is faith in engaging the state misplaced? How do we bring into the debate issues of violations against women in areas other than the Valley,

in the refugee camps in Jammu? There was a presentation on the Lalgarh struggle and the role of women providing a detailed history of police repression and violence on women in this area.

The next paper offered a critique of the tourism development strategy of the Goa government and its impact on women's health. A paper on the pro-democracy movement led largely by Maoists concluded that this and also the dalit movements gave an alternative citizenship to women and provided alternative avenues for developing their capacities (e.g. participating in the armed struggle) despite some elements of patriarchal repressions. Another paper discussed the genealogy of the concept 'empowerment' and the need for appropriation of this concept to counter the state version. Two other papers critically engaged with the issues of marginalisation and victimisation of muslim and tribal women by the state for claiming their rights as citizens.

A session on state and education had papers that discussed how school textbooks remain untouched by feminist re-imaginings of the discipline, holding onto a self-perception as an objective science- mapping, labelling and quantifying descriptions. Another paper insisted on re-examining educational institutions and its relationship with other institutions such as the family . The next paper presented a study of one of India's only all-girls' military schools founded by a RSS member and its gendered Hindu nationalist project. There was a paper which discussed the informal local- governance of the tribals in Rajasthan and how they resolved gender issues within the patriarchal tribal justice system. A paper on Elected Women Representatives highlighted the centrality of family and male control in countering women's effective functioning. The last paper discussed the dalit migration and the complexities of articulating dalit identity within the dalit basti.

SUB-THEME 7: NEW MARKETS AND INTERLOCKING INEQUALITIES: LABOUR, EDUCATION, HEALTH AND MARRIAGE

This sub-theme attempted to look at how patriarchal hegemonic forces and capitalism's inherent inclination for commodification structures gender relations in terms of interlocking inequalities in market situations in post-liberalisation India. Discussion ranged on whether women should question this position of exploitation of other women within these market forces or whether such

is the need to survive in the market. In the area of health, reproductive health attracted maximum attention. The nature of reproductive technology pertaining to assisted reproductive technology (ART), surrogacy, in vitro fertilisation, was focussed upon. The scope and lacunae of the Draft ART Act, 2010, was discussed. Mental health became one of the strong focal points in the discussion on health issues. The emergence of domestic service as new market was discussed. The papers looked at the productive value of the job which drives poor women out from their unpaid invisible domestic spheres to the big cities to satisfy their material aspirations, for providing financial support to their natal families and to aspire to a comfortable new urban life.

Another paper explored the link between state policy, technological change and rural female labour and revealed a series of problematisations of the state's conception of women's work, the invisibility of women workers in most policy frameworks, the lack of acknowledgement of the intricate nature of women's work, and a neglect of the fact that modes of organisation of women's work are deeply influenced by cultural values, which in turn reinforce these values in state policy. Papers also problematised the burgeoning field of state and non-state financed microfinance and microcredit. How microfinance promises a coping strategy to poor women largely affected by the neoliberal policies of development was examined.

The papers sought to address these issues focussing on the politics of microfinance as part and parcel of the Structural Adjustment Policy. Loan utilisation was examined to unravel whether new opportunities and livelihood are at all created and whether the question of gender empowerment challenges patriarchal norms embedded in family and society. In the papers on body and beauty attempts were made to explain how a mystical social hierarchy is created where woman's image and well-being is primarily identified with the body. The papers also explored how this confluence of body beauty and health remade bodies as a catalyst to find success and marriage in the global market. There were varied areas that emerged out of the papers presented on the issues relating to marriage. An overwhelming dowry demand and the presence of customary laws pushed the poor Muslim women of Kerala often towards exploitative contractual interstate (Mysorekalyanam) and transnational (Arabikalyanam) kind of marriages.

Although these marriages diluted the rigours of caste, they are often equated with sexual slavery. Another study revealed an interesting correlation between dowry and bribes. Couple of ethnographic presentations revealed that a huge amount of money is invested in marriages apart from dowry to showcase the growing disposable income of the Indian upper middle class.

SUB-THEME 8: RE-IMAGINING RELATIONSHIPS, TRANSCENDING BOUNDARIES

Altogether 18 papers were presented in this sub-theme; a wide range of issues were discussed which included the implications of judicial decisions on interpreting intimate relationships, critique and re-invention of feminist space in social reform, rituals, political participation and gendering process in various social sites like schools and local governments and different modes of negotiations by women in their everyday life situations.

The papers pointed out the clear shift of judiciary from 1980s to the present as it redefines intimate relationship including the live-in relationships. An active interaction followed the presentation that put forward valuable suggestions on methodological and conceptual aspects. A critical analysis was made on the current status of Kerala Muslim Women in Malabar which is the northern part of present Kerala explaining that these women are backward in terms of formal education despite enhanced socioeconomic conditions as a result of Gulf migration and also how the songs written and sung by women (mappila pattukal) were being used as a form of resistance and expression. Discussions were also made on changing forms of sexual controls of Women in Kerala analysing the changing patterns of controls over female sexuality in a period of transition from pre-modern state to colonial state. It was also discussed how young women negotiate their relationships in a working-class Muslim neighbourhood with the restrictions imposed on them.

There were discussions focussed on the feminist understandings of conceptual and methodological frameworks and the limitations of conventional data analysis models. Issues like how identities are constructed in our contemporary debates; the concept of routine violence and trauma that construct certain identities in women's lives was also discussed. Discussions pointed out the importance of foregrounding the historic and

political reasons behind the migration of Kashmiri Pandits at different moments of history and the day-to-day negotiations of Kashmiri Pandit women, young and old, in their relationships within and outside the family. It was also discussed on the changes in the personal and public life of elected women representatives because of their newly assumed power.

The discussion that followed raised doubts on this positive picture through examples of patriarchal ideological outlook in development policy and programmes. The paper on women and sports was a very interesting attempt through which the problem faced by the sporting women in Kerala and the influence of negative social perceptions on them was revealed. The session concluded with the suggestion that we must move beyond using gender as the only analytical tool and from considering only women as a category for analysis.

SUB-THEME 9: BODY TALK: INTERROGATING BOUNDARIES AND HIERARCHIES IN FEMINIST DISCOURSE

In this sub theme the significant issues discussed were as follows: Who is the subject of feminism? Is it only the biological woman? Moreover is it only the 'good' woman? And in the context of violations, is it only the good victim that we are imagining as the subject of feminism? There is also need to recognise the need for a sexuality perspective to address gender-based violence, and beyond challenging the binary between pain and pleasure, we need to re-examine what pain and pleasure might mean.

The presentations and discussions underlined the need to use nuanced narratives and life stories rooted in material realities and changing contexts to help us capture the complexity of lived realities, challenge and transcend the binaries. We also have to underline the urgent need to address binaries. A focus on marginalisations is needed not only to ensure inclusion, which is critical, but also because there is a need for new frames to understand our rich, complex, messy and changing realities towards greater change, greater equity and justice. The first session focused on the intersection between sexuality and violence. The many linkages between these two aspects were unpacked and interrogated in this session. It critically looked at the VAW programme and the exclusion of non heterosexual women from getting justice.

The other theme that was explored was that of Exploitation vs. Liberation in which the theme of the virtue-and-victimhood binary was brought in. The late nineteenth and early twentieth century devadasi debates were framed within this binary which later became mapped on to later feminist debates on sex work in peculiar ways. One way out of this binary is to consider the continuum related to 'labour and longing' in the lives of labouring women. To see labour in all its myriad forms includes sexual labour and conjugal labour. The Exploitation vs. Liberation binary was also challenged through an exploration of how women express their desires in a range of sites from physical spaces such as the bathing ghat, to contemporary sites such as cyberspace. Technology as a site in which existing iniquitous social norms are reinforced but also challenged emerged in the discussions around assisted reproductive technologies.

The presentations on the gender and sex continuum made clear how limited the existing binary of male and female is to capture the rich diversity of gender expressions. Attention was also drawn to areas of silence, not sexuality so much as areas that the women's movement has not engaged sufficiently in the realm of what might be seen as 'mainstream' development, such as with issues like maternal mortality. The presentations and discussions, in particular those addressing issues relating to disability and sex work, showed that it is necessary for the existing marginalisations to be addressed not only because certain identities are being excluded but also because an engagement with these margins enables us to see the necessity of using different frames.

SUB-THEME 10: WOMEN, LABOUR AND QUESTIONS OF MARGINALISATION

The general focus of this theme was on issues of marginalisation today and what it means in terms of the experience of women. It was important to have papers from across different regional contexts, both urban and rural, from migration in weaving households in Benaras or the Angami Naga women's weaving within households that is devalued, to varied experiences of working in the city within households to selling wares in the street.

Many of the papers were based on very preliminary research, yet the presentations suggested how concrete studies from different regional contexts can complicate and nuance our understanding of how processes of marginalisation impact women. A paper on the rural work in Meghalaya focussed on the transformation in matrilineal

practices in Meghalaya and showed how women were being increasingly marginalised. Lack of decision making powers, decline of traditional agricultural practices leading to marginalisation of women despite the inheritance rights, outmigration of men leading to increasing work burden for women yet they being invisibilised were highlights of two other papers in the session on rural work.

The invisibilisation of women in the home based industries especially in the visual representations leading to devaluation of women's contributions, the emphasis on women's reproduction not production, the patriarchal state policies on women's work were highlighted by few presentations. The session on gender and migration focused on the problems with the macro data on female migration, the need for micro-level studies on female migration and its impact on women's lives as in the case of women in the weaving families of Banaras, the need to analyse determinants of migration such as marriage, family, work and struggle for existence as in the case of women migrating to Bhubaneshwar and to Kerala, as in the case of migration of single women and divorcees and those migrants from lower castes and so on. Taking up several cases, instances from various regions of India and looking into several contexts of migration, papers in this session argued that the migration was a movement from freedom to unfreedom with women lacking agency, living under precarious conditions are only employed in the urban informal sector with low payment and in insecure jobs.

The third session focused on the lived experiences of the migrant women workers, construction workers, home based workers, the street vendors in the slums of Delhi, Andhra Pradesh and Mumbai. The low payments despite women's skills, perceptions of women workers of their work, spatial discriminations, lack of protection for women workers were highlighted in this session. The fourth session dealt with the issues of the domestic in the case of domestic workers and the problem of exclusion of this site from state legislations related to labour and gender and the resultant perception of domestic work as such. The paper on care work emphasised the need for initiating measures to develop institutional structures for the care of disabled children. It highlighted the low value placed on such work and the notion of dependency leading to absolving the state of any responsibilities. Some of the papers, however, did look at the ways in which women negotiate their lives at an everyday level. Often there were ways in which they did try to bargain or define choices.

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FEATURES AND EVENTS

Cultural Programmes

A major attraction of the conference was the wide range of cultural programmes performed by individuals and groups throughout the conference.

- Ojas had put up a mono act performance 'Le Mashale' on Irom Sharmila after the South-Asian regional plenary as described above. The conference was inaugurated to the tune of percussion from the Bastar Band.
- There was a thirty-minute presentation of Lawani and other folk dances of Maharashtra by a troupe from LAD College, Nagpur, on the opening day of the conference. Lawani, a spirited dance, forms a part of the tamasha tradition of Marathi folk theatre.
- The Koya Paad (The Bastar Band) a 25-member team of Adivasi performing artists along with the music of the Dandami Madia, Dhurwa, Dorla enthralled audience.
- Another programme included Dewar Karma by Poonam Tiwari and others. Poonam Tiwari's dance exhibited rare grace and freedom of movement, a legacy she has inherited from Fida Bai Mala Bai.
- The conference played host to a concert by Nageen Tanveer. Nageen has been trained as a vocal singer as well as a theatre performer in the Naya Theatre created by the late Habib Tanveer. Nageen presented a selection of 12 songs from the traditional renderings of women in central India.
- The tribal women artists' workshop from Madhya Pradesh was a five-day event from January 20 to January 24. Five tribal artists who are currently based in Bhopal displayed their art, work and taught their kind of art to interested students and workshop participants. The five artists who participated in our workshop were: Gangubai from the Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya, Bhopal, who works in the Jhabua style; Mangala bai, who is a Gondna (tattoo artist), is from Bharat Bhavan; the other artists were Deepa Bai, Rupa, and Dhanaiya, The last three work in the Patangarh style.
- The Film festival organized by Uma Chakravarti and T.N. Uma Devi ran parallel to the sub-theme sessions, as well as in post-dinner sessions when those

attending the conference were free to watch the films. The films focussed on the main theme of the conference and its sub-theme sessions: there were films on gender, caste, land and environment struggles, human rights and disability. Twenty five documentary films ranging from 103 minutes to 5 minutes were screened.

- Stalls for books, food, craft items, clothes, etc to be displayed and sold were available. A total number of 24 stalls were put up on the four days of the conference. There were local food stalls, artefacts and other products which were a major attraction for the participants.
- Zubaan had organised a poster exhibition at the conference venue that showcased a selection of 80 posters focussing on different campaigns of women's movements. There were posters on violence against women, women's labour, saving the environment, caste, sex-selective abortions, political participation, and beauty contests among many other themes.
- Publications : A range of publications were distributed to the participants of the conference. This included the following: President's Address and Executive Committee Reports; a compilation of all regional workshops conducted between 2008-10; a compilation of the abstracts which were sent by willing participants for presenting papers in different sub-themes in the 'Book of Abstracts'; the special issue of newsletter with a focus on marginalisation and Wardha.



Resolutions passed at the General Body Meeting, XIII National Conference of the IAWS, Wardha, 21-24 January 2011.



Resolutions on State Violence

1. Caste-patriarchal violence perpetrated on the Bhotinange family is not just an exceptional event. The relationship between caste and patriarchy are premised upon the exercise of power which is achieved through the use of coercive power. The role of the state is that of either covering up or sabotaging such events. This is unanimously condemned. This conference resolves to stand together against the oppressive forces which have perpetuated caste order through ideology as well as coercion.
2. The Government of India should try its utmost to find ways to curb the rising prices of food items and domestic fuel in the last few years. IAWS solemnly resolves to fight for all the women of Jammu and Kashmir and the states of the North East who have suffered under insurgency for many years. This conference strongly condemns the growing militarization and violence against women in the North East. We demand the scrapping of AFSPA and withdrawal of armed and paramilitary forces there.
3. The state is looting of natural resources in the name of promoting 'development' and 'national security' and waging war on its own people. This is happening especially in the tribal belts of the country, rampant sexual violence is being committed with impunity by military and paramilitary forces of the state. IAWS demands the immediate withdrawal of Operation Green Hunt and the disbanding of Salwa Judum and other state sponsored vigilante groups.

4. The XIIIth IAWS conference condemns Government's decision to build a 10,000 megawatt nuclear power plant at Jaitapur in Maharashtra's Ratnagiri district. This conference expresses support to the uncompromising struggle being waged by the farmers and fisher folk of the area against the setting up of this nuclear plant on the grounds that it will endanger their health, lives and livelihood.
5. The IAWS strongly condemns the arrest of political activists who are working with marginalized communities and challenging the hegemonic policies of the state. It protests against the false implications and incarceration of these activists, including many women who are prosecuted on criminal charges. This conference demands the repeal of the penal provision of sedition being deployed to curb dissent and to delegitimize democratic protests. Further it demands the immediate release of Dr Binayak Sen and justice for all struggling to uphold democratic rights.
6. The IAWS is deeply concerned about the harassment and intimidation of journalist K K Shahina for interviewing and publishing report of the case of Abdul Nazarmadani, Chairman of People's Democratic Party, one of the accused in the Bangalore bomb blast. She has been charged under S 22 of UAPA, a draconian law designed to silence voices of dissent and denied anticipatory bail. This conference demands the withdrawal of case against K K Shahina.

Resolutions on Laws and Policies

7. The IAWS demands that the Section 498 A of IPC be protected as it is the only law to protect married

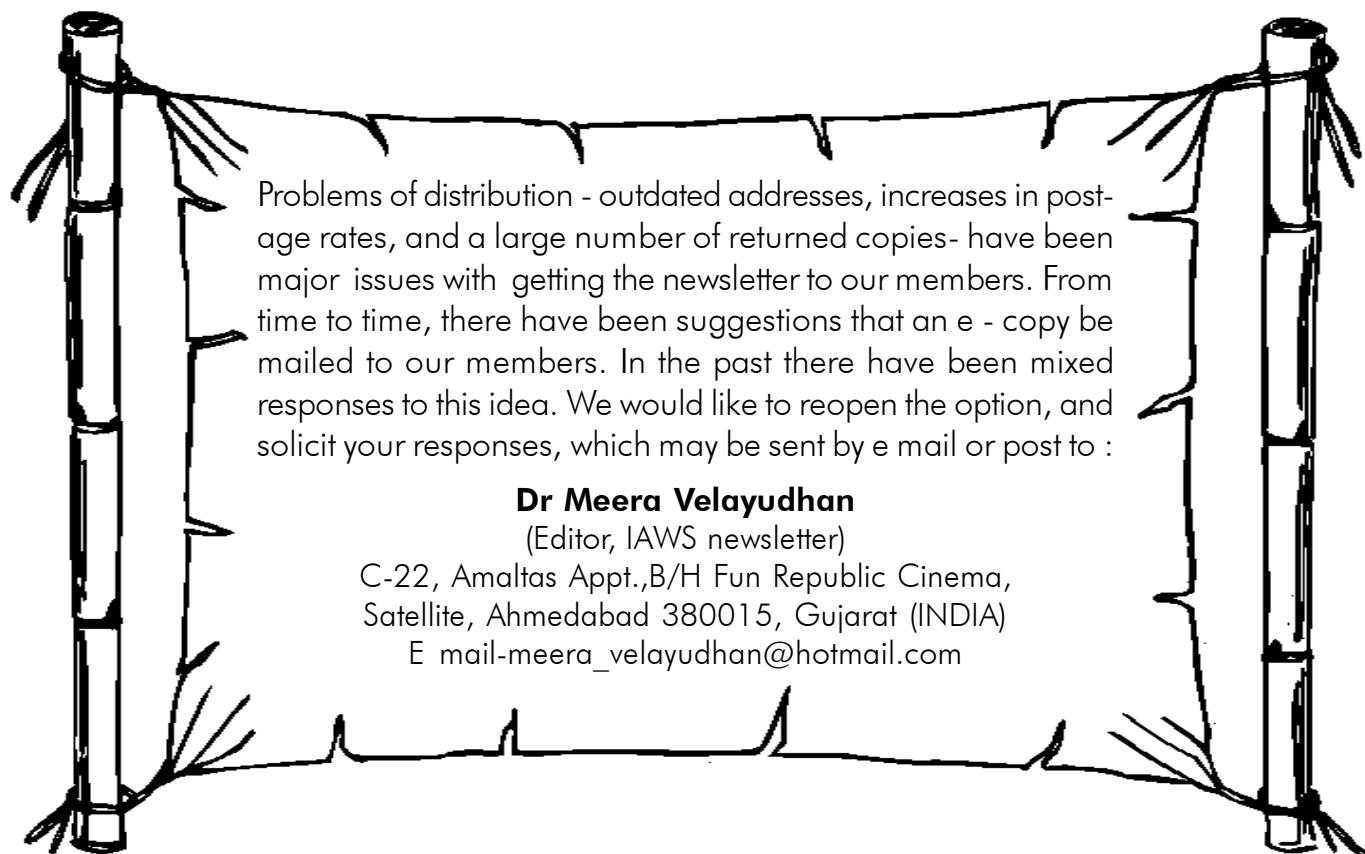
women and prevent married women's suicide and murder. The provision should remain cognizable and non-compoundable and that no changes made to the present law.

8. This conference of the IAWS demands that specific measures be undertaken to increase investment in agriculture with special emphasis on generation of livelihood opportunities in rural India and for making agriculture a viable activity. Steps to be taken to make rural credit available to women at easier conditions and interest rates. NREGA needs to be strengthened through increasing wages and addressing issues of women workers including child care needs. The Sexual Harassment in the Workplace Bill need to include domestic workers within the ambit of the legislation and should take away the provision on penalty for lodging false cases. The government needs to provide food security and universalize PDS. In the wake of modernization processes and international trade agreement, significant measures be taken to revive handloom industry with specific focus on handloom. This conference believes that globalization is not improving the condition of women in work but is further restricting the choices available to women and

rendering them vulnerable to new forms of patriarchal and other forms of oppression.

Resolutions related to Women's Studies

10. This conference demands an introduction of Women's Studies at Senior Secondary and UG levels in all universities. It demands that the eligibility of Women's Studies for Civil Services and government recruitment at all levels be recognised.
11. The XIIIrd IAWS conference demands for an Inclusion of women with disability as part of women's studies, however this inclusion cannot be done without addressing changes in infrastructure, pedagogy and curriculum.
12. All UGC Refresher Course should include at least a day-long module on Gender Orientation to facilitate incorporation of gender concerns across all disciplines
13. The Student workshop at the XIIIrd IAWS conference demands that all universities with Centre for Women's studies to have a Board of Studies in Women's studies and that there should be a dialogue between women's studies centres / Departments at the Universities with the women's movements. ○



Critiquing Participation: A Reflection on Women's Inclusion in Forest Management

Nitha. G. Nair¹

As a part of wider debates relating to decentralisation and forest management, gender participation has become the buzz word for two main reasons: (1) as a way to improve the 'efficiency' of managerial outcomes and (2) to enhance "women's well-being" (broadly defined). Participation is meant to provide wider opportunities to marginalised people, including women, and hence improve outcomes. This paper is an attempt to critically summarize the literature on gender participation and decentralised forest management, the latter finding a place in the 1988 National Forest Policy. Here we examine why and how women's participation was mainstreamed in decentralised forestry policies and how this is translated into participatory strategies, constraints, outcomes and questions of segmentation, differences within the category of women. Also addressed are shortcomings in existing studies and areas for further research.

Mainstreaming Women's Participation

The 1988 National Forest Policy is cited as the point at which the discourse of forest management changed with its emphasis on citizenship, agency, governance and rights (Arun Agrawal et al, 2006). Early JFM policies did not have specific mention of women's involvement. However, later JFM guidelines ensured the involvement of NGOs, village communities and state governments in management, protection and regeneration of forests and one-third reservation for women in the executive committee of forest protection committees in addition to the inclusion of one woman (and one man) from each household on the basis of state level government orders (Dasgupta, Roy and Chattopadhyay 2006).

On paper, the National Forest Policy accepted people's dependence on forests and proposed a "people's movement to protect the forest" (Singh and Poffenberger 1996). Donor organisations and NGOs have supported such efforts (Debanarayan and Das 2002). In June 1990, the government initiated Joint Forest Management (JFM) which gave importance to the usufruct rights of people over forests ostensibly as a means to increase their

access (Sarin 1995). Women's participation as conceptualised in current policies of forest management is meant to deepen democracy through collective action of citizens and helps to develop a need based approach which privileges marginalised people, especially tribes and women.

The 'equity' and 'empowering' benefits of participation of women is premised on the belief that women have a special relationship to forests. The large tracts of forests are a major source of livelihood for rural households (Poffenberger 1996, Siva 1994, Krishna 2004, Agarwal, B 2009), especially the landless poor, tribals and women (Agarwal, B 2009). Women are more dependent on forests than on other types of land such as private land because in a patriarchal system women do not have any control over private property and hence depend on the forests for supplementing livelihood needs. Women, especially in tribal areas, are considered to be the collectors, processors and users of forest goods. Women enter forests for subsistence needs like food, fuel, and fodder (Agarwal, B 2009, FAO 1990) which are important to the larger household economy (FAO 1990). Dairying, livestock rearing, fishing, hunting, food preservation, and collection and processing of medicinal plants are also important activities undertaken by women (Sumi Krishna 2004). All these things are closely related to the day to day survival of the family. Hence participation, as Arun Agrawal et. al (2006) argue, will lead to outcomes that include greater equality in the distribution of benefits from development, "especially to citizens whose preferences historically have been discounted in development" (in this case women).

Linked to use is "women's knowledge about the forest". In a rural agricultural system women are deeply engaged with conservation and cultivation. Women, it is argued, know how to protect plants from animals and insects as well as how to use plants and trees for a variety of purposes including food, fuel, fodder and NTFP given the seasonal dimensions of use (Mies and Siva 1993, Rocheleau 1995). In the context of forests, women have

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sound knowledge about fuelwood, wild food and fodder and acquire new knowledge through discussion with elders. They know, for example, that some leaves are best when young, that others are poisonous when young, that some fuelwood is easily flammable and transmits high levels of smoke, that some mushrooms are good for health while others are poisonous and that the same is the case for medicinal species (Rocheleau 1995, Agarwal, B 2009). Arun Agrawal et. al (2006) also point out that women are the primary collectors, processors and marketers of NTFP like sal leaves.

Such empirical observations have led to wider conceptual arguments. The Women Environment and Development (WED) approach broadly highlights that "women have closer affinity to nature and a greater inclination for conservation". WED, in addition to ecofeminism, also gives importance to the argument that women are the victims of environmental degradation and that they should play a crucial role in the conservation and management of natural resources (Shah 1998). Both emphasise women's role as users and managers of natural resources and custodians of genetic resources and food produce (Leach, Jockes and Green 1998). However, while the former focuses more on the material reality of women's interaction with nature, the latter highlights the 'naturalness' of such interaction.

All of this has translated into policies addressing women's participation more directly. It is important to note that such policies are also aimed at 'better management' or more 'efficient management'. First, the greater dependence on forest resources means that the exclusion of women might result in poor outcomes. The long history of conflict between state and society has witnessed women at the forefront of resistance, i.e. they were the main 'rule breakers'. The seasonal closing of forests, moreover, often affected women most (Agarwal, B 2001). Women's involvement, therefore, is aimed at reducing conflict around forest use. Second, the local knowledge of women due to their closer interaction with nature would also improve management outcomes as women would devise rules that were more beneficial to forest conservation. As Puri (2004) argues, an efficiency based approach considers "participation as an instrumental means to the ends that varies from institutional efficiency to state defined public interest". One could go further and argue that active participation of women itself is an indicator of the efficiency of a program and good governance.

Are Women Participating More?

Beyond the theoretical arguments in favour of women's participation, do women actually participate more in practice? One body of literature has focused on whether participatory forest management policies are participatory in their gender content. On the one hand, this literature has tried to measure the extent of women's participation in forest management be it in terms of participation in committees and their role in decision-making (Agarwal, B 2001).

Gupte (2007) also tries to assess participation based on indicators, adapting Bina Agarwal's (2001) framework slightly. She reveals that women's representative participation happens only in homogenous villages with an external agency presence. Gender stratification in homogeneous villages is liberal and participation in committee transformative. On the other hand, women's participation in heterogeneous forest dependent committees is nominal and their overall participation, instrumental. Arun Agrawal et. al (2006) also attempt to understand how women's participation influences the outcome of the programme and how other indicators influence the participation. They argue that participation is limited.

Most studies do not generally examine how people (men and women) themselves perceive of participation. These studies highlight how participation is constrained by social stratification and existing gendered roles and the rigidity of the JFM framework within policy. Studies illustrate that participation is greater in homogenous communities than in heterogeneous communities because of fewer social divisions and more common interests. But the concept of 'homogeneity' is itself questionable when gender issues are at stake. Madhu Sarin (1995) and Bina Agarwal (2000) point out that men dominate the decision making process while Jackson and Chattopadhyay (2001) highlight the differences among women in their access to resources and knowledge about forests, based largely on caste. What needs further exploration, therefore, is gender participation in heterogeneous contexts.

Women's Participation and Outcomes

Studies have highlighted that participation has addressed 'efficiency' related outcomes more than agency-based outcomes. What has been illustrated is that women's participation helps to increase the forest cover, control illicit grazing, illicit felling, and forest atrocities as had been assumed it would. But positive agency based

outcomes, especially accessibility and control over resources have been few and far between. Rocheleau (1995) has argued that most policies do not ensure "women's right and control over the resources" but instead increases their responsibility of "food production and landscape midwifery". On the basis of Rocheleau's argument, it is important to stress that what the state considers good outcomes and what women consider good outcomes might be different. It must be stressed also that what is good participation itself might be different for the state and local women. Outcomes, including participation as an outcome, in other words, need to be problematized more. What is a good outcome? Good for whom? Policies are not neutral or unaffected by socio-structural influences. Existing socio-political forces may lead to internal and external conflict over the distribution of benefits and forest committees could face difficulties in implementing rules and consequently better management of forests.

Rethinking Women's Participation

What are the explanatory factors that limit women's participation? It has already been suggested above that socio-political factors might direct policies in particular ways that women themselves do not choose. Arora (1994) highlights that national and international discourses prioritize efficiency-based outcomes as opposed to agency-based ones. Ramdos (2009) argues that "the question is not just of including women in policy and programmes but of unravelling the gendered structure of patriarchal institutions that are notoriously resistant to change". Bina Agarwal (2001) also emphasises social rules, norms and perceptions as the major constraints to women's participation, i.e. gender segregation of public space, gender division of labour, gendered behavioural norms, patriarchal structure and personal and household endowments of persons. Time of meeting and place of meeting, existing social rules, norms and expected behaviour of women, household responsibilities like caring for children and aged members of the family, pressure of earning and consciousness about security are also constraints on participation. Age group and marital status further place restraints on women from talking with men in committees. Other restrictions such as 'don't argue with elders and head of the institutions', 'don't speak loudly', 'avoid interaction with outsiders' are also limiting. All these restrictions are dynamic and changing over time, space and geographical area. Gupte (2004) argues the same but adds that social restrictions will vary amongst women from different class and caste backgrounds. Existing literature suggests that tribal

society is less patriarchal than other societies and tribal women enjoy more freedom of mobility than other women. At the same time one must accept that heterogeneity exists amongst tribals and therefore not romanticize tribal life. Individual and household entitlements also play a crucial role in imposing restrictions.

Conclusion

On the one hand, there are the perceived conceptual advantages of women's participation in decentralised forest management. Advocates of women's participation consider it a means to efficiency, equity and empowerment. They then go on to assess participation based on institutional and social indicators. A case has been made that women's participation helps improve forest management, most notably increasing forest cover and reducing rule breaking. Evidence suggests that women's participation has often been limited and outcomes in terms of improving women's access to resources and changes in their life few and far between. Two reasons exist for this: the limits of policy in terms of its imagination of what participation should mean and social constraints within society. Future studies on gender participation must, therefore, centre-stage the dilemma between gender participation as a form of state-driven governmentality and as a truly emancipatory form of gender empowerment.

Acknowledgement

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Divided Paths, Common Ground: The Story of Mary Matthews and Lella Gaddis

Angie Klink

In the early 1900s, Mary Matthews and Lella Gaddis forged trails for women at Purdue University and throughout Indiana. Mary was the first dean of the School of Home Economics. Lella was Indiana's first state leader of Home Demonstration. In 1914, Mary hired Lella to organize Purdue's new Home Economics Extension Service. According to those who knew them, Lella was a "sparkler" who traveled the state instructing rural women about nutrition, hygiene, safe water, childcare, and more. "Reserved" Mary established Purdue's School of Home Economics, created Indiana's first nursery school, and authored a popular textbook. Both women used their natural talents and connections to achieve their goals in spite of a male-dominated society. As a land grant institution, Purdue University has always been very connected to the American countryside. Based on extensive oral history and archival research, this book sheds new light on the important role female staff and faculty played in improving the quality of life for rural women during the first half of the twentieth century. It is also a fascinating story, engagingly told, of two very different personalities united in a common goal

Purdue University Press, 2011, pp.249, \$16.95, ISBN 1557535914, 9781557535917



Broken Republic: Three Essays

Arundhati Roy

War has spread from the borders of India to the forests in the very heart of the country. Combining brilliant analysis and reportage, Broken Republic examines the nature of progress and development in the emerging global superpower, and asks fundamental questions about modern civilization itself - in three incisive essays: 'Mr Chidambaram's War': The low, flat-topped hills of south Orissa have been home to the Dongria Kondh long before there was a country called India or a state called Orissa . . . 'Walking with the Comrades': The terse, typewritten note slipped under my door in a sealed envelope confirmed my appointment with 'India's single biggest internal security challenge'. I'd been waiting for months to hear from them . . . 'Trickledown Revolution': In the

early morning hours of 2 July 2010, in the remote forests of Adilabad, the Andhra Pradesh State Police fired a bullet into the chest of a man called Cherukuri Rajkumar, known to his comrades as Azad .

Penguin Books Ltd, 2011, pp.224, £10.99, ISBN 0241145287, 9780241145289.



Law, Justice, and Gender: Family Law and Constitutional Provisions in India

Flavia Agnes

The first of two-volumes on the subject, this book provides an in-depth analysis of family laws while exploring the overlaps and contradictions in them. It reviews the legal history of personal laws of the colonial and post-colonial periods and their application in contemporary matrimonial law. The ground level litigation practices are interwoven with the framework of statutory provisions, which in turn provide an entry point into the rights discourses and social movements. The book discusses cases, Acts, and amendments, and unravels legal complexities. The concern of the book is to weave women's realities into legal theories and position women's claims within the Constitution to highlight the lacunae in laws and to analyze their effectiveness at the ground level.

Oxford University Press, 2011, pp. 600, \$40.00, ISBN 0198067909, 9780198067900



Perspectives on Modern South Asia: A Reader in Culture, History, and Representation

Kamala Visweswaran

This book presents an exciting core collection of essays drawn from anthropology, literary and cultural studies, history, sociology, economics, and political science to reveal the complexities of a region that is home to a fifth of humanity. It presents an interdisciplinary overview of the origins and development of the eight nations comprising modern South Asia: Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, India, the Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka. It also explores South Asia's common cultures, languages and religions and their relationship to its ethnic and national differences. It features essays that provide understandings of the central dynamics of South Asia as an important cultural, political, and economic region of the world

John Wiley and Sons, 2011, pp. 400, \$44.95 PB, ISBN1405100621, 9781405100625.



Intimate Others: Marriage and Sexualities in India
Samita Sen, Raniita Biswas and Nandita Dhawan (eds.)

The last two decades have witnessed pervasive transformations in intimate relations, whether within or outside marriage, in same-sex or heterosexual contexts, in terms of coupled cohabitation or other unconventional living practices. Indeed, these have also impacted marriage. This book considers the interplay of gender, class and community with regard to marriage, on the constructions of masculinity and femininity within the family, as well as larger societal gender constructions that impact upon the family. Marriage, an all-pervasive institution remains grounded in caste, kinship, economic insecurities, sexual anxieties and faces globalizing desires or new conjugalities. In brief, the book challenges the notions of marriage: 'its orders as well as its borders', seeking to examine the different dynamics of marriage, within itself as well as in inter-relationship to hierarchies of caste, class, community, and above all, gender.

Stree, 2011, pp. 400, INR 450, ISBN 978-81-960760-1-4.



Following My Paint Brush

Gita Wolf, Dulari Devi

To earn more money, we worked in people's houses, washing their dishes. When we were done, I liked arranging the pots and pans in rows. When I grew up, I still did the same work. I had never gone to school, so I was not trained to do any other job. Sometimes I wished I could do something else. Every day was the same, as it had been from the time I was a small girl. Then one day, when I was passing the village pond, a strange thing happened. As I stood and looked, the scene turned into a picture in my mind. It came alive, bright and lively, telling stories. I was happy the whole day, thinking of my picture.

Following My Paint Brush is the story of Dulari Devi, a domestic helper who went on to become an artist in the Mithila style of folk painting from Bihar, eastern India. Dulari is from a community of fisherfolk whose occupation is river-fishing. Used to a life of hard and relentless labor, she discovered painting while working

as a domestic helper in an artist's house. Dulari learned by doing, and very soon came to adapt artistic rules and conventions to her own expressive needs. Following My Paint Brush narrates Dulari's momentous journey from a worker who knew no rest to an artist who is willing to go where her imagination leads her.

Tara Books, 2011, pp. 32, INR 375, ISBN 9380340117, 9789380340111.



Appropriately Indian: Gender and Culture in a New Transnational Class

Smitha Radhakrishnan

Appropriately Indian is an ethnographic analysis of the elite class of information technology professionals at the symbolic helm of globalizing India. Comprising a small but prestigious segment of India's labor force, these transnational knowledge workers dominate the country's economic and cultural scene, as do their notions of what it means to be Indian. Drawing on the stories of Indian technology professionals in Mumbai, Bangalore, Silicon Valley, and South Africa, Smitha Radhakrishnan explains how these high-tech workers create a "global Indianness" by transforming the diversity of Indian cultural practices into a generic, mobile set of "Indian" norms. The Indian culture they create is self-consciously distinct from Western culture, yet compatible with Western cosmopolitan lifestyles. Radhakrishnan describes the material and symbolic privileges that accrue to India's transnational technology professionals, who often claim ordinary middle-class backgrounds, but are overwhelmingly urban and upper-caste. They are also distinctly apolitical and individualistic. Members of this elite class ground Indianness in family relationships, notions of respectable femininity, and the practice of a decontextualized version of Hinduism. Their expectations of proper Indianness are influenced by the ideas and values that circulate through multinational corporations (Indian and non-Indian), but global Indianness is ultimately rooted and configured in the gendered sphere of home and family, making professional women key arbiters of the new Indian culture.

Duke University Press, 2011, pp. 256, \$22.95 ISBN 9780822348702



Women, Panchayats and Natural Resource Management

Seema Mallik

Based on feminist environmentalist approach and capability approach, the study argues that increased women's participation in natural resource management will ensure not only the efficient functioning and long-term sustainability of institutions but also boost women's empowerment. To overcome discrimination based on the gender division of labour and property women need to increase their bargaining powers and strengthen their role and capabilities in forest management through greater participation in decision-making. This field-based study has highlighted that both men and women have a stake in forest regeneration and protection, though from different perspectives. This interesting research focusing on the role of Panchayati Raj Institutions in forest management with special reference to women's participation provides very useful insights.

Rawat Publications, 2011, pp. 248, INR 390, ISBN 9788131604182.



Harvesting Feminist Knowledge for Public Policy: Rebuilding Progress

Devaki Jain and Diane Elson (eds.)

Harvesting Feminist Knowledge for Public Policy brings together 14 essays by feminist thinkers from different parts of the world, reflecting on problems of current patterns of development and arguing for political, economic, and social changes to promote equality and sustainability. The authors argue that the very approach being taken to understand and measure progress, and plan for and evaluate development, needs rethinking in ways that draw on the experiences and knowledge of women. These influential feminist thinkers, activists, and academics have drawn upon their vast experience to identify new understandings, emerging issues and an asset of recommendations that help address the key issues of today. The essays are written in the context of the "triple crises" of food, fuel, and finance, and the underlying deep-seated problems of growing inequality, squeeze on time to provide unpaid care to family and friends, and environmentally unsustainable patterns of economic growth. All the chapters, in diverse ways, offer proposals for alternative strategies to address the limitations and contradictions of currently dominant ideas and practices in development, and move towards the creation of a socially just and egalitarian world.

Sage Publication, 2011, pp.452, £39.99, ISBN 8132107411, 9788132107415



Empire, Media, and the Autonomous Woman-A Feminist Critique of Postcolonial Thought

EshaNiyogi De

Autonomy is commonly linked to liberal individualism, the Enlightenment philosophy which gives primacy to personal existence and interests rather than to the person's place in society and in history. Many see the autonomous individual as harbouring the possessive mentalities of western empire. In this groundbreaking work, EshaNiyogi De radically questions this foundational anti-Enlightenment position on which influential models of Postcolonial critique are based. She argues that the 'individual' has been creatively indigenized in non-western modernities: indigenous activist individuals attentive to empire and gender refuse possessive individualism while they invest in certain ethical premises of Enlightenment thought. De weaves her radical argument through a rich tapestry of gender portrayals drawn from two transitional moments of Indian modernity: the rise of humanism under colony and the influx of neoliberal capitalism. This book emphasizes the feminist challenge to sexual and racial orthodoxies posed by critical imaginations of the 'autonomous woman' in postcolonial cultures by studying autobiographical texts by nineteenth-century Bengali prostituted women; point-of-view photography; woman-centred dancedramas and essays by Rabindranth Tagore; representations of Tagore's works on mainstream television, video, and stage in India and Indian American diasporas; and feminist cinema, choreography and performance respectively by AparnaSen and ManjusriChaki-Sircar

Oxford University Press, 2011, pp.264, £30.00, ISBN978-0-19-807255-3



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