

The Significance of a Feminist Geopolitical Analysis in Mahasweta Devi's *The Hunt and Douloti the Bountiful*

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Abstract

In the inspiration of bringing alternatives to Critical Geopolitics and Subaltern Geopolitics, Feminist Geopolitics has been employed in this paper. Feminist geopolitics traverses upon the discriminated, marginalized community's lives and events as well as it connects their exploitation with power production. This feminist geopolitics' analytical approach demonstrates connections of geopolitics power production with everyday life of Indian tribal people. While reading Indian Tribal community as a subaltern in the works of Mahasweta Devi, through feminist geopolitics we have analyzed violence, displacement, and resistance of tribal women. In geographical imaginaries, the land of tribal protects and strengthens women; simultaneously the tribal land displaces and destroys. The article investigates two questions, 1. What is the role of land in the lives of tribal women? 2. What is the need of mother land for tribal women? It also focuses on two women, whom the dominant geopolitics had marginalized once, but then, the research gap states, how one (woman) could survive through epitomic influence on geography and another could not survive due to displacement. Moreover, the gap insists on how the power relation operates inside and outside the tribal border as well as the interest, knowledge and power of elite's invades the tribal community after the independence. The qualitative method (textual analysis) is used for research analysis, and Arya (2020) defines that "textual analysis is a type of qualitative analysis that focuses on the underlying ideological and cultural assumptions of a text" (Arya, 2020, p. 173). Hence, this method utilizes the theoretical approaches of the feminist geopolitics theory for the study of the two short stories of Mahasweta Devi. In this article, *Imaginary Maps* (1995) a collection of short stories by Mahasweta Devi, translated by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak from which *The Hunt* (1995) and *Douloti the Bountiful* (1995) (two stories) have been analyzed for discussion.

Keywords: subaltern geopolitics, feminist geopolitics, displacement, resistance, land, power.

1. Introduction

The article employs upon feminist geopolitics, in the short stories. The role of Land in two women's is analysed. The first character Mary (*The Hunt* (1995)) saved herself with the geographical knowledge which she had on her forest. In the short story *Douloti the Bountiful* (1995) displays how Douloti has been victimized to the society after being displaced from the forest. The paper demonstrates how land decides who becomes prey and who emerges as predator. Feminist Geopolitics expanded from geopolitics. Geopolitics is an interdisciplinary study, Sir Halford John Mackinder is considered as the founding father of Geopolitics. Geopolitics refers to the competition for control over areas of land that have an international or worldwide scope, as well as the use of such areas for political gain. "The word geopolitics points to the interface between two distinct ontological realms and scientific disciplines, geography, and politics" (Steinmetz, 2012, p.1). The word Geopolitics was coined by Rudolf Kjellén, and for him, geopolitics is "the problems and conditions within a state that arise from its geographic features" (Puntigliano, 2021). As responses to the critical approaches to geopolitics, critical geopolitics and subaltern Geopolitics emerged. They both challenged dominant narratives. Critical Geopolitics analyses how certain spatial, geographical, and identity representations support political agendas and influence power relations, "Critical geopolitics examines arguments about power and place" (Albert, Reuber, & Wolkersdorfer, 2014) Subaltern Geopolitics represents Subaltern imaginaries with a geopolitical perspective, provide innovative, alternative research to that of the dominating groups and rooted in post-colonial studies. "The concept of subaltern makes direct reference to postcolonial notions of power relations, suggesting a position that is not completely other, resistant or alternative to dominant geopolitics, but an ambiguous position of marginality" (Sharp, 2011, p. 271). Feminist geopolitics is an analytical approach extended from critical Geopolitics and subaltern geopolitics "Another emerging field of inquiry within critical geopolitics is feminist geopolitics, which shifts the focus from the operations of elite agents to the constructions of political subjects in everyday political practice" (Kuus, 2017). Feminist Geopolitics refers to a tool which ventilates how power operates on desperate people, issues and places "Feminist geopolitics unpacks geopolitical power and demonstrates such power's exceptional role in the everyday lives of real people" (Massaro & Williams, 2013, p. 567). This also deals with the power production of inequality and exploitation.

Reading feminist geopolitics with geographical imaginaries shows how tribal people particularly tribal women are dominated and displaced by geopolitical power. “Subaltern imaginaries that offers creative, alternative study to the dominant groups in geopolitical perspective.” (Sharp, 2011, p. 271) The dominant and dominated groups are considered as binary oppositions and the binary oppositions are not directly involved in the power relation, but trace relationship with the land and dominant society. Geopolitics as a material is used to analyse as well as to study object, furthermore, it plays as a tool and study as an object. “Geopolitics was both blueprint and framing Device for international relations, effectively blurring a distinction between the analytic lens used to study objects and the objects themselves” (Dixon, 2016, p. 2). As an analytical tool, Geopolitics analysis how Mary (*The Hunt*) survives with geographical acquaintance and Douloti (*Douloti the Bountiful*) becomes an object to the geopolitical displacement. The most marginalised subaltern group in India is tribal community; therefore, bringing down the subaltern imaginaries with geographical power relations leads to a conceptual understanding of critical and subaltern geopolitics. Feminist geopolitics will be examined more closely when analysing feminist characters. This paper tries to elucidate the relationship between women and land; geographical structure strengthens women to fight against their exploitation. At the same time, displacement also causes weakness; because it cuts people off from interpersonal connections and the strength of epistemological (knowledge on both place and culture of tribes) ethno relationships. A tribal indigenous group in India has been dominated before and after the colonisation; in other words, imperialism continued by the elites in postcolonial era. The ethno cultural identity of the Indian tribal is associated with forest, yet the tribal never owned the forest land. “Tribal people had no sense of property. There was communal land holding because, just like the Native Americans, they also believed that land and forest and river belong to everyone” (Devi, 1995, p. X). Since they never owned any land, feudal landlords occupied the land, and these landless tribal people were enslaved or forced to work for low wages. The tribal community worshipped the forest and nature, but in the same place, they were exploited. Subaltern Geopolitics attempts to read the indigenous tribal community (Subalterns) and their exploitation in the context of the border; the exploitation is a combination of displacement and alienation of tribal identity within the land.

The article aims to read Feminist Geopolitics from two fictional feminist characters, Mary from *The Hunt* (1995) and Douloti from *Douloti the Bountiful* (1995); both are short stories from the collection of short stories, *Imaginary Maps* (1995). Mahasweta Devi is an Indian Bengali writer born in the year 1926. While writing her first novel *Jhansi*, she had a chance to meet rural people, “since then, I have a firm opinion that the most precious historical material is what is preserved in the memory of the common people” (Swaminathan, 2016). Her experiences made her write history from the perspectives of common people. In 1965, she visited Palamu, located in Bihar; the visitation made her understand the critical position of tribal people in independent India. Mahasweta Devi primarily concentrated on documenting tribal history due to an incident; “A tribal girl asked me modestly, When we go to school, we read about Mahatma Gandhi. Did we have no heroes? Did we always suffer like this? Hence, through the words of the girl, she started writing about the tribal movements and the tribal heroes” (Devi, 1995a, p.XI). Predominantly, she was involved in the lives of marginalized tribal people, especially in the states of Madhya Pradesh, West Bengal, Odisha, and Jharkhand.

2. Literature Review

Discrimination against indigenous tribal people is spoken worldwide. The condition of tribal women is discussed universally, but discrimination has not vanished completely; instead, it has taken various forms. Geographical discontinuity from the main stream society and displacement has ruined the life of tribal people, especially when tribal women are suffered more. Land and border roles have been politicized internationally, in the same way tribal belt also is occupied politically. Feminist geopolitics can be used to address human displacement, particularly when marginalized women are taken out from their places as sexual commodities and other types of lay labour. Jennifer Hyndman speaks about the human displacement with the view of refugee, which involves in the international border and associates with feminist and critical geopolitics. In addition, “the externalization of asylum and extended waiting that refugees experience while displaced is a form of slow violence, or slow harm” (Hyndman, 2019, p. 7). Finally, Jennifer Hyndman discusses about resettlement, where the migrated people were not given proper secured job.

The influence of power politics on the lay people is discussed by Massaro, he demonstrated how lay people of subaltern society is exploited through power. The development of feminist geopolitics from feminist geography and critical geopolitics is discussed as well as it traces how the power politics operates between elites and subaltern. “Rather than fixed or simply imposed, Pain and Smith draw attention to the ways geopolitical relations are manifested through emotional geographies” (Vanessa & Jill, 2013, p.571). The Authors concludes by highlighting that Geography is associated with emotions when the displacement occurs that are expressed with pain. Jack argues the international power relation on the everyday experience with the lay people, especially non elite society. Similarly, she analyses feminist geopolitics from the perspective of technology which traces the correlation between international politics and technology. The marginalized people, “They perceive their own sense of marginality, privilege, and inclusion is critical to how they live out the geopolitics of technology in the everyday” (Jack & Seyram, 2021, p2). Technology provided an invisible infrastructure in both centre and marginal countries, but the technology makes an impact in the terms of gender at the marginalized countries.

Fluri (2009) discusses gender politics and political constriction of “Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan” from the perspective of Geopolitical violence. Jennifer mainly focuses on how geopolitics brings out violence and gender issues from the perspective of non-elites. “This article has sought to complicate the existing visible scenes of political violence from below” (Fluri, 2009, p. 2640), so that it documents the history from the perspective of others who are considered as below. Tavassoli and Mirzapour (2014) argue the social, political and economic concerns of colonized countries and how the minds are colonized and women are subjected to both colonization and male domination. The author concludes that post-colonial literature gives voice to silenced, marginalized and

oppressed women in the third world countries. Hyndman addresses the political violence in the Iraq war through feministic geopolitics and political geography. Hyndman navigates between political geography and feminist geopolitics and exposes the violence in the war and the death of women in “war on terror” (Hyndman, 2017, p. 1). Dixon and Marston (2011) explore geopolitics, and found that it is not only about the borders, but the vulnerability of the individuals. They also addressed issues of feministic geopolitics related with women's vulnerability, care, emotions and agency.

Vijayan, and Umamaheshwari (2022) deal with breaking down the existing binary barrier as well as analysing feudalism, bonded slavery, economic exploitation, socio-political exclusion, sexual harassment of tribal women and land displacement which influences the Indian Tribal community. “They are also marginalized and exploited in post-colonial India by local moneylenders-landlords and Rajas, as they were during the British colonial period” (Vijayan, & Umamaheshwari, 2022, pp. 7-8) Authors shows how Douloti has been marginalized by the elites. Arun, Subbiah (2022) focus on an eco-feminist perspective focusing on extractivism, bonded labour system and exploitation of the unprivileged and the environment. The writers emphasised in their works that humanity can only survive if people respect and honour Mother Nature instead of stealing it for their own gain. Guha (2021) accounts the elements that influence a state to impose a hegemonic power on the lay people. Guha analyses how the common people are affected by the hegemonic power in the works of Mahasweta Devi. The author gives voice to India's underprivileged communities, who are otherwise silenced by the dominant narratives and controlled by the powerful.

Philip, Dangwal and Balakrishnan (2020) elucidate the resistance of tribal women. Authors argue on how women's resistance takes place in Mahasweta Devi's works. The researchers look into the position of gendered subaltern women and their participations in identity seeking and resistance. They finally identified the bridge between theory and practice with gendered subalterns. Myadar and Davidson discussed geographical displacement, sexual objectification and violence against women body through war in ‘Comfort women’. “The euphemistic phrase denotes to the cruel irony of displacing women from their homes and homelands while concealing the realities of the violence of displacement and sexual slavery” (Myadar & Davidson, 2019, p. 2). They highlighted that female body had been used as commodity during the war and the displacement is another cruel action which made them into sexual slavery. Kim speaks about the institutionalizing democracy and the citizenship of women, the rights of women, yet they are seen traditional repositories. “In the historic context of post-coloniality and the establishment of a democratic republic, women's rights became a symbol of democracy” (Kim, 2020, p. 87). Kim highlights the establishment of women rights through historical context and post-colonial theories. Surendran, Prasannan, Jeyaram, Palanivel, Pandian, Ramasubbu (2022) review different groups of Indian tribal community and their ethnogynaecology. The article especially deals with tribal knowledge of ethnogynaecology and tribes special contribution to medicine developments in India. They got done that the ethno-medical knowledge of Indian tribal communities contributes to various medical problems like menopause, abortion, infertility, menstrual pain, delivery, and leucorrhoea.

Praphan (2018) demonstrates the victimisation of tribal communities through bonded slavery and bonded prostitution by the system from *Imaginary Maps* (1995). Praphan makes a view through neo-colonisation and shows how third-world countries are victimised to knowledge and management. He ends with the enslavement of nature through how tribal people are enslaved by the capitalists. Women's revolutionary actions and resistance are discussed by Silva (2018) from the works of Mahasweta Devi. She also speaks about the difference between myth and real life. “Devi's protagonist is situated at the point of break down between myth and its real-life context and finds that it is through extreme, terrifying measures that one can secure agency.” (Silva, 2018, p. 63). The above discussed articles are bringing down different perspectives on feminist geopolitics, post-colonial dimensions, and various issues of Indian tribal people and the works of Mahasweta Devi. The review includes those of refugee women, how the power line affects the general public in their daily lives, and how technology affects gender in developing nations. These reviews reveal that feminist geopolitics is rarely applied in literary works, as wells tribal women's issues are not approached with feminist geopolitical framework. The current article differs from the review article in a way that deals with the displacement of marginalized tribal women and their exploitation it also speaks about the strength of tribal women when they are not displaced.

3. Methodology

Rudolf Kjellen's geopolitics has been adopted into various disciplines like Political Science, Geography, Social Science and Literature. The term geopolitics joins various theories and forms new structures such as critical geopolitics, subaltern geopolitics, feminist geopolitics, dominant geopolitics, anti-geopolitics and popular geopolitics. Vanessa & Jill define feminist geopolitics as an analytical method that connects various discriminated societies, people, places, events, and problems to demonstrate how various power operations and creations of inequality and exploitation are interconnected. Feminist geopolitics is studied through the lens of critical geopolitics and subaltern geopolitics, which enables us to see how power operates in marginal places and problems. Subaltern Geopolitics deals with the geopolitical power play in ordinary people's daily lives and prompts them to rewrite the personal history. The perspectives of feminism and geopolitics have been used to analyze two women characters from a discriminated indigenous society through the text. The combination of feminism and geopolitics lights upon the individual women characters with an imagined geographical location of the author. Geography, epistemological elite's imperialism, and feministic emancipation and vanquishment are analyzed with textual evidence and other discussions from different articles and more over newspaper incidents are included.

4. Discussion

4.1 Elements of Feminist Geopolitics Imaginary maps

The Hunt and *Douloti the Bountiful* are taken from *Imaginary Maps* (1995) (a collection of short stories). The Hunt speaks about Mary, who belongs to Oran tribal community. The story involves how the prey becomes a predator within the tribal land. Douloti the Bountiful deals with Douloti, a tribal woman who was sold as kanya-whore (Bonded labor for prostitution) and displaced from her native and died at last. Imaginary maps prompt “thinking through geographical boundaries, imaginary or real, complicates the visible division of land and space” (Anwar, 2017, p. 83). Analyzing two female characters (Mary Oran and Douloti) with geographical power influences and feministic elements are conceptualized through feminist geopolitics. Douloti is displaced and exploited at the same time Mary survived with the help of geographical knowledge and strength. “Feminist Geopolitics is an analytic approach that connects seemingly disparate people, places, events, and issues to show the connections across various operations of power and productions of inequality and exploitation” (Massaro & Jill, 2013, p. 567). Feminism directly refers to gender inequality and male domination as well as the cultural and political position of female gender; geopolitics discusses in terms of feministic which directly analysis “epistemological and methodological approach in geography” (Massaro & Jill, 2013, p. 570). In India, tribal’s lands are mostly located in and around the forest; their geographical location was displaced during and after the colonization, through which the tribal community has been exploited and marginalized. Most of the tribal women were treated as sexual objects.

By bringing down the relationship between mind and land, the influence of colonizers could be brought out. The colonizers first colonized the minds and then they colonized the land. Colonizing the minds led to psychological weakness and colonizing the land brought economic weakness. These kinds of colonization happened not only in British period but also in the time of decolonization. Tribal people have been brought down from the forest and divided into groups, “We come to know not only about the geographical division of the land but also the psychological splits and tensions built around such divisions” (Anwar, 2017, p.85). Spatial Inequality and Geographical dislocation have ruined the cultural structure of subcontinent tribal people, especially tribal women, who were considered and treated as sexual commodities. This paper’s main aim is to establish women’s psychological stability within their land, which refers to geographical structure or border where cultural identity strengthens, and displacement gives mental weakness.

4.2 Colonization in the Tribal Land

In *Imaginary maps*, generally, two kinds of colonization (Colonization in the postcolonial land) took place around the tribal land; the first kind is feudal landlords who entered into tribal lands and made them into enslaved people. “When did the Rajput brahman from outside come to this land of jungle and mountain? When did the entire landslide into their hands?” (Devi, 1995c, p. 21). It is clear that non-tribal people have entered into the tribal land and occupied their land. It is like the white invaders, who have entered into India and colonized our land. In tribal culture,

Today in the village of Kuda, only seven families hold 21 acres of land. Now those 21 acres are irrigated, and the crop will be equally divided among the entire community. They understood ecology and the environment in a way we cannot yet imagine (Devi, 1995a, p. X).

The author herself explains the quantity of land which has been occupied. Tribal people never owned land; therefore, it was easy for the outsiders to own their land with the help of a few corrupt government officials. The suppression of tribal people was not ended only by occupying the lands, but contractors started extracting minerals and timber from the forests; the worst thing here is that tribal people were forced to work for low wages. “Like them, the Sobors (the hunting tribes) will beg forgiveness if they are forced to fell a tree: You are our friend. I do this because my wife doesn’t have any food, my son doesn’t have any food, my daughter starves” (Devi, 1995a, p. X). Tribal people were forced to work against their will. The forest and nature were worshiped for generations, and they did not take anything from the forest more than their daily requirements. The second kind of colonization was displacement; tribal people were forced to move out from the forest, and mostly they became bonded labours and sexual commodity. The idea of being low has been sown in the minds; tribal people are made to believe as it all happens because of their fate,

On the high-caste boy’s forehead, he writes property, land, cattle, and tree from the forest. Education, job, contract. On the outcaste’s forehead, he writes bonded slavery. The sun and the moon move in the sky by fate’s rule. The poor boys of Seora village become mokamiyas of the Munabars, Fate’s rule (Devi, 1995c, p. 55).

When the tribal people are not aware of reality, it is easy for the colonizers to invade their land and labours as well as the displacement. This is how Douloti was displaced and used as a sexual object.

The modern colonization or modern slavery took place amidst tribal communities by occupying forests, “Seora is originally a tribal land of jungles and mountains that was encroached by outsiders and converted into agricultural land. Once claimed by economic developers, the village is handed over to the emerging” (Yook, 2018, p. 6). The forest has been maintained as jungle by the tribal people, but after the arrival of non tribal people, the forest was converted into agricultural land. The eco-cultural system of tribal people never allowed non tribal people to occupy the land, but later they entered through government rules. After being entered in the tribal land, the tribal region was used for agriculture, where tribal members were required to work for low wages or they were sold as slaves. The remaining lands were used for extractives. By bringing down geographical references, the relationship between an individual’s cultural profile and international political stance can be displayed. The analytical approach of feminism and geopolitics connectively enhances the

exploitation and discrimination of dominated society and specifies the geographical and psychological divisions of the tribal community. The psychological outcomes of Mary from *The Hunt* and Douloti from *Douloti the Bountiful* vary because of the psychological and geographical atmosphere. Geographical epistemology is highly required for resistance when they are exploited.

Multi-layered power structures across the geographical location of tribal communities separated indigenous people from the mainstream society. *Douloti the Bountiful* shows Seiora as a reflection of the whole of independent India, where all sorts of exploitation occur. Douloti has been portrayed as a symbol of independence in India; she is displaced from Seiora and sold into a brothel house. Consequently, she dies on the day of independence. When Paramananda freed Ganori's bonded labor from Munabar Chandela, Paramananda asked for Douloti to marry him. "This god is saying; he'll end my bonded labor with money; he's saying he'll marry Douloti" (Devi, 1995c, p.46). When the bond is transferred from Manabar to Paramananda slavery, subsequently, the nature of the job and place are transformed. The transformation happens from man's physical labour to woman's sexual labour. The cruelty of feudal landlords sucked the tribal's labour and gained profit out of human labour. However, when Paramananda took Douloti and put her into a brothel house, he just profited out of the human body.

4.3 Significance of Geography in the Life of Douloti

The title *Imaginary Maps* is justified with the body of Douloti. An economic alienation symbolized in third-world countries through the sufferings of Douloti. Geopolitics is embodied in the tribal land between Nagesia and Chandela, a layer between caste and economic class. When Crook Nagesia is father of Douloti was forced to sell his daughter, economic, caste and class tied him to stand against selling his daughter. The characterization of Devi signifies the imperialist position of the subaltern community and how the elites imperialize them. Paramananda travelled from village to village and merchandised women for brothel houses; especially he entered only the economically underprivileged areas. "This god plays this game from village to village" (Devi, 1995c, p. 47). Political influences influenced the geographical location of the subaltern communities, especially the proletarians. Douloti witnessed a human body being plundered and crossed the border, where human habitations are displaced as commodities. What Spivak calls the "Epitomic violence of imperialism" (Spivak, 2015, p.82), which is actually ignored by Deleuze and Foucault, could be seen through the characterization of Devi. The elites utilize the ignorance of subaltern communities, in the third world countries.

The idea and interest are always promoted through the knowledge, the proposed knowledge is a proposed interest, and the interest of Paramananda has been expressed through the marriage proposal, the power of cruel knowledge sown on the lands of the tribal community. "I am a brahman. What I say is right" (Devi, 1995c, p. 44) the power of elite is imposed on tribes, the power structure is transferred from British Colonizers to Indian elites. "Ganori! I will go with you to your master and repay the money. Economic strength manifested through epistemology". (Devi, 1995c, p. 45). "I have got down to this work as the god Narayana, I must have a goddess Lakshmi with me. I will marry your daughter Douloti". (Devi, 1995c, p. 46) At last the interest is exposed. The interest is taking Douloti away with him, and the knowledge is making tribes to believe that Paramananda is right. And at last the power is money. All the three together knowledge, interest and power are combined and suppressed Douloti. Douloti is projected as a reflection of whole subcontinent tribal women after the independence. When Paramananda says to Ganori that all his words are rights since he is a Brahman, he shows his power and knowledge together, and the actual interest in taking Douloti with him for prostitution. 'Epistemic Imperialism' in third-world countries, with geographically isolated locations, especially in the forest area, has been used to colonize the subaltern community.

In point of fact, first, they colonized the minds of tribal people and made them believe that they were superior to them, "I am Crook Nagesia, god, untouchable, very poor, god" (Devi, 1995c, p. 45), the inferior thought of tribal, made the non-tribal superior. Finally, they colonized tribal's labour through bonded slavery; through this bond, they will never be accessible for generations, "He keeps Dusad, Ghasi, Nagesia, Munda, Lohar, Oraon, Bhuyian, Chamar, Parhaia as Kamiya. There is no end to the people he has lent money to and made into Kamiya". (Devi, 1995b, p. 21) By occupying tribal land, elites occupied minds, lands and labour of tribal community. Even though the government abolished bonded slavery, it continues still in a different form. In the story *Douloti the Bountiful*, the entry of Paramananda represents colonization, where Paramananda was an invader who colonized Douloti in the name of marriage. Seiora village is represented as the imagined geographical structure for the whole of independent India Where Munabar Chandela came and colonized the village; he conquered the land and labour of the tribal people.

If you raise a roof or buy a water buffalo, the master will notice. If you buy land, the master will grab it. If you buy cattle, the master will snatch them. If you buy an umbrella for your head, or shoes for your feet, he'll have you tied to the post in the yard and beaten (Devi, 1995c, p. 24).

The tyranny of Munabar controlled seiora and he never allowed them to be free. This imperialistic view of a colonizer discriminated tribal society even after the freedom of a country.

Paramananda came to the village and possessed tribal girl whom he takes back to his place and treats as a sexual commodity. So Paramananda took away Crook's fourteen-year-old daughter Douloti one day. Crook protested greatly. But Munabar said with menace, didn't he give you money? Didn't he make you free? (Devi, 1995c, p.50).

Munabar colonized Seiora's land, and Paramananda invaded Seiora's women Douloti. The nontribal colonizers politicize the ignorance of tribal people, where geography has been used as a tool in conquering. Inside the third world countries especially after the freedom, the fourth-world space emerges through the elite's imperialism. A geographical location where most indigenous people live has become a targeted place for the new colonizers. Seiora is an imaginary map that displays the decolonizing country's true face.

A tribal girl from Seiora village dies on the day of independence, where an Indian map is drawn, and the national flag is hoisted. An isolated location that is marginalized and cornered from mainstream society is portrayed as a symbol of independent India, where people have never breathed the air of freedom and are unaware of the systems. “Yes, yes? But where is China? Where again is India? Myelay or MLA says, this country is India. No, no, Madhpura. What! Contradicting the Mye-lay Sir?” (Devi, 1995c, p. 66) “No, no, this is not a good circus. – What’s the fight? - Who knows? They are fighting some China. - Whose fight? - Someone called India, his. I didn’t understand anything”. (Devi, 1995c, p. 65) The people actually who do not know the geographical structure and power structure of a country are victimized and colonized by the knowledge and power of elite society. At last, Douloti is given thirty customers a day which makes her sick and leads to death. Geographical dislocation through a bonded agreement directly affects the psychological stability of a woman. The economic need of a tribal woman, and the need to fulfil the bond Douloti owes to landlords, prompted them to dislocate from the location; this directly represents or criticizes the modern Indian economic scenario. Moreover, Douloti’s death expresses that tribal people will never be freed from bonded slavery, but it transfers to another form. The entire tribal experience is displayed through the character of Douloti. The life Douloti undergoes many traumatic experiences, they can be considered as the representation of the entire subcontinent tribal people, who are invaded and exploited by postcolonial colonizers.

4.4 Forest and Women in the Hunt

The Hunt can be seen from the opposite view of Douloti, where geographical structure produces strength, A tribal woman Mary Oran becomes a predator, who was about to prey. Douloti becomes a victim of modern colonization, at the same time; Mary could save herself from the harassment of the outsiders. The story deals with the same kind of exploitation that Seiora faced, like economic crisis, extractivism and even tribal people forced to cut down trees from the forest, which they worshipped for generations. “Every five years or so, some trees will be ready, and I’ll buy. One two three. This is still a virgin area, and I’ll take the tree felling monopoly” (Devi, 1995b, p. 7). Without doubt, all tribal people in India have been exploited before and after the independence. Throughout history, the resistance of tribal people against discrimination has been visible. Feministic emancipation is displayed through Mary in *The Hunt*. The woman is treated as sexual objectification and subjected to all sorts of discrimination. Colonial evidence could be traced in the story of *The Hunt*, the outsiders invaded and extracted from the forest; the entry of contractors to cut the timbers resulted in colonizing the workforce of tribal people.

The broker started planning the deployment of manpower. Oraon and Munda men and women came from six villages Kuruda, Murhai, Seeho, Thapari, Dhuma, Chinadoha. Unbelievable. Money at home. Others will fell the trees, twelve annas daily for men, eight annas for women for trimming branches and carrying the pieced timber to the trucks. (Devi, 1995b, p. 8).

The economic crisis of the tribal community has been used ideally by the contractors who have entered from outside to forest areas. The forest and tribal people underwent all sorts of exploitation inside and outside, but Mary could resist Tehsildar Singh and killed him in order to save her from the harassment. Mary has a chance to make her decision and decide accordingly.

A psychological ability which was provided by the geographical strength resulted in the resistance. The knowledge of the land structure and power of a tribal woman prompted Mary to fight against the giant predator Tehsildar Singh. “Mary laughed and held him, laid him on the ground. Tehsildar is laughing; Mary lifts the machete, lowers it, lifts, lowers. A few million moons pass. Mary stands up. Blood? On her clothes? She’ll wash in the cut.”(Devi, 1995b, p. 16). The prey hunted the predator, and the woods witnessed the Murder of the Tehsildar, who came to murder the trees as a contractor. The deeper knowledge of the forest governed Mary from Tehsildar who is the hunter of the body. The tribal ancestors worshipped forest and nature for generations, and the strength of nature bounded and strengthened Mary to hunt the predator.

The Murder of Tehsildar or the violence of Mary is acceptable once the reader understands the agony of Douloti, who died out of the cruelty of dominated society. The resistance, murder and bloodshed incidents in *The Hunt* moves with the dance and happiness of Mary and all these are justified with the sufferings of Douloti.

In the women’s gathering, Mary drank the most wine, sang, danced, ate hunted meat with rice and felt the greatest relish. Drink and song, drink and dance. Ooh Haramdeo our God, Let there be a Spring feast like this every year. Let us hunt this way every year- We’ll give you wine. We’ll give you wine. (Devi, 1995b, p. 17).

Moon festival of this tribal community goes with hunting in the forest, boozing wine, singing and dancing. Mary went for human hunting and this particular hunting made her happy and to be satisfied, because she realized that she killed a beast. Douloti’s death anthropomorphises tribal woman as a prey and murder by Mary Oran shows a tribal woman as a predator. The tribal borders make all the differences; within the tribal border, Mary could resist and kill those who abused her sexually, but Douloti could not resist and died after becoming a prey to the mainstream society. “Douloti realized this as well, that she would no longer get to Seora. Pain is climbing her entire chest, upward, upward. Douloti lay down. The pain became a cough; the cough became blood, Douloti closed her eyes” (Devi, 1995b, p. 93). Douloti longed to reach Seora, but then she realized that she could never reach and this shocking truth made her mentally and physically weak. Geographical dislocation ruined the life of the ignorant tribal woman Douloti. Mary faced sexual violence from a man, who is influenced by political power, but this power did not stop Mary. Even though Mary is a tribal woman who is not aware of the political influences and laws of the government, she shows her resistance through the geographical knowledge of her forest. “Forward behind the creeper is the ravine, loose stones on its sides. No one knows how deep the ravine is. No one has gone all the way down. If one could go down into that bottomless cold darkness?” (Devi, 1995b, p. 16). Mary is aware of the deep forest. In this place, no one can enter

easily, which helped her to protect herself from a blood-sucking cannibal. Women became more power in her geographical location. The land protected and strengthened her to stand against imperialism. Douloti's death is justified by the murder done by Mary Oran.

5. Bonded Slavery in the Modern India

The displacement of Douloti from Seiora denotes the displacement of all tribal communities; even seventy five years after freedom, bonded slavery and sexual exploitation are enduring for tribal people.

A 16-year-old tribal girl who was a migrant from Madhya Pradesh to Karnataka was allegedly gang-raped in February 2022.

Around 300 migrant labourers were forced to work as bonded labour at sugarcane mills in Karnataka where a minor pregnant girl was sexually abused and threatened not to reveal (Kakvi, 2022).

Still tribal people are migrating throughout India for various works, and the bonded slavery is happening without bond. The pair, like husband and wife is given some amount in advance to work, and until they pay the full amount by work, they are not permitted to go out and work somewhere. In such places, tribal women are sexually exploited and they are threatened by the contactors, so that they will not reveal it to the police. Tribal exploitation and displacement are habitual news in regional newspapers. Human values are treated as commodities for the growth of the landlords; when the labour is completely taken out from the body, when the land lords feel that the slaves are no longer useful, they are thrown away like a broken pot, "body! Kamiya woman's body! If the body dries up, she will depart. Famine's on the way, is there any shortage of harijan Kamiya women?" (Devi, 1995c, p. 79); no values are given until the fruitful labour is sucked out from them, and once they are dried up, they are thrown up to the streets to beg. Even though the country has been freed from colonization, its region has not met decolonization, and its geographical location is ultimately abandoned.

A recent survey by Geoff Law clarifies the exploitation and ill-treatment towards tribal women as sexual product. In order to remove the tribal people from the forest, paramilitary is used so that there will be no problem to bring out the tribal people. The Chhattisgarh government was criticized by the National Human Rights Commission in 2016 for the sexual assault of Adivasi women by security officers in Bastar; according to the report, 16 cases were registered, and all these were minor people. "I have seen 14-16-year-old Adivasi girls being stripped naked in police stations and tortured. They were given electric shocks on their wrists and breasts. I have seen the marks. It horrified me". (Law, 2022). Peevishness towards tribal land made corporate companies unleash the perpetrators against tribal men and women; men are assaulted, even children are not excluded, and women are harassed sexually. Government officials do all these brutal activities. The entry of corporate companies to extract natural resources resulted in the removal of tribal people from the forest brutally.

6. Conclusion

Feministic approaches through geographical imaginaries evaluate the state of Douloti and Mary. (Geographical imaginary is a term which refers the understanding of power of maps, landscapes that are related with identity and discrimination of society in their everyday lives). Subaltern perspectives and postcolonial readings provide information on the sufferings of the tribal community in the subcontinent. All the referred articles in literature review speak various issues like tribal women, different uses of feministic geopolitics and subaltern geopolitics, at the same time this article deals with the feministic view that undergoes on the evaluation of feminine position through geopolitical analysis. Comprehending the political and geographical perspectives on women's resistance, particularly that of marginalised tribal women, the land gives power to women to resist, and that is linked to women's psychological capabilities. In Imaginary maps, a disconnected tribal land from mainstream society is shown as the epitome of an independent India. In fact, for the Elite's endless desire towards land, money and lust, tribal people are victimized throughout India. As per tribal customs, they never owned land for them, yet, considered that land was for all as well as treated nature as God. The high cultural value becomes the source of all their social illness. Devi's subaltern historiography documented the exploitation of the Indian tribal community through Imaginary maps.

Anwar elucidates the visible division between land and space and exploitation through geographical spaces and how the division of the land influences economic division. "The cartography and politics of the global economy in Imaginary Maps raise issues related to the subdivision of land into human categories of distance and difference" (Anwar, 2001, p. 93). The study of Imaginary maps involves considering the boundaries that separate and incorporate individuals with politics and cartography, which has a direct and indirect impact on the world economy. The exclusion and inclusion happen through land division in Imaginary maps. Yook (2018) demonstrates the consequences of displacement. "In postcolonial India, where colonial power is handed over to upper-caste men, tribes, displaced and dispossessed from their lands and homes" (Yook, 2018, p.19). Yook stresses the displacement, after the colonisation, the colonial power was transferred to upper-caste men by whom tribes were displaced from their land. Tribal people are victimised to displacement, prostitution and bonded slavery in the post-colonial era. Prabhan (2018) clarifies the causes of colonial exploitation of tribal people and nature, "the correlation between the exploitation of nature and human beings by those who inherited power from the colonisers" (Prabhan, 2018, p. 16). Prabhan emphasises that exploitation occurred as a result of the colonists' tremendous power, and it had its impact not only on the tribes, but also on the environment. Bonded labour and bonded prostitution are brought out by the British colonisers, where Indian tribes are objectified. These evidences show how land division, displacement and exploitation of colonisers victimised tribal communities. Similarly, the current article tries to examine the land identity and the outcome of displacement from the perspectives of women.

The represented villages Thori and Seora in *The Hunt* and *Douloti the Bountiful* evidenced more profound understanding of reality. The exploitation for both villages, Thori and Seora seemed to be the same, but Mary's attitude differs from Douloti's inaction when it comes to resistance. Douloti is objectified for the economic and physical lust after the displacement, but Mary Oran becomes a predator when

she stays back in her tribal land. The ability and inability to resist exploitation vary according to the place, where they are located. In the murder of Tehsildar, the land played a vital role, whereas Douloti's death is associated with displacement. The land is considered as a significant root line for colonial imperialism aspects like bonded slavery, sexual objectification, extractive, and displacement through which tribal communities are subjugated in the Indian subcontinent. In actual fact, for the future researches, there is a vast gap in wageless economy, which is the part of neo liberalism, all those bonded labours in *Douloti the bountiful* have never received wages for their labour instead they worked for the interest, which they owe to the moneylenders. After all, the Subaltern geopolitics is another tool to evaluate the works of Mahasweta Devi.

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