

STUDY ON MARATHWADA DAVISGENDER AND IDENTITY



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ABSTRACT

Feminism has historically been and will continue to be seen as a movement in its own right, on par with any other movement, whether it socially or physically. Sometimes it obtains a place in literature among all the other theories that take a less emotional approach to the subject matter. The concept of feminism has been passed down to us or has developed through time as a theory, but the majority of women, who make up a marginalized part of society, have changed very little over the course of the years. We are still engaged in the age-old conflict of repression and suppression; we are still subjected to the same mental and physical

humiliation; we are still required to endure the same pain just because we were born female. The struggles and the shame that come along with being humiliated as a woman are timeless. There does not seem to be any way out of the mental and physical abuse that women are subjected to in today's culture. In her writings, Mahasweta Devi elucidates the challenges that women face and the suffering that they go through as a result of living in a society that is controlled by males. In her writings, she has addressed the predicament of women and their inferior status in society. Her writing has little to do with the small daily quirks of the affluent, and she avoids the unneeded or unnecessary.

Her avoidance of the needless or unnecessary is reflected in her writing. Her writing is factual and without of hyperbole, thus there is no room for sentimentality in her portrayal of the predicament of women who are most severely and directly impacted by patriarchy.

Her protagonists come from lower-class socioeconomic backgrounds, and they are believable, multifaceted, and completely fleshed-out individuals.

KEYWORDS: Identity, Feminism, Believable, Multifaceted

INTRODUCTION

They constitute an essential component in Mahasweta Devi's eyes. In the tales of Mahasweta Devi, we see a diverse group of women, from women of lower castes to women from higher castes, and from wealthy to impoverished backgrounds, all of them are attempting to navigate the hypocritical actions of their families and the larger society. Not only did the dualism or double standard of society wreck their lives, but it also served as an illustration of how a dictatorship operates, in which women and their physical attributes are solely seen as something to "consume" and "mutilate." In addition to this, their outward appearance is concealed, and their physical body is treated as an item to be reproduced, sometimes even without the subject's informed permission. In reference to Mahasweta Devi, Devy Ganesh makes the following observation: "She has a remarkable capacity to interact with the voiceless, and she reserves her finest discourse for those to whom no one has spoken." She is regarded as a unique creative writer because of her ability to bring difficult tales from underrepresented communities to light. The narrative of Mahasweta is an example of feminist appropriation in literature. As an Indian intellectual, Mahasweta Devi became well-known for her feminist perspective with the publication of her book "Breast Stories." These tales, written by Mahasweta Devi, depict the reality of the circumstances in which women find themselves. The figure of the female without a voice has her own awareness, which develops in tandem with the tales she tells. For readers interested in delving into Indian feminist literature, Breast Stories is a book that offers a welcome change of pace. Breast Stories was first published in Bengali, but in 1997, feminist critic Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak translated it into English from the Bengali version. Draupadi, Behind the Bodice, and Breast Giver are the names of the tales that

make up this collection. They all have a common theme, which is represented by the breast, which is a symbol for the exploitation of women who come from underprivileged groups. These illuminating narratives bring attention to the pervasive discrimination that women experience on a daily basis. There have been reports of rape being utilised as a military tactic in the countries of Afghanistan, Iraq, Sudan, and Nepal. No matter whether you're in the capital of Delhi or the state of Kerala, women are subjected to persistent sexual harassment on the streets. Not just monstrous people, but even persons with good intentions manipulate and objectify our bodies. They do this in the name of "progress."

Through her story on "Jashoda," Mahasweta Devi challenges the silence that surrounds the social, political, and cultural concerns. Specifically, she focuses on the experience of motherhood as well as the exploitation of women in her work. A significant focus of *Breast-Giver* is on the struggle to achieve equality through triumphing over the tyranny of males and of society as a whole. The main character, Jashoda, is a lady of the Brahmin caste who lives on the margins of society. As a result of the tragedy that left her husband paralysed, she has no choice but to take a job as a wet-nurse for the rich Haldar family. After an accident leaves her husband Kangalicharan unable to work, she decides to become a wet nurse so that she may continue to provide for her family. She provides food for twenty youngsters in order to maintain her family. In spite of the fact that her new job requires her to get pregnant on a regular basis, she is now regarded as a significant figure in both social and political circles since she is known as the Mother of the World. In this version of the narrative, Jashoda's family relies on breast both as a means of subsistence and as a means of making a living.

The household of Haldar was making use of Jashoda's corpse. The many children that belong to Jashoda's owner and mistress pay her to milk them. Her spouse and children are able to generate an income thanks to her copious amounts of milk. It is not because Jashoda is a woman that she is exploited; rather, it is because of the class structure, the progression of time, and the circumstances. Despite the fact that she is the primary breadwinner for the household, Jashoda does not absolve herself of her obligations as a wife and mother to her own children. She can't choose between the two careers, which is indicative of the difficulty that many women face in their daily life. In the very beginning of the story, Jashoda is introduced as: Kangalicharan's wife from birth, the mother of twenty children, living or dead, counted on her fingers – Motherhood was always her way of living and keeping alive her world of countless beings

is introduced as: Kungalicharan's wife from birth, the mother of twenty children, living or dead, counted on her fingers In the Motherhood had always been Jashoda's chosen vocation, therefore she was known as a "professional mother."

Even when a woman earns her income outside the home, this does not imply that she is any less concerned with the activities that take on inside her own home and with her own family. Even if she may be absent from her family for part of the time, a woman who has a job still has a responsibility to be a strong provider for them. It is a well-known fact that women are capable of being both caring and powerful at the same time. As part of her journey, Jashoda must also triumph over the constraints imposed on her by a culture that is mainly patriarchal, an essential goal in feminist thought. In a variety of ways, Jashoda is able to triumph over her status as "different." The culture in which Jashoda was raised places a bigger value on males than it does on females. As well as being the leaders of the home, the males are responsible for providing for their families. This conventionally patriarchal order is flipped upside down by Jashoda. She rises to the position of leader and finds a job outside the house so that she can care for her family financially. By doing so, she elevates herself to the same level as or even higher than, her husband and the other males in society.

She takes on chores that are traditionally assigned to the male head of the household and does them with aplomb. Both Jashoda and Kungalicharan take on the 'roles' of the opposite gender at various points in the story. While Jashoda is out at work, Kungalicharan manages the household responsibilities. This inversion of customary duties is illustrative of Jashoda's business acumen as well as her standing within the family and the community as a whole. When you take into account the labour that is done at home, which is typically the responsibility of the woman, she and her husband are on equal footing. Because of her breast cancer, Jashoda is known as the "Milk mother" for the Haldar family, and she passes away while suffering in solitude. She is given a private cremation by the medical personnel despite the fact that there are many children there. The exploiters were content with her output so long as she remained fertile; but, as soon as she was diagnosed with cancer, they distanced themselves from her completely. As a result, Mahasweta Devi demonstrates how the "Milk mother" has to pay a high price for her ignorance and ultimately passes away in excruciating agony. She brings to light the covert exploitation of Jahoda, a low-income lady who is also a devoted wife and wonderful mother.

The game of politics, which seeks to crush the spirit of men and women who struggle for freedom from slavery on behalf of their caste and clan, appals Mahasweta Devi. She is frightened by it. As a result, she decides to start on a project with the intention of portraying the horrific truths that occur behind the socioeconomic and political iron curtains, and she does it via the medium of her most influential work, *Draupadi*.

Dopdi is a native lady and she is twenty-seven years old. Her mistress is the one who gave her the name. She is on the list of those who are sought for the murder of Surja Sahu, a landowner and money lender, because he refused to share his water supply with untouchables. He was the spouse of the mistress's husband. Because they are sought by the authorities, they have gone underground to conceal themselves. Dopdi, the main character of the story, is trying to get away from the police when she is unfortunately caught by the armed forces and tortured to get information. When she is able to endure all of the tortures and does not reveal whatever information the policemen wanted, the worst form of torture is used on her, which consists of her being brutally gang raped the whole night and day, which leaves her bleeding, wounded, and bruised. A woman may be raped for any reason at all. This is a weapon. When there is animosity between two men, or between two communities, or between two countries, it is thrown down onto the women. This is true whether the animosity is between men or between communities or nations. If one wants to exact revenge on a community and a particular society, the women of that society are the ones who need to be assaulted and destroyed physically and mentally so that the society is brought into disgrace. This is especially true in Indian society, where women are accorded certain values and honour. The name *Draupadi* is really pronounced differently in certain rural or tribal areas, which is how the moniker *Dopdi* came to be. Even though the characters of *Draupadi* in the *Mahabharata* and *Dopdi* in *Mahasweta Devi* are so unlike to one another, there is a point of convergence between the two in which they both strive to fight against the injustice that has been done to them in their own unique way.

Draupadi is a queen, regal, and gorgeous; despite the fact that she is only wedded to one, she has five husbands. *Dopdi*, on the other hand, is a destitute tribal lady who has been treated unfairly by the feudalistic authority in the community during her whole life. In the story of the *Mahabharata*, Lord Krishna, who represents God, is the one who arrives to save *Draupadi* after she has been humiliated, but there is no God to rescue *Dopdi*. The theme of exacting retribution is highly strong in both stories; nonetheless, there is some type of distinction between the two. One of the

motivations for the Mahabharata war was Draupadi's desire for vengeance. In Mahasweta devi's Dopdi, she chooses her own form of retaliation rather than seeking vengeance for the humiliation she suffered. She makes an effort to exact vengeance on those who have harmed her. She seems to be a new species of female. After the terrible event, Draupadi does not wail or act like a helpless victim in any way. She will not dress herself in the morning, she will rip her garments to shreds with her teeth, and she will not wash her hands or face. Her behaviour is completely inexplicable and baffling to say the least. As a result of her refusal to execute the order, she makes a favourable impression on Senanayak, the leader of the army, who is known for being too rational. She marches towards Senanayak in the broad sunshine without any clothing on, exuding an air of confidence and assurance.

".....what's the use of wearing clothes? You are free to disrobe me, but I do not see how you could ever dress me again. Are you a man? She glances around and decides to spit the bloody gob onto the front of Senanayak's white bush-shirt, saying at the same time that there isn't a guy in this room about whom I should be embarrassed. I will not consent to having you drape my clothing over me. What more is there for you to do? Come on, argue with me, argue with me, argue with me... .. Dopdi pushes Senanayak with her two wounded breasts, and for the first time in Senanayak's life, she is terrified to stand in front of an unarmed target. She is horribly afraid.

We have not yet come to terms with the fact that men and women are equally important in the house or outside, in order to talk about larger issues and to find a solution to extreme cases like rape; and the idea that we will ever be able to fight for justice for rape victims is still a very distant dream. Therefore, while reading literature, one encounters a character such as Dopdi, who makes the decision to exact her vengeance in her own unique manner. She does not wait for any other force that is more powerful than her or for a guy to exact retribution on her behalf. After enduring a particularly heinous kind of group sexual assault, the fact that she is able to find it within herself to speak up is an astounding demonstration of the limits to which a woman may be pushed. Dopdi is a new woman who has been born, and although if she cannot convey the perspective of a woman, she is still a woman. The patriarchy has been challenged by this new lady, who has done so without making any sound or movement. She goes about it in her own stealthy way to start a new conflict. The Hunt also focuses a lot on the topic of sexual harassment in the workplace. The author, Devi, focuses her attention on the violence that is often used to dominate and control women. In this scene, a wealthy guy allows his lustful cravings to be satisfied by a native lady. But Mary, the

semi-subaltern protagonist, uses physical force to put a stop to his sexual advances, which would have otherwise gone unchecked. She uses her machete to execute the perpetrator of the crime. After a period of thirteen years, gender roles are suddenly flipped during a tribal spring celebration, and women take on the role of hunters while men play the part of clowns. This event marks the turning point in Mary's life, and it takes place on the night of the festival. By participating in the ritual and taking on the role of a hunter, Mary is able to find the fortitude she needs to get rid of the danger that was hanging over her head and save her own death. In *The Hunt*, Mary exacts her vengeance on what she calls "sexual tyranny." The tales of Devi bring to light the deplorable situations that lower-class women are compelled to live in, where they are forced to constantly endure humiliation on several levels, including the personal, the socioeconomic, and the political. However, her work also underscores the reality that the primary agent of change in a woman's life is the woman herself, who, by following the bravery of her beliefs and bringing about a transformation in her life, may turn herself from a victim to a winner.

The song "Khalnayak" from the Bollywood film *Mahasweta Devi's Breast* serves as the inspiration for the last instalment of the series, which is titled "Behind the Bodice." The author herself poses a thought-provoking question at the beginning of the tale, asking "What is there," which refers to the national issue of that particular year. When it became a national issue, the other fuckups of that time, such as crop failure and earthquake, everywhere clashes between so-called terrorists and state power and therefore killings, the beheading of a young man and woman in Haryana for the crime of marrying out of caste, the unreasonable demands of Medha Patkar and others around the Narmada dam, hundreds of rape-murder-lockup torture and other non-issues which by natural law approached but failed to reach This was not quite as significant as choli kepiche, which literally translates as "below the bodice."

Freelance writer and photographer Upin snaps a picture of Gangor, a low-income migrant worker from a tribal community, as she breastfeeds her child. He takes many pictures of Gangor's breasts and then submits them to a well-known newspaper for publishing consideration. A photo of Gangor's breasts with a statement that reads, "The half-naked ample-breasted female figures of Orissa are set to be raped." Keep them safe! "We must protect the breast!" These photographs are brought to the notice of the Jharoa police force after arriving there in some mysterious manner. The cops apprehend Gangor, throw her in jail, and then rape and sexually assault her there. After Upin found out about the terrible end that Gangor was about to meet, he made it his mission to go

and save her. He learns that she has begun engaging in prostitution in order to support herself financially. Gangor has been cast off by her family and friends, leaving her with no other options. This is her last remaining option. When they finally meet face to face with one another, Gangor identifies Upin as one of the individuals who molested her. Upin is taken aback when she sees Gangor's breasts in their altered state. The terrifying image hammers home the point that he has been trying to ignore the Nothingness all this time, even though it is now impossible to do so. He is now fully aware that his pleading with people to "rescue the breasts" is completely pointless. Because those who are tasked with protecting society are, in reality, the ones who are carrying out violent acts. Upin, who is in a state of shock, walks onto the railroad tracks in Jharoa and is killed when he is run over by a train.

Proletarian – Bourgeoisie Hegemonic Relationship – Subaltern Struggle with Men and Other Women

According to Mariarosa Dalla Costa and Selma James, a woman's work is never finished when she is entrapped in the isolation of being a "angel in the house" (Patmore). This is complemented by the "unpaid domestic work" force, which results in a lack of social experience and knowledge; powerless degradation as "personal servants" without social power; and unequal labour division, despite the fact that women are the vital producers of capitalism. The elimination of a potentially saleable commodity, such as "capacity to work" or "unpaid excess labour power," is an example of the covert exploitation of capitalists. Women who enter the workforce and achieve professional success discover autonomy and empowerment, but they are quickly disempowered by uneven salary relations in a "class society" that revolves around the power centre of males, so perpetuating "the illusion of female inability." The bourgeois "buys with wages the right to use" the only thing "the worker has to sell, his or her ability to work," transforming "community as a productive centre and thus a centre of subversion" where women "carry out domestic labour without a wage", strike, and pension," but also because they always receive back into the home all those who are periodically expelled from their jobs because of economic crisis. The family, this maternal cradle that is always ready to support and protect in times of need; this is what causes inflation, subjection, and exploitation of women in the working-class struggle.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(2013) Swarna Kumari Ghosal was an accomplished musician, writer, novelist, dramatist, and correspondent in addition to being Rabindranath Tagore's sister. Her most notable works are "Deadly Garland" (2014), "The Incomplete Song" (2015), and "An Indian Love Story" (1910). Her works, for the most part, reflected the environment of the white collar class, and in her role as manager of the journal Bharathi, she was primarily responsible for distributing logical articles with the intention of instructing Indian women who did not speak English in the most recent logical recognitions. She was a light conduit in the presentation of women' works in Bengal in addition to being one of the most prominent intellectual characters of the historical period.

When Swarna Kumari first appeared on the intellectual scene in Bengal, it marked the beginning of a new era for women. She was the first author to illustrate the power of women's writing and to elevate the status of women's expressions to a position of respect. Cornelia Sorabji (2015), a legal adviser who received her education at Oxford and has a high level of expertise in addition to evangelical intrigue, fought for the cause of women, particularly widows and women who observe Purdah. Her compositions, "Love and Life Behind the Purdah," are among her most notable works (2017) Studies on the Child Culture of India, Also Known as Sun Babies (2016). The films Behind the Twilight (2014), India Calling (2014), and India Recalled (2018) served as instruments of societal change. The majority of the early works have female protagonists who are fundamentally Indian in their receptivity and creativity and who exhibit the traditional ladylike traits of legitimacy, love, and abdication.

FORMATION OF FEMALE SUBJECTIVITY AND IDENTITY

The experiences and environments that are controlled by women who are marginalised are subversive and have numerous shades that may be formed from and understood about them. The phrase "marginalised women" refers to women who are forced to live on the margins of society due to factors such as gender bias, social class inequalities, and their place within a caste system. This is especially true for indigenous women. The so-called "common" culture does not often make room for the presence of women like these. Their sorrows have been ignored for a very long time, and they do not consider them to be "wrong," but rather the typical repercussions of day-to-day existence. In addition, these women do not have any voices to be heard when it comes to the control they have over their own bodies and the day-to-day activities of their lives.

This physical authority is under the sway of her more powerful male companion. In the case of disadvantaged women, the act of mutilating a female's body might even be deemed to be part of the regular behaviour. In Anup Baniwal Vandana's statement, The colonial and patriarchal discourses that are largely premised upon a series of binary oppositions, such as colonizer/colonized, imperialism/nationalism, man/woman, public/private, center/periphery, produce a violent hierarchy. These oppositions include: colonizer/colonized; imperialism/nationalism; man/woman; public/private; center/periphery. In this hierarchy, those who have been colonised, those whose culture has been suppressed, and women are labelled as a group that is socially and culturally deviant and disruptive. In this kind of binarist thinking, one word ruthlessly dominates the other (2007, 6).

THE REJECTIONABLE NATURE OF THE FEMALE SELF AND BODY

It is not simple to have a conversation about the female body when women are considered to be nothing more than "marginalised" or "peripheral" individuals who do not have any voice to speak for themselves or for others and who have no right to their bodies. This makes it difficult to have a conversation about the female body. 2 The same may be said for situations in which women are only seen as a "object" for the sake of trading and exploiting. This conversation does not conclude with the concept of right or wrong, but rather creates a "in-between grey area" of dispute to chronicle the situations in which women find themselves. We see a broad variety of women, from women of lower castes to women from higher castes, and from wealthy to impoverished backgrounds, navigating the hypocritical actions of their families and the larger society in the tales of Mahasweta Devi. Not only did the dualism or multi-behavior of society destroy their lives, but it also served as an example of tyranny by creating an environment in which women and their physical attributes are simply seen as a commodity to be "consumed" and "mutilated." In addition to this, their outward appearance is concealed, and their physical bodies are considered to be a topic worthy of reproduction without their informed permission.

WOMEN AS MOTHER VS. MOTHER AS WOMEN

Because of their important position in the process of species reproduction, "natural" has come to refer to a procedure that is artificially created in order to subjugate women (JasodharaBagchi,). In

"Breast-Giver," Devi tells the narrative of a subaltern lady named Jashoda who, following the death of her husband Kangalicharan in an accident, is assigned as the professional mother of the "Haldar family" in post-independent Bengal. Jashoda's husband Kangalicharan was killed in the accident. Because she has to provide for her family, she decides to take the job. She is represented as "divine" (Spivak, 228) and "a piece of mother" (Spivak, 233) owing to the fact that she is a Brahmin lady; nevertheless, in the long term, her standing has altered due to the fact that she is unable to continue the task. She eventually takes on the role of the other maids in the household. She is not a 'goddess' in the traditional sense of the word. In her narrative, she "becomes the newborns' suckling mother" (Spivak, 228) in order to preserve the "figure shape" of the daughter-in-laws of the Haldar family. This was done to protect the "figure shape" of the Haldar family. It strikes me as quite ironic that Jashoda is willing to give up her own body in order to provide support for her boss in exchange for little more than a sufficient quantity of food. She shows how a subaltern woman's reproductive body is used to produce economic value in a way that is exploitative of her position. According to Spivak's argument, which is referenced in Gayatri Chakravarty Spivak by Stephen Morton, Jashoda's decision to sell her mother's body to the household of a wealthy Brahmin family in order to provide for her own family in effect inverts the traditional sexual division of labour that exists between men and women (2007, 126).

WOMEN AS WOMEN

Another narrative, titled "Dhouli," depicts the oppression that women face due to their status as members of a lower caste and social class, which results in the objectification of the female body. Despite the fact that Dhouli is a dusad, also known as an untouchable, she finds herself falling in love with Misrilal, a Hindu from a higher caste. Her oppressed status prevents her from freely expressing her 'love,' which instead takes on the character of a sin for her to commit. She gives birth to Misrilal's kid, yet she is given little credit for her accomplishment. She maintains control over her family by the use of forced prostitution, which, as the narrative progresses, becomes a problem that Misrilal finds intolerable. He does not take her as his wife and does not let her to remain in the village where he lives. He makes a big deal out of it and summons a salis in an attempt to take her away from the hamlet. It is to notify that in a few times before he was in love with her as he also mentions that he is 'the slave' of Dhouli, but in a moment when society strikes

clothed and cannot be publicly exposed" (Spivak, 183). Her narrative exemplifies the upper-class narrative, in which an alleged saviour in the form of God is present. Nevertheless, the reader is left with the peculiar impression of her "legitimised pluralization in uniqueness," which is entirely constrained by the position she has in relation to her husband.

WOMEN AS MOTHER

This section of the chapter opens with a thought or a query on whether or not the idea of a "mother" is marginalised in any way. Or may the actions of a mother be called into question within the context of the discourse on 'marginalization'? Or does the significance of her physical attributes not come into play in this discussion? The underline distinction between motherhood and the idea of motherhood, as Devi refers to the juxtapose emotions of motherhood with the constructed notion of motherhood: "These works demonstrate how the traditional deification of motherhood can often conceal a collective attempt to circumscribe women within socially prescribed roles while denying them the right to articulate their individual needs and desires." (These works demonstrate how the traditional deification of motherhood can often conceal a collective attempt to circumscribe women within socially prescribed roles while denying them the right to articulate their (Chakravarty, I). It makes no difference if a woman is a mother, a daughter, or a wife; they are always subjugated in the process of defining their vulnerable position. Devi provides an insightful explanation of this topic while equating women to goddesses and comparing them to mothers. Sindhubala's mother portrays her daughter in the narrative "Sindhubala" as having dark complexion and a "bulging forehead, snub nose" (Sindhubala, 38). However, at the same time, her feet are ascribed as being lucky since they reached the first realm. According to the story that Devi is telling, Sindhu reportedly came into this world feet first. Ever then, Sindhu's feet have been viewed particularly auspicious" (2011, 37). In addition, Radha Chakravarty says that "Sindhubala" represents the sorrow of a woman who is compelled to play the role of a heavenly healer and is asked to save the lives of other people's kids while ignoring her own physical and emotional demands. Radha Chakravarty wrote this (In the Name of the Mother, xi).

CONCLUSION

In the previous three chapters and the introduction, I made an effort to investigate two facets: first, women and their voices; second, women and their bodies. I also investigated the feminist ideology

that underpins the concept that feminism is a social construction. It implies that a woman is not something that is born but something that is formed by society. In the first chapter, it developed the working premise that women do, in fact, have voices of their own; yet, these voices are mangled and shattered. In order to provide an explanation for what Devi's tales are all about, I extended this discussion as an underlining message in the remaining two chapters. In this chapter, I also spoke about the feminine narrative tone and the topic construction in terms of both the authors' and the characters' perspectives on the tales. These two lines of thought are complementary to one another and have numerous similarities. These women have had to overcome a variety of obstacles, including those pertaining to their gender, caste, and economic standing, in order to construct a story and speak up with a powerful voice. In her story, Devi is speaking while simultaneously carrying the voices of subalterns. Then Spivak is maintaining these voices and making them known to the public via her translations and analyses of other people's work. Therefore, there are several speakers operating at various levels, and their voices are mixed together as they express the tales that have not been stated.

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