BODY AND SEXUALITY AMONG ADOLESCENT TRIBAL GIRLS: A STUDY OF SANTHALS IN JHARKHAND

A SYNOPSIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY (ARTS)

BY

SRILEKHA CHAKRABORTY

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

JADAVPUR UNIVERSITY

KOLKATA- 700032

2023

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

BODY AND SEXUALITY AMONG ADOLESCENT TRIBAL GIRLS: A STUDY OF SANTHALS IN JHARKHAND is submitted by me for the award of the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Arts at Jadavpur University is based upon my work carried out under the supervision of Dr. Piyali Sur. And that neither this synopsis nor any part of it has been submitted before for any degree or diploma anywhere/elsewhere.

Countersigned by the

Supervisor:	**Candidate:**
Date	**Date**

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. The Rationale of the Study:

In areas of hunger and poverty, discussions on gender, body, and sexuality are seldom prioritized. It is often assumed that in native communities, indigenous women should defend tribal nationalism and liberation from the oppressors of land and instead ignore sexism and their experiences of bodies as part of their very survival as women in the communities (Ramirez, 2007, p. 23). In an attempt to document discourses around gender, body, and sexuality in everyday life, this study focuses on adolescent tribal girls from the Santhal Parganas[1] region of Jharkhand, prioritizing two districts named Deoghar and Pakur between 2015- 2018.

The anthropological and sociological debates around the social construction of bodies, the performed rites of passage and rituals, and the agency in bodies in everyday tribal life are the focus areas of this study while discussing gender, body, and sexuality at its core. The reason for studying adolescent tribal girls in Jharkhand was to understand the social construction of gender in bodies and the events that marks their bodies as female and gendered, which has rarely been central to the discourse of theoretical trends studying women and bodies in India (Niranjana, 2001, p. 13).

The new members of society come to be involved in a self-regulating process where they begin to monitor their own as well as the conduct of others through the process of 'doing gender' (West & Zimmerman, 1990). By focusing on the acts within which women define their lives that mark bodies as female, the primary task of this study was to have a conceptual elaboration of how gendered bodies are produced through the social construction of spaces, performance of rituals, and also through risk, resistance and negotiations in bodies. A complex set of values was attached to the

adolescent bodies in the tribal community, the one with the functionality of labor, marriage, motherhood, and the girl's future, which was the core component of the study. The three objectives of this research are:

- To understand the various ways Santhali girls experience body and sexuality in their everyday lives.
- The ways these adolescent bodies live through rites of passage and ritual practices and internalize an understanding of body and sexuality.
- And to understand the agency in the adolescent body reflecting on the resistance, risk, and negotiations in their everyday lives.

The chapters in this study indicate that the body is not a mere object but a condition contextualized through relations to 'other' from the culture and spaces it occupies as 'being-to-the-world' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). The articulation of the embodied experiences of the body through language, perceiving beauty, living through rituals and rites of passage, deconstructing motherhood, and living through the socio-cultural locations through inner dilemmas, beliefs, and internalization of selves (Thapan, 2009) were critical to the everyday life of the adolescent bodies in the Adivasi Santhal Parganas region and are documented through the chapters of this thesis. Though every chapter is divided into several sub-sections in the dissertation, this synopsis represents only a few excerpts from the introduction, methodology, and the finding chapters. The final section of the synopsis includes the study's significant findings and the concluding thoughts.

1.2. Situating the Field and the Context of the Tribal Identity:

Today, a tribe is universally understood as primitive, savage, or wild routinely as an idiom of defining backwardness against the so-called advanced non-tribal colonial

measures of the development paradigm (Bara, 2009, p. 90). The term 'tribal' usually means a social unit, whereas 'Adivasi' is the collective term for the tribes of the Indian subcontinent who are recognized as indigenous inhabitants. Nevertheless, there was a culture of silence or *Nirbakization* of the tribes that gradually shaped alongside the conversation of tribes or Adivasi initiated by the process of Sanskritization (Mahato, 2000). However, since Santhal *Hul* or the Santhal rebellion Sidho and Kanho became an embodiment of Adivasi victory, the question has been, 'where have all the women in the struggle been?' (Rao, 2018). Several pieces of literature from the Santhal Parganas have noticed the daily struggles of the people as residues, and most importantly, women amongst them have been forgotten since the *Hul* (Guha, 1983).

The slogan *Loha Nahi Anaaj Chaahiye!*[2] has been a pertinent demand for the Santhal Parganas since the colonial era. The struggle of *Jal, Jungle*, and *Jameen* has taken up an essential part of these communities' survival in the country's marginalized pockets. 62.6% of pregnant women in Jharkhand in the age group of 15- 49 years are anemic compared to 50.3% in India, which manifests poverty and hunger transmitted through generations.[3] [4] The heavy workload of tribal women, anemia and limited access to body rights has profound effects on the health and pregnancy of women in these areas. The socio-demographic profile also reflects that Jharkhand has the highest dropout rates in India, where only thirty out of a hundred girls finish school. According to the Jharkhand Economic Survey conducted in 2015-16, the enrolment of girl students at primary and upper primary levels is 50% .[5] Young women's agencies and peer support groups have always been limited in Jharkhand. Even with the percentage of child marriage in Jharkhand being 49%, much higher than the national average of 47% among girls aged 15-19 and the average case has never gone below 50% in the last decade as the maternal healthcare-seeking awareness and behavior among adolescent tribal girls

are very limited (Rani et al., 2007). Kishwar (1987) writes that tribal women play a crucial role in the production process and are not maintained by the men's labor as they get to cultivate a portion of the land in their lifetime as a part of the usufructuary right until death when the land again reverts to the men in the family. This act aimed to check the alienation of tribal lands by non-tribal as being transferred through marriage in the form of gifts or bride prices. Therefore, as soon as a daughter marries, she loses her limited usufructuary right over parental land. If an unmarried daughter is raped or has a sexual relationship with a non-tribal man, she loses her usufructuary right to the parental land. Hence the zeal to document the understanding of the gendered body and sexuality of indigenous Santhali[6] adolescent girls putting their experiences of internalizing social construction, negotiations through rituals, and reclaiming agencies through their lived realities was a step closer to normalizing the discourse of studying adolescent bodies beyond a 'reductionist' approach in the Adivasi context.

1.3. Decoding Body, Gender, and Sexuality in this Study:

The Adivasi-Dalit and Bahujans in India have continuously refused to be integrated into mainstream Hinduism for a long time. Describing gender and body, Nivedita Menon (2017) argues that there is a popular political, fair-complexioned, saffron flag-bearing sacred image of an Indian woman always pitted against the dark-skinned Dalit-Adivasi rural woman, accompanied by the black buffalo, not the sacred cow. Not fitting into a certain Brahminical identity claims for being the 'Bharatmata's unruly daughters,' the daughters who were instead the Adivasi or the first inhabitants of the Nation in reality but whose bodies seldom count as India's daughters. Women have been in the peripheries of academic literature for ages; however, amidst the 'new identity' defined by urban, middle, and upper classes of society (Shilee & Shailee, 2002), the narratives

of doubly marginalized voices of tribal women and concerns around their identities were further subdued. Elizabeth Grosz writes that the body's spacio-temporal location and settings inform women's bodily practices within diverse contexts and settings as bodies are never simply human bodies or social bodies (Grosz, 1995). Hence, this study experienced 'space' and gender playing an essential part in the practices and discourses of femininity and sexuality governing the morality and control lived through the bodies (Niranjana, 2001). This study perceived bodies as the permeable boundary between the individual sense of self and the existing society (Tolman et al., 2014). In this study, it is believed that bodies do not merely function in a vacuum but are a 'body-subject' (Merleau-Ponty, 1962). From participating in the basic bodily acts to presentation and performance in broader societal organizations on deciding upon marriages and decoding shame and morality, these are the 'lived bodies.'

Bordo (1993) identifies that women are active agents engaging in the practices and are not oppressed or victims of the practice but engage with power through a discourse of active self-discipline. Hence, the oppressed groups are not positioned outside of power as powerless (Foucault, 1977), and there is no top-down coercion. Through bodily practices, bodies become 'docile' bodies subjected to external regulation, self-surveillance, and improvement, creating 'knowledge' as power normalizing dominance and subordination. Taking into consideration Foucault's context of power and biopolitics through a feminist lens, this study tries to understand the modern-day mechanisms governing people. From negotiating bodies on marriage, motherhood, sexuality, and everyday labor on the ground, this study highlights the narratives from the ground depicting power through lived realities in everyday life.

The understanding of body and sexuality throughout this study is intertwined between two distinct processes, with the body being embodied in 'space and time' that reflects the corporeality living in the skin (Grosz, 1994) and, on the other hand, 'embodying the social and the sexual' through negotiations and acceptance (Crossley, 2006; Rubin, 2002). So eventually, young women's self-image is grounded in their embodiment where the body as an object and the body as a subject are simultaneously present. At the point of overlap between the physical, the symbolic, and the sociological, the body is, therefore, one of the dynamic frontiers and also a threshold through which the lived experience of the world is incorporated and realized by the individual who is 'neither pure object nor pure subject' (McNay, 1999, p. 98).

2. METHODOLOGY: ON LIVING THE ETHNOGRAPHY ON THE GROUND

2.1. Setting the Gaze on the Ground:

The methodology chapter is one such part of the entire writing which is the window that lets the ethnographer be true to their experience and embrace their failures and successes. The idea is that the ethnographer must present and narrate a world of observation to produce a clear image of the community. However, only typically a fraction of what an ethnographer learns and sees in the fieldwork can be presented in the most precise terms with all the context, non-judgmental concepts, observations, interviews, and theories emerging during the fieldwork (Fetterman, 2010). This chapter narrates the study's methodology and talks about my everyday life as an ethnographer that has remained central to the study and a witness to the experiences of my fieldwork done between 2015 to 2018 in the Pakur and Deoghar districts of the Santhal Parganas region of Jharkhand.

This chapter considers the understanding of my field experiences as a 'Participant Observer' and discusses the boundaries of my entry and access to the ground in detail. The role of the ethnographer is to be a 'part insider' being the participant in the social world that is the object of the investigation and also 'part outsider' performing a professional purpose in the field of research, and this was always a critical boundary to be managed (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2007). There are narrations throughout this chapter where the experiences of the "Other"[7] in me, the interpretive methods of the culture and the labels of gender on the ground constantly narrated accounts of my everyday life as an ethnographer. Therefore, the 'push' and the 'entry' in the field tend to be a crucial part of ethnography, where it is not only about entering the field but about a vast range of changes the ethnographer experiences in their own lives (Srinivas, 1976). There was a 'shadow side' of doing the ethnography, which has been spoken about in length in this chapter, where the boundaries of the personal and formal ethnography begin to get complicated when as a person, one fails to fits within the framework of professional (McLean & Leibing, 2007). Through disturbing field encounters challenging my own emotional, moral, and intellectual standpoints around the body, gender, and sexuality, this chapter holds experiences challenging my understanding of the 'personal is political'[8] along with the detailed explanation of methodology on the ground. This chapter also has a detailed usage of personal pronouns and personal narratives written in the first person, like several classical ethnographies, for example, the way Srinivas (1976) wrote *The Remembered Village* from a personalized account.

There was a constant negotiation of the identity, and for months the desire for totally amalgamating in the community and being able to function as one of 'them' remained strong. Bryman (2001) argues that it is always crucial for ethnographers to

refrain from fooling themselves about their basic status concerning those they study, as they will always be the 'outsider.' After months of struggling to be one of the community members and trying to document what is different, the realization dawned that I was a *diku*[9] indeed; the outsider in the land was a fact that could never be altered. I realized that I was not one of them and were not the same, forming a homogenous category of women because I could leave the land anytime I wanted to, but they could not. So my task was to identify the mundane and compare knowledge differences with the larger discourse available around gender, sexuality, and body. I finally realized that my research should not only highlight the outsider's perspective in me but also examine the mundane because it was essential to prioritize what one 'sees' in the community. However, even if the thought emanated from me, it took time to accept being a '*diku*' as an integral part of my everyday life and identity.

2.2. Playing the Participant Observer on the Field:

Little things, therefore, would always demarcate my presence from the community during the initial days on the ground; for example, I would stay in the community but still go with the field worker to access the bathroom in the high school and not use the open field. On days during festivals when the entire village would be intoxicated, and the smell of freshly brewed *hadiya* or local alcohol would take over the village, after every session or interview, I was often offered a bowl of *hadiya*. I had to politely reject the proposition every time by telling them that I was 'working' and would not be able to taste it. This thin line would still demarcate the hierarchy with the boundaries of participant observation, and it constantly puts me in a position to situate my identity on the ground. Every morning I would enter the village with my *jhola* or cloth bag, and kids would start crying, imagining I was someone from the health department that had

come to give them vaccine injections. There would always be a young girl in the house getting ready to pick up the kids (interestingly, I would never see these girls in schools throughout my stay in the village). I was the "stranger" (Schutz, 1944), the typical ethnographer "doing ethnography" (Fetterman, 2010).

On the ground, when I talked to young girls in length to decode their everyday lives and understand how gender and body shape their identity, they would often surprisingly laugh at the innate need for me to document stories of girls as mundane as them. *"What is so special in our stories that you are documenting it?"* they would often ask me. With these small yet significant instances happening around, I questioned what Geertz in 1973 (Bryman, 2001, pp. 258-270) called the 'native's point of view' while building the epistemology in ethnography. The context of Sanskritization Vs. *Nirbakization* (Mahato, 2000, pp. 17-18) leads to a culture of silence in the marginalized population where they think their stories are not worthy. The culture of silence is sometimes latent to the extent that our representation of the subaltern says more about us than the subaltern, where we produce the subaltern by our own gaze and end up reinforcing subalternity (Spivak, 1988). In her most influential postcolonial theory, Spivak also points out that 'the act of empowerment' of the subalterns from a privileged gaze has a silencing effect because it is essential to analyze whether we are speaking 'for' the subalterns in any way rather than empowering them to speak.

Goffman, in *On Fieldwork,* talks about 'cutting one's life to the bone' on the ground (Goffman, 1989), and constantly playing the role of the participant-observer was challenging and life-changing at the same time. It was about being present fully and, simultaneously, being critically aware of the conscious, systematic distancing. Being a 'Participant Observant' was about subjecting one's body, personality, and social situations to physically and ecologically penetrate in a circle closer to their habitat while

responding to their life. Expressing my vulnerabilities would, however, make me closer to the group whenever I showcased my fears and imperfection. Irony and humor are tactics of ethnographers usually appreciated in writings when one utilizes those limitations on the ground with aesthetic elegance and depicts their narrations on being a participant observer (Clifford & Marcus, 1986).

2.3. Performing the Impression Management and Gender on the Field:

Judith Stacey's 1988 article, *Can there be a Feminist Ethnography?* argues that feminist researchers predominantly suffer the 'delusion of the alliance' more than the 'delusion of separateness,' which may lead to a 'feminist ethnographer's dilemma' with the amount of knowledge and the plight around how much to share and that there cannot be anything called a 'fully feminist ethnography.'[10] Ethnographers face a dilemma once they get close to sensitive information shared with them in their role of 'friend' rather than in the role of researcher, and this happens quite often as a participant observer when for days and months, one has gained and regained the trust in the community[11]. I fixed two sets of clothes for the field visits, one with a green and blue printed short kurta with a green pajama and the other a yellow and dark blue printed *kurta* (a loose cotton cloth) with a pink *pajama*. It is important to discuss my attire and the look at this point because it was essential to maintain consistency on that, and I kept wearing them for days for them to recognize me as a known person. In studying *the Glasgow Gang* and their insider culture, James Patrick sometimes observed that the researcher must dress in a way that is mainly in sync with the other cases around (Patrick, 1973).

Gender also became a significant context in the field depending upon the information collected, and it is also an essential aspect of the access to spaces we occupy as ethnographers. As there was an immense struggle to penetrate a certain space due to

gender, there were also opportunities to capitalize on gender roles renegotiating some aspects of them for the fieldwork.

The chances of my acceptance in the community to talk about sexuality, intimacy, and daily lives were higher because women are perceived to be less threatening than men with stories associated with other women (Warren, 1988). As per Warren's experience in her ethnography, women seen as unthreatening may gain access to settings and information with a certain amount of ease where the common cultural stereotypes of females work in favor of them. However, Warren also provides the restrictions and the risks that can arise from being a woman researcher. Yes, being a woman, I would get access to some information better, but that would not ensure a context of 'genderless neutrality' on the field (Westmarland, 2000). For example, in discussions with government officials, the asks around the data and information on women's health would end up with men ending every conversation with *"aap Mahila hein naa, aap nahi samjhengi"*[12].

On days when I would accompany the young girls to a nearby field in the afternoon, a few girls would share, *"you are like a man to us."* However, with this association of empowerment, I was frowned upon for not embodying my characteristics as a woman. They constantly reminded me of what a shame any woman would bring to the community if she were not married. So my association with the women and the adolescent girls was not only that of power that I possessed, but it was also an image that none of them would either associate with or risk embodying. Rainbird (1990) experienced something similar when she found out how being female affected her relations in the field as some activities were exclusive to one sex or the other, so she could attend meetings freely around the countryside as men did, but not drink with men unless other women were present.

2.4. The Art of Data Collection and Writing the Ethnography:

This study considered purposive sampling as one of the core data collection methods by talking to fifty Santhali tribal girls between fifteen to nineteen years old in two blocks of Pakur and Deoghar named Litipara and Palajori, respectively. The interviews and the Focus Group Discussions (FGD) added patterns to the larger purview around gender, body, and sexuality studied during this research. The FGDs set in the base of verbal interaction and language in the community with conversations around festivals, marriage, songs they sing, and taking leads from the discussions that sprang up in the group and also helped in identifying symbols of everyday life that described a given culture (Fetterman, 2010, pp. 27-28).

Between 2015 and 2018, fifty adolescent girls between sixteen and nineteen were separately interviewed in approximately twenty villages in the Deoghar and Pakur districts of Jharkhand for a collective understanding of their body, gender, and sexuality. I also visited the women on the ground and conducted about twenty to twenty-five FGDs collectively with the women and the girls. It took a repetition on the ground with constant group discussion and interviewing for triangulation around topics on gender, sexuality, and body because it took time for the adolescents to register the context and build narratives around it.

Fetterman (2010, p. 10) writes, 'Fieldwork ends when the researcher leaves the village or site, but ethnography continues.' So when I left the field physically, there was so much pressure to bring all the data into one place and the dilemma of interpreting the narratives in a way that would keep the essence intact. The fatigue and reminiscences of the field lingered with me even when I finally took an off from the field in 2019 and shifted to Ranchi, the capital of Jharkhand, where I concentrated on my writing. Though months into the fieldwork, I realized that no matter how intimate I

was in the community, I could never be a part of their lives (Powdermaker, 1966); I never knew that disengaging from the field would also be an equally challenging task. The dualism of the researcher in me and the confessional field data dissolved the spaces in between, shaping it into a much stronger feminist ethnography than I envisioned when I started writing. Writing the lived experiences on text as a 'lived textuality' is about grounding the work on the study through the flesh-and-blood of the individuals studied, but in the process, the writer bleeds too (Denzin, 1997).

The claim of objectivity on the ground with the perspective on "us" and "them," along with interrelated narratives on body and sexuality among adolescent girls in their everyday life, was a critical reflection on my reality. Ethnographic writing was not simply reducing the collected data to scripts. I tried to use 'ethnographic allegories' through my writing, describing the cultural events and drawing particular attention to specific voices within the texts spoken about (Clifford & Marcus, 1986). However, the number of lost messages in translations and the emotions were also significant when we presented the finished product to the audience for them to gaze into reality.

3.EXPERIENCING BODY AND SEXUALITY IN EVERYDAY LIFE

3.1. Introduction:

The contexts of marriage, fertility, and motherhood have been studied in this chapter through the lens of body and embodiment in recent times and are presented in this chapter accordingly. The context of land and labor, with its quintessential relation to the gendered body, is an area of sociological interpretation included in this chapter, being one of the central points to understanding social practices around gender, body, and sexuality. The gendered identity of labor and the decisions around marriage and motherhood were pertinent markers related to land that adolescent girls internalized

from a very young age in the communities and were explored in detail through this chapter. The narratives in this chapter assume that adolescent girls' understanding of their gendered identity is not only perceived but also 'deeply inscribed' on their bodies through their lived-in experiences as a dynamic frontier balancing between the physical, the symbolic, and the sociological (McNay, 1999, p. 98). The first half of the chapter explains how 'bodies' are constructed in everyday lives through the narratives of the young adolescent girls around their domestic work and the work on the field. The next half of the chapter identifies the construction of marriage and motherhood as the norms depicted in the making of the gendered bodies being intrinsic to the identity of adolescent girls. The last section of the chapter highlights the discourse of surveillance in the communities.

3.2. The Making of the Laborious Bodies:

Girls often shared during the focus group discussions, *"We are asked to work a lot in our house and the field. Our parents are preparing us for marriage! They say if I cannot work at my in-law's place, they will never keep me in their house but will send me back*." There tends to remain an instrumental attitude toward bodies and the labor it produces in household work and reproduction, which constructs the identity of gender and sexuality. Gendered social practices, therefore, do not simply negate the body but transcend and transform it by changing the meaning and character of people's bodies reinforcing particular images of femininity and masculinity (Shilling, 2003, p. 94). Gradually discovering the hard labor and working in the fields, cooking at home, skipping school, and then leaving school to manage the younger siblings at home were the typical trajectories of the tribal girls in Pakur and Deoghar interviewed during the study. Adolescent girls, during the interviews, shared, *"I did not know my body was so*

powerful that I could work so much." Getting to know what work and identity are for them and what laborious bodies were was a journey for the adolescent girls experiencing the power and endurance through their bodies.

As elaborated on in the third chapter, on any given day, children as old as three years old in the villages would be seen playing with broken tools made of bamboo used to husk the rise in mornings as an organized 'play technique' to master husking of rice when their parents were busy in the field. They would be seen putting mud and sand in those tools and husking them to re-shift how adults husk rice. As per Goffman (1956), this understanding of theorizing the body plays an essential role in mediating the relationship between people's self-identity and their social identity. If girls did not want to work in the field, families would say, "*do not see you working hard enough in the morning, eh! - work hard, and only then will you get to eat.*" Social constructionist asserts that families, therefore, played a crucial role in constructing the idea of the body for these adolescent girls. Parents develop a set of shared assumptions assisting children in redirecting them toward the dominant social context in the household and what is expected outside of their bodies that need to work hard to survive. The language codified the value of work and labor as a passing history to the next generation can be expressed in how Foucault defined the 'docile bodies' (Foucault, 1977).

3.3. The Discourse between the Land and the Body:

> Soromoti (16 years old): *"This land is for my brother and brother's wife; how can I have this land? I will go to my in-laws; how will we cultivate the land here then? The land will stay here and will not come with me. When I leave for my in-laws' post-marriage, that will be my land."*

Land formed a complex identity of living through the gendered body of a woman. The context of land was indispensable to the community, but so was the context of women being defined by the labor to be produced for sowing the land, mending the courtyard, and even leaving the dream of education for taking care of the land but never being allowed to claim a part of the same land. The historical understanding of land and property rights holds significant importance for women and girls of the Santhal Parganas. Nitya Rao (2018), in her book *Good Women Do Not Inherit Land*, mentions that globally land has been the critical element in framing the identities of indigenous people. However, she also stated, 'In material terms, women are as engaged with land and agriculture as men; it is in the social-symbolic realm that their rights are not just secondary, but also denied' (Rao, 2018, p. 201). However, it is interesting that even after years of the fight put by the feminist activists, Adivasi leaders in Jharkhand condemned any judgment around land rights for women claiming that they have no intention of interfering with customary law because initiating a discussion on individual rights for women would create further divisions in the Adivasi society (Rao, 2018).

If a girl has attained puberty and no *mehmaani* or marriage proposal has arrived yet for her, it is not considered a good sign and is a form of hidden anxiety for the family. Though the girls in the Adivasi communities are not considered a burden as they keep performing an integral part in the production system, they will still say – *"No one has called me yet"* when asked about marriage (Kishwar, 1987; 1989), and this spoke about a series of collective burden adolescents will live through post their puberty. The land was so integral to women's identity and bodies that adolescent girls who were married once and returned to their maternal house were ready to choose any man to be with over choosing to stay at their maternal house.

3.4. Construction of Marriage and Motherhood through Bodies:

A young girl cannot escape the value in society that marriage brings to them (Dube, 1988); hence, the social construction of marriage is highly influenced by the understanding of norms, property rights, gender, and sexuality. However, the narratives around marriage and motherhood showcased that this seemingly ordinary aspect of their lives has its core in the normalizing and disciplinary strategies of women and their bodies (Puri, 1999, p. 02). For example, in every discussion with girls, even those going to school, there was always the context of getting married and having children as an indispensable part of the discussion.

> Meena (16 years old): *"I will work as a nurse or teacher after school. I will earn money and spend it on my kids. I will buy things for my own need too, but I will mostly buy clothes for my children and think I will enroll them in a good school and teach them properly*".

In *The Reproduction of Mothering*, Chodorow addresses the question of 'why women mother?' by which she means why daughters grow up to be the primary, affective, intensively involved parents of their children. She answers that a woman's psychological capabilities for parenting are built into her personality through her continuing intense relationship with her mother (Chodorow, 1978).

The art of *nipai-potai*, or making the mud floor in the house's courtyard, tends to be one of the most critical deciding factors in projecting the girl's eligibility for marriage. Of all the daily chores, *nipai-potai,* or the plastering of the floor, is the one the girls found the hardest, they learned it from their mothers and brothers' wives, and it was a technique the girls firmly had to know to survive, and get married. The mixture used to coat the floor had mud and sand, which sometimes pierced the girls' hands while

they learned the method. When the *ghatakdars* (match-makers) are out in the community to look for eligible bachelors, they notice these decors on the wall outside. Soon they understand that there must be some unmarried girl in that house and seeking a groom. According to the *Elementary Structure of Kinship*, Strauss points out that the bride is the object of exchange. The bride constitutes a sign and a value that opens a channel of exchange that serves the functional purpose of facilitating trade and performs the symbolic or ritualistic purpose of consolidating the internal bonds, the collective identity, of each clan differentiated through the act (Lévi-Strauss, 1969).

Women in the village would sarcastically share that they might elope if the girls were not married off early. They often shared during interviews that *"it is impossible to control a girl after she attains her puberty."* The social construction of the realities around the body, gender, and sexuality finds a girl the most vulnerable between puberty and marriage. Therefore, the idea of marriage was socially constructed as an instrument of control to be an institution where women were fully conscious that they would have to work all their lives as enslaved people in their husbands' houses and that they should not expect any security as a right. So when women enter a marriage, they are prepared to do the labor, produce children and keep less emotional expectations from their husbands (Kishwar, 1987).

3.5. The Discourse of Surveillance in the Gendered Bodies:

As we noticed in the above-mentioned sections, women and girls were integral to the tribal household and the field through their labor. However, women were debarred from ploughing the field as they were ritually prohibited from touching the plough. Thapan (2009) noticed that a young woman's experience of her gendered identity rests very much in her body through her body image and concerns her embodiment with others in

her everyday life. Through a form of surveillance mechanism, young girls are made to believe traditionally from a very early age that touching the plough will bring an omen to the whole village, such as a drought or famine[13]. Even after years of activism and the fight against patriarchy in the modern world, this taboo has been predominant and still practiced today. Girls who dared to break the norms and touched the plow were fined heavily by the Panchayat for having their family feed the entire *Gram Sabha, murga-bhaat* and *hadiya* (Chicken-rice and local alcohol). The other myth that prevailed was that if women touched the plough, it impaired the strength and effectiveness of the plough. Young girls often argue during the session that the ban on women ploughing exists because ploughing is a very strenuous activity that women are constitutionally incapable of performing. Sociologists and activists have decoded the real purpose behind the taboo, which seems to be to strengthen male control over the land, even while women perform most of the labor on the land. The taboo ensures that women and girls can never conduct agricultural operations independently without cooperation from male members. This control makes women dependent on men, legitimizes male control of the production process (Kelkar & Nathan, 1991), and makes young girls aware of their gendered bodies.

The *Gram Sabha* is a forum people use to discuss local governance and development plans for the village. It was also where women were barred from attending, and men commenced the meetings because the decision-making capacity was on men. Berger talks about the social constructionism of the consciousness, which is always intentional, and the understanding of surveillance in this context is experienced as belonging to an external physical world that successfully has shaped the subjective reality of the individuals (Berger & Luckmann, 1991). Girls understanding of being an 'Other' and the marginalized in the given set is the phenomenon through which their

identity of being feminine is constructed every day and lived through their body as 'one is not born a woman but becomes one' (Beauvoir, 2010). The pattern of passive construction of bodies needed to be ensured every day by not allowing girls to be a part of the *Gram Sabha*. These spaces were areas of constant surveillance on gender as we know that power comes from below and the complex local interwoven relationships (Foucault, 1980) in our everyday lives. There was constant surveillance of adolescent girls and their mobility post-puberty in spaces outside the home, too, through a 'Panopticon gaze' (Foucault, 1977). Surveillance was silent, just like the *Gram Sabha*, which by controlling spaces, controlled the lives of the young girls and internalized in them the idea of living through a 'gendered' body from a very young age.

Other than the *Gram Sabha,* the *Hatiya* or local markets were places the boys could visit easily, but girls' post-puberty were only allowed to go without their family until married. The entry to puberty in such cases was institutionalized through different boundaries set by the external to discipline[14] the bodies (Foucault, 1977). It was interesting to find out how girls experience themselves as self through the 'good girl' notion not directly but only indirectly through social experience, from the standpoints of other individual members of the same social group, or from the generalized standpoint of the social group as a whole to which they belonged (Mead, 1934). Girls would narrate that a 'good girl' in the community is one who works a lot in the community and does not go out with the boys or in the *mela*. Community members often check on the girls mastering 'essential femininity' through their accountable 'ladylike' behavior (West & Zimmerman, 1987).

3.6. Adolescents and the Onset of Sexed Bodies:

> Sonali (16 years old): *"Boys were showing me a Jatra*[15] *ticket and were saying they would show me the theatre. My cousin's sister,*

who accompanied me, held the ticket, tore it, and threw it in the boy's face. They were angry with us for not accepting the proposal but later left the place and went away."

Soromoti (17 years old): *"I once went to the mela with my friends. A few boys in the mela were behind me and said they liked me; many said I did not want to have a relationship. During mela, boys would come behind us, laugh, and hit us with small stones until we looked back and talked to them. They want to flirt, but few also want to marry."*

Gayle Rubin's essay, *Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality* (2002), is considered to be the challenging conflation between sexuality, gender, and the theories of women's oppression, insisting that as sexuality cannot always be equated with gender, sexuality cannot be isolated from the effects of gender either. Sexuality in this study was about ways thoroughly young girls negotiated and reproduced aspects of heterosexuality. There were strategically selected appropriate languages, thoughts, and spaces to exercise one's views on exercising desires and sexuality by elaborating on pleasures in a place and mentioning the taboos in other places. As girls would often share about the others going to local fairs and getting lured by the boys, *"If a girl manages to control her sexual desire when she is sixteen, then consider her life gets better forever. However, she struggles for her entire life if she cannot control* her desire and elopes or has sex." What was more intriguing was how broad social themes and patterns intersected into more personal and individual aspects of the narratives decoding the patterns of sexual behavior and understanding gender and sexuality.

In every society, it is necessary to make room for illegitimate sexuality; there is

always a space for the 'Other Victorians' (Foucault, 1977). Girls would share that couples, as well as single boys and girls, meet up in *mela,* and if a girl is alone in a *mela* along with her friends and not family, boys get a chance to tease them more, considering she might be here to mingle. Though peers were one of the primary sources of information about sex, there was no peer pressure or competition among peers to showcase their sex life among the girls in the community reflected through their narratives. Instead, to showcase how adolescent girls were often disinterested in romantic propositions in public was a norm during interviews. Girls always refrained from proposing to a boy they liked because there would be gossip among friends if the boy did not want her back. They would exclaim, *"It is not in our culture! Moreover, what if they reject me? His friends would know and tease me".* Every time a discussion around the proposal pointed out the social construction around the lead in the proposal making based on their gendered identity of bodies which kept practicing. Therefore, the power inequity in gender relations translates to an unequal power balance in heterosexual interactions. The male partners always made fundamental decisions regarding taking the lead on sexual actions (Van Reeuwijk, 2010, p. 55). It was interesting to find out that boys were to quote macho ideals in this situation with an aggressive masculine identity and were expected to express an unbridled choice of sexuality. At the same time, girls were expected to practice coyness (Geetha, 2002, p. 03).

This chapter, therefore, draws stories and experiences of Adivasi Santhali girls in their everyday life and connects them to the social construction of gender and sexuality in their adolescence. The personal becomes political when the historical analysis of the representation of labor in Santhal Parganas through daily chores and in the fields has its roots in discrimination and struggle where the man will not give up

land ownership. However, labor on land and childbirth remains the most significant phenomenon women are supposed to perform. The adolescents and their understanding of gender, body, and sexuality revolved around parameters of land, labor, and surveillance through everyday norms.

4. EMBODIED RITES OF PASSAGE AND RITUAL PRACTICES

4.1. Introduction:

Given the context of the current study, it was interesting to understand how everyday rituals and the rites of passage contribute to forming a 'body image' in the Santhali societies. This chapter depicts the unnoticed taken-for-granted phenomenological expectancies and habitus (Schutz et al., 1967; Bourdieu, 1977) of the performed organized 'rites' and 'ritual practices' of everyday life that form the embodied understanding of bodies among the Adivasi Santhali girls studied throughout this study conducted in Jharkhand. Embodiment in this chapter refers to the experiences of 'living in' and thereby perceiving the world from a specific location of the inhabiting bodies (Tolman et al., 2014), whereas being embodied refers to an experiential awareness of the feelings and expressions within one's body through the corporeality we live in (Grosz, 1994). The 'rites of passage' in this chapter are about ceremonies or experiences that mark significant transitional periods in a person's life and the involved 'ritual activities' that strip individuals from a set notion of roles and perspectives and prepare them with a new set of roles to perform.

4.2. Internalizing Beauty Rituals and the Shaping of the Body Image:

At the core of this chapter, the understanding of the 'body image' and 'embodiment' are narrated through the discourse of rituals and the rites of passage that the adolescent girls

in the community performed in their everyday lives. As the interactionist perspective on the body says that the body as an object cannot be separated from the body as a subject as they are emergent from one another, 'embodiment' refers quite precisely to the process by which the object-body is actively experienced, produced, sustained, and/or transformed as a subject-body (Waskul & van der Riet, 2002, p. 488)[16] through the rituals and rites of passage to perceive their body.[17]

The most important part of the body, which the majority of the girls interviewed in this research shared, would be their 'nose,' which they were conscious about. Almost everyone would want to make it sharp and tall enough to look beautiful and for men to be attracted to them post-puberty. They often say, *"Men would agree to marry a girl swayed by her beauty if she has a beautiful nose."* Women's bodies have often been conceptualized by focusing on the particular social and cultural messages directed at parts of the body like breasts, genitals, and other sexualized body parts. However, finding 'the nose' as one of the most attractive body parts in the body puts the entire context of popular notions around tribal bodies to question, through whose 'gaze' are these bodies being presented? Therefore, more voices from adolescent young girls talk about their bodies and 'body image' in everyday lives through the art of embodying tattoos, living through menstruation and birthing, deconstructing beauty, and living through the ailing bodies; in this chapter.

Girls would embody 'stigma' around the body through a conscious body image developed by a given set of power that explores it, breaks it down, and again rearranges it with a set of disciplines that produce subjected, practiced, docile bodies (Foucault, 1977). So when fifteen years old Ritamoni and other girls like her were embracing puberty as a rite of passage, what tended to be the most stigmatized part of her body was the 'bare knees' repeatedly asked by other women in the community to be covered.

The visible part of their body, which to date was allowing them to work freely on the ground, getting rid of the mud by wearing a skirt above the knees, suddenly was a stigmatized entity altogether, and the girls would often look for ways to tackle this growing shame.

4.3. Body and the Ritual Performance of Dance:

During festivities and rituals, mainly known as *parab* in the Santhali language, the whole village becomes a commune where dancing is an integral part of the rituals and involves young girls, ladies, and even older women. Girls dressed in traditional striped *lungi* and *saree* draped around their waist get ready to dance, sometimes even prepared to play the drums if men were too drunk to play. These adolescent girls, therefore, were undoubtedly aware of their womanly characteristics, grounded in their embodiment (Thapan, 1995). However, at the same time, they assert their independence from the more feminine aspects of their embodiment by beating a drum as hard as they can, putting the left foot to hold the ground firmly and the right leg a bit lifted on another rock holding the drum with full pride and beating the sticks with the other. Girls would say, *"Dancing together feels so good, and we look at each other's pots and find out whose plant has grown more*." Norms, therefore, were not only consolidated but were performed through the rituals and habitus in various ways embodied through work and play, which are made and unmade in the experience of everyday life (Bourdieu, 1977). The older women are the links between the girls from being amateurish to owning the dance with every rhythm. These older women who had mastered the skill of dancing had the power to control and influence others through surveillance during the dance. As Durkheim (1912) writes, whatever is 'sacred' is expressed through a set of collective symbols in a way that people gather around, feeling a form of shared moral sentiment

towards it. Skills innately contribute to one's power and privilege and hold one in a functional position in the status quo. It is interesting how the bodies enable people to intervene in it through dance, intending to come out as a trained body without a societal force (Goffman, 1963; Foucault, 1972). The interpretive approach, therefore, states that the regularized cultural routines are the rites of the passages creatively set by adults to induct the children through a structured process on the adaptability of the 'public body' available for presentation.

Paul Atkinson, in his article *Opera and the Embodiment of Performance* (Waskul & Vannini, 2006, pp. 95-108), examined how, through the rehearsal process, the opera directors and the performers negotiated the creation of the roles through physical accomplishments associated with the gesture, orientation, gaze, and movement within a defined set of space on the stage because in the end what finally mattered was the public presentation of the ideal bodies. However, one of the most exciting parts of the dance in the community remained that no girl was rejected from the dance if she was unable to reach perfection. Hence, highlighting here that dance was not a medium that bred competition among gendered feminine bodies but was a rite of passage building the collective identity of the body. Hence it is through the social and cultural practices, apart from the mundane strategies of the socialization process of labor, that girls start shaping up their ideas on bodies through the 'shared vocabularies of body idiom' (Goffman, 1963, p. 35) in the communities.

4.4. The Ailing Body as a Rite of Passage:

Girls would meet the *jhola-chaap* doctors or the quacks, who often would get them medicines and know the community's deepest secrets. The ASHAs would share how

the quacks dealt with every detailed knowledge on unwanted pregnancy, abortions, and issues on delayed menstruation.

However, they would also share, *"there is no accessibility for an alternative most of the time when we look for doctors or health workers helping us with reproductive health."* The countless quacks with pretentious degrees would do the work as ordinary people will have few choices, and availabilities of doctors nearby as to go outside the villages and look for doctors far in the main town gets troublesome. Hence, their choices of doctors depend on the availability and accessibility of the doctors (Sainath, 1996).

The body's psychical interiors are intertwined with the social inscription of bodily processes established outside. The mind accords with the changing social meanings attributed to the body through structured historical, social, and cultural particularity embedded in social encounters (Grosz, 1994). Hence, starting with the added amulets to be worn, girls felt that since their illness, their family members had more control over their bodies and mobility. Moreover, the neighbours tell them that witches possess them because they loiter around at places of their own will. However, a few good things that girls shared that happened to them post their illness as they would share with a witty smile, *"I cannot stand under the sun anymore, and everyone asks me to rest and not work. I can demand anything from my brother's wives, and they get it done without questioning anything."* This unknown illness tends to be a rite of passage to manipulate the gendered symbolism of labor associated with socially constructed bodies, as amidst all this pain; the illness also gave giving new meanings to her life from the ones already present (Corbin & Strauss, 1988). Turner writes that diseases are not simply invasions of an environment by any alien entity, and often a person appropriates their illness as their individuality (Turner, 2008, p. 200).

Chronic illness and disability, therefore, present circumstances where people become conscious of their bodies and reflect upon them in ways that may or may not be on their terms. Nevertheless, studying people's experiences with chronic illness and disability helps us understand the fragility of our bodies and appearances and how these are reflected through our lived experiences. The physical milieu and the neighborhoods are vital, as the location is always more than the physical place and reflects a 'spatialization' of social relations (Niranjana, 2001). Arthur Frank (1995) argued that the dialogues ill people engage in with others have the potential to 'create empathetic bonds between themselves and their listeners, and there are integral accounts of pain and human realities hidden beneath it.' Girls with a disability would often share, *"No one has come yet; I do not think anyone will take me home anymore. I am getting old. I feel bad that mehmaani, for other girls in the village, comes so early, but nothing has come yet for me. So now I depend on my brother and still stay at his house*."

The relentless chores in their house, as they depended on their brother and his wife, and listening to her constant taunts on not getting married made them struggle to negotiate in their everyday lives. They speculated that staying at their brother's house would bring in a huge quarrel later, or they might end up being called a 'witch.' Hence, they wanted to marry any man who got a proposal for her as they just wanted to get married to leave their brother's house.

5. FINDING THE AGENCY IN THE BODY

5.1. Introduction:

With the construction of the bodies and the everyday rituals discussed in length in the last two chapters, the acceptance, manipulation, resistance, and risks that form the bodies are the prime focus of this chapter. Young girls grow up in socially constructed bodies; however, resistance and risk also shape gendered identities and subjectivities

because social norms and expectations not only inform the adolescents and construct their bodies but also conflict with one another in creating newer meanings to norms and situations, channelizing 'agency' through bodies. This chapter also explores how women in everyday activities seek power through resisting and accommodating the mainstream norms and the role the body plays in sustaining and challenging women's territory in a society where more is expected than a mere appropriation of labor. Agency in this chapter is an 'embodied identity' lived through the bodies collectively as a source of resistance, risk, and negotiations to understand how societal discourse are performed through bodies. The primary discussion points in this chapter, therefore, are the state-affiliated policies that act as 'biopower' or 'biopolitics' on the one hand and the plethora of negotiations, resistance, and risk young girls exercise through their bodies in society on the other hand.

5.2. Sexuality, Risk, and the Loitering Bodies:

This chapter section is about the embodied narratives of young girls who loitered unapologetically, challenging the concept that being present in public without a purpose is deemed 'unfeminine.'[18] Young girls in the community often said that post menstruation, they were asked not to meet boys because what if they indulge in some '*badmaashi*' (the collective term for being 'naughty')? The terminology of 'being naughty' and the 'narrative of safety' around women's bodies is not about the accidents or injury in the body but is always about the popular public imagination of girls gaining more sexual agency through mobility. Pleasure or fun is seen as threatening because it fundamentally questions the idea that women's presence in public space is only acceptable when they have a purpose and as if it violates the boundaries of public and private (Phadke et al., 2011, p. 113).

Adolescents often mentioned social influences about culturally normative ideas about good and bad behavior associated with sex. However, still, there was curiosity and an urge to manipulate settings and channel an agency through loitering in whatever way possible, in this case, the easiest being traveling to access open fields for toilets in the morning. Girls would form a group every morning to go to the end of the village ground for the day's toilet, where, for a few, that was the only time for loitering and even meeting their boyfriends. During the sessions, girls would narrate how villagers would often ask them if other girls and boys were meeting as couples or not in secret places to get news.

Few girls went to meet their lovers in local fairs fearlessly, and, to avoid the surveillance of local people, they even touched his feet, pretending to be some elder brother treated with respect[19]. In order to prevent being caught and punished, the courtships took place in secrecy as an agency and with hidden messages where dialogues were often short and direct and gestures that would prevent attracting attention and getting caught (Van Reeuwijk, 2010). In places where girls are not allowed equal digital access, adolescents have been deconstructing the public-private boundaries that continue to shape femininities in socially constructed bodies through multiple forms of resistance and negotiations. For example, several romantic relationships for girls would form through wrong numbers dialed on a cellular phone, which they could grab from their mothers while they were out for a bath.

Risk and public space were an intersection of romanticism in the lives of the Adivasi girls negotiating and resisting norms. With the money some of them earned from their daily labor in other’s lands, they got the freedom to buy things of their own choice and loiter around the night at the village fair. Agency in bodies, therefore, provides room to explore sexual behavior that sometimes does not conform to the norms; hence, newer

meanings are created, and structures change. Therefore, the agency is not only about the manifestation of a rebel but also about staying in the same system and, through a latent action of the individual, is about changing the system's social structure. The term 'reflexivity' suggests an agent's ability to alter their place in the social structure consciously. Some prioritized their sexual autonomy and shared that while they had a boyfriend who had been gifting them the beautiful earrings that they adored, anytime a *mehmaan* or a better suitor comes, she was ready to break up with the person and indulge for a better life. Therefore, the current context of sexual activities could sometimes be considered a form of resistance to fight the attached norms to sexuality imposed upon adolescent girls. There is always an attempt to define women's agency as transformative in its capacity related only to the politics of change.

However, the narratives of the girls highlight the integral role played by boundaries in framing the ideas of purity and danger in bodies and the concept of risk, which is dangerous but also certainly challenges the borders between the known and the unknown, resulting in a feeling of accomplishment and agency (Douglas, 1966). As in the history of literature, wherever women and their bodies and desire are documented, the narratives of contested female bodies with a sexual agency are demarcated and removed into the margins other than the ones that count as a passive repository of the tradition (Puri, 1999, p. 44).

5.3. Negotiating Gender in Everyday Life:

It can be said that 'risk is gendered' because not only are men allowed to experience more freedom to engage with risk, but engaging with risk also is linked to implications for reputation, honor, and woman's virtue as more prized over their desires and agencies (Phadke et al., 2011, pp. 58-59). Sport and employment have always been a man's

territory, and their validation of occupying the space with their overtly masculine presence was a norm. The constant display of superiority in any act reminded another gender of a space that was not theirs. Girls, during the interviews, would often share about one of the most interesting masculine gender norms of men being the superiority they claimed in a given space during sports. During local MLA[20] elections in the district, local MLAs often organized football matches in huge fields to seek votes. Where men were entitled to this leisure for women, no events were organized, and neither participated in those spaces created for men. The girls gradually assumed that there was seldom a need to invest in women in any politics-related discourse as it was men who would always manage the women in their house regarding any politics-related matter. They would vote for whomever the man in the house wanted to be voted for, as women were primarily apolitical.

However, only a few girls would practice football in the community, collect funds to buy jerseys, and hide them in a friend's house. Every morning at four o'clock before the day's chores started, girls would reach that one friend's house wearing *salwar kameez* and skirts and change into their respective jerseys to play till five-thirty a.m. in the morning only to return home before the day's chores start. Many parents supported their daughters' agency in pursuing games in the hope of a better job in the future.

Girls realized that boys who were the worst players even had the right to coach a girl but often found it offensive to be coached by girls even if they played well. Showcasing that men in sports are better than women in contemporary patriarchal culture is the foundation of the panoptical male connoisseur. This panoptical male connoisseur resides within the consciousness of most women where women perpetually stand before his gaze and under his judgment and gradually live their body as seen by another, by an anonymous patriarchal 'Other' always (Foucault, 1977).

However, there was only one thing that girls on the team found the most humiliating; it was about negotiating with the boys to let them play early before them because they were expected to reach home before dusk. And then, when the boys would mock them asking them to leave, saying, "*go home then if you cannot stay back*," the girls would answer, *"I have informed at home and come to play*." The sexualization of femininity is the medium through which the physical and cultural spaces are marked through morality (Niranjana, 2001). However, when these boundaries are blurred, women are often asked to conform to the norms, and hence the urge of the boys to state that these girls belong to private and not in public was a 'power mechanism' men-owned under patriarchy. Girls in the community would often be criticized if they accepted a job other than cutting paddy in other fields or local brick kilns. The men in the village often ridiculed girls working with street theater groups or working in Non-Governmental Organizations if a car would come to fetch them from their homes on certain occasions. *"Have you become some big kind of politician or some kind of Prime Minister that people are coming to meet you?*" they would comment. These comments had deep-rooted links to the adolescent girls and their economic independence of planning their life, leaving the boundaries of their house, and carving their agency from their hardships as contrary to the image of Adivasi women who were the head loaders[21] and historically, economically subjugated men with lower payments were justified as being undisciplined and unskilled. Women are barred from public spaces because of the control of sexuality and mobility, which is very much about the consenting relationships women might have with 'undesirable men' (Phadke et al., 2011).

6. MAJOR FINDINGS:

6.1. Formation of the Subjugated Bodies:

One of the core findings of this dissertation identified that the embodied action and experience are no longer under the control of the individual subject but have been controlled and appropriated by structures of governmentality and the goal-oriented activities associated with contemporary work and leisure designed by the constraints of social class (Shilling, 2005). Household work was the initial entry into the labor force as an inception to socialization where girls would often narrate, "*We have to work, and there is no choice; what would we eat if we do not work*?" Gradually discovering the hard labor and working in the fields, cooking at home, skipping school, and then finally leaving school to manage the younger siblings at home became a part of *habitus,* the typical trajectories the tribal girls would internalize in their everyday lives. As some would share, *"I did not know my body was so powerful that I could work so much."* Hence, through daily work, the adolescent girls experienced the power, endurance, and identities in their bodies when they discovered that parents from a very early age would teach them to work to prepare them for marriage. Anecdotes like *"I left school as early as in the third standard, as there was no one at the house to work, and I had to drop school*" showcased how time and again, in their homes, their natures and destinies were crucially interlinked to their future (Geetha, 2002, p. 02). When they would *share that "our parents are preparing us for marriage through work or our in-laws will never keep us in their house,"* it captured the reality of everyday life as an 'ordered reality.' Social constructionist asserts that families played a crucial role in constructing the idea of the subjected bodies for these adolescent girls. As mentioned in the third chapter, parents develop a set of shared assumptions assisting children in redirecting them toward the dominant social context in the household and what is expected outside of

their bodies that need to work hard to survive. It is essential to point out that parents' influence is separate from the socio-economic context in which the adolescents live (Van Reeuwijk, 2010, p. 82; Berger & Luckmann, 1991).

Bourdieu (1984; 1986) writes that the working class tends to develop an instrumental relation to their body as they have little time free from necessity. Hence, the development of 'cultural capital,' even through leisure and play, is embodied within children through acquiring particular tastes and abilities expressed through their bodies; the body is, therefore, a means to an end for them. And though women engaged in household work in the form of 'doing gender' and men were not engaged in it were the early symbolizations attached to the activities (West & Zimmerman, 1987) the fact that land can be inherited only by sons and daughters has minimal usufructuary rights until marriage was known to every adolescent girl in the community. The fear of working hard and searching for sustainability in 'marriage' through hard labor in the field and at home so that they are not thrown out of their in-laws' place was a pertinent phenomenon adolescent girls internalized in their lives. For example, married underage girls would work harder than their body could undertake in their in-laws' house to prove to everyone that their body was capable of enduring hard work linking the bodies between people's self-identity and social identity (Goffman, 1956).

6.2. Critical Bodies and Sexuality:

It was interesting to find out how girls experience themselves as self through the 'good girl' notion not directly but only indirectly through social experience, from the standpoints of other individual members of the same social group, or from the generalized standpoint of the social group as a whole to which they belonged (Mead, 1934). Girls would narrate that the definition of a 'good girl' in the community is one

who works a lot in her house and the field and does not go out with the boys or in the *mela*. Community members often check on the girls mastering 'essential femininity' through their accountable 'ladylike' behavior (West & Zimmerman, 1987). For example, the Adivasi community had their elaborate *mela*, which most of the girls during the sessions agreed to have never gone alone but always knew that those were the places where boys and girls met secretly. As if adolescent girls thoroughly compared their situations with other girls from the community to develop an idea of morality associated with their culture and the spaces they occupied with their bodies. Space is fundamental in any form of communal life, and space is fundamental in any exercise of power (Foucault, 1994).

In every society, it is necessary to make room for illegitimate sexuality; there is always a space for the 'Other Victorians' (Foucault, 1977). Nevertheless, adolescents and youth in the Adivasi communities had opportunities in spaces like mela or local fairs to interact and court. There was usually pride in how girls showed sexual reticence in guarding their reputation and passive roles as recipients of courtships, while boys actively tried to convince girls to lure them (Van Reeuvwijk, 2010, p. 117). However, girls refrained from proposing to boys they liked because of the shame it would bring if the boy did not want her back, as there would be gossip among friends. The sarcasm, irony, and gossip associated with young girls in the community and their bodies speak about how women's bodies are both lived and imagined and how bodies bear the mark of morality (Niranjana, 2001). Where femininity and female morality are once represented through socio-physical and cultural spaces (Niranjana, 2001, p. 89), some girls take pleasure outside cultural spaces and challenge the boundary between the public and the private. There are narratives in Chapter 5 where adolescent girls flamboyantly explore their sexuality by 'loitering' and defying the boundaries defined

by the communities refusing to play the roles assigned to them. 'Agency' in bodies provides room to explore sexual behavior that sometimes does not conform to the norms, and hence newer meanings get created.

Therefore, this dissertation portrays how resistance, risk, and sustainability can be alternatively described as rebellious, irrational, and deviant concerning young people (Rigakos & Law, 2009). For other women in the community, these girls were often termed as 'loose girls' and a threat to the community for other girls. The loose woman, as many feminists quoted in their writings, however, violates these norms as her 'looseness' manifests not only in her morals but also through her speech and the free and easy way she moves (Young, 2005; Bartky, 1997). The identification of women with the unruly body and the deep misogynistic fear of sexuality being rampant and destructive aims to produce a version of female subjectivity that is still powerful in present times, the one that is tamed (Frost, 2001). However, girls who had some sort of economic independence often expressed anger at surveillance around their loitering and freedom and resisted this silent control over their bodies. Thapan writes that socialization is not the only normalizing strategy that functions effectively in society, as women are continuously exposed to a spectrum of impacting social and cultural ideologies and practices through negotiations, strategy, and contestations (Thapan, 2009).

6.3. Inequality, Oppression, and the Body:

Adolescent girls who took up work other than chopping paddy on fields were often subjected to disgust. For example, in Chapter 5, we come across the story of Maryam, who shared that she has to dance with the local *nukkad natak team* even if she violated the cultural code of being feminine through the act to have financial independence, deal

with her alcoholic father and feed her family. Women in the community would often joke that young girls in present times have had the new refined packet of rice known as the *Sarna Chawal* found in shops and have developed an inevitable trend to roam around aimlessly. We often treat the body as a comparative and normative looking glass that is technically separated from the self and the situation (Waskul & Vannini, 2006), and it is the same in the course of the finding in this dissertation on motherhood. Again, women struggling with their ailing bodies and marriages or motherhood had rumors of being possessed by witches. Such bodies mediated a relationship between self-identity and social identity shared through embarrassment and stigma (Shilling, 2003). These burdened passive bodies often symbolized powerlessness and aspired to attain freedom only when one produced a child or got married. Adolescent girls assumed their bodies were not as 'docile' and nurturing as they should be living up to feminine expectations (Bartky, 1997). If one is unable to produce children, their anxiety about losing control of their own body, the unsure future of her husband marrying someone else, and the surveillance on her body being called unwell altogether reiterate the context of childbirth as an embedded identity that every girl in the community bore with them as a reflection of an ideal healthy body, and there is in no context an alternative. As chapter 3 notes anecdotes from girls sharing, *"If I do not produce a child, my in-laws would say it would have been fruitful for them even if they would have got a cow home and not me because at least the cow will give them milk and ask me what will I be giving to the family? Who will eat their land now?"* Adolescent girls were expected to produce children through marriage, and bodies that could not produce a child were often compared to a 'cow' and were a part of the gendered identity adolescent girls internalized from a young age.

6.4. Understanding the Menstruating Bodies:

Menstruation meant the blossom of the body, with *hormo* meaning body and *baha* meaning flower. As mentioned in chapter 4, 'menstruation' is called *hormo-baha* in the Santhali language, and though many young girls call it *mahina* and *mahavari* in Hindi, the word *hormo-baha* is still prevalent in the community. However, it was also observed during the chapter that girls had little knowledge or agency on menstruation beyond the beautiful Santhali name for menstruation. Adolescent girls experience menstruation and 'first periods' with fear where the narratives young girls carry with them, the moments of disbelief, getting used to one's blood, and what needs to be done and undone to embrace the new way of life becomes an embodied reality that one carries with them the entire life (Dammery, 2016). When the adolescents described menstruation during the interview, they focused on how it is linked to the role of reproduction and the body in public purview post menstruation on getting ready to be married and conceive. For example, girls shared, *"when we get periods, in a few days, the body starts glowing, and everyone says that the person looks pretty. The villagers claim that by seeing the glow on someone's face, they would understand that the girl is menstruating and that it is time to bring a match for her."*

However, *"There is a leech inside my vagina!"* the girls would often exclaim imagining that there is a leech which has gotten inside their vagina when they went to take a bath in the common river. Menstruation was still associated with '*ganda khoon*' or bad blood among the girls. The concept of living in a body that produces bad blood every month talks loudly about how girls imagine their bodies to be. There is always a prominent thought of being a 'lesser body' and self-surveillance in keeping the self-censoring gaze alive in oneself (Foucault, 1977). The emphasis, therefore, remains on the menstrual blood and the perceived dirtiness around it of the bodies being considered

secondary and polluted. However, regarding myths and taboos, the Santhali girls interviewed during the study shared only a few that prevailed in the community. Santhali girls in Pakur and Deoghar shared that they had no restrictions on working in the fields, fetching water for household chores, cooking food, and cleaning during their menstruation which was the usual restriction faced by adolescent girls in parts of India. It is interesting to analyze that the basis of discarding the myth was not knowledge around menstruation or awareness of body rights, as those were still passive bodies formed to perform the gendered feminine requirement of producing mundane labor as a form of survival. During the harvest season, a girl from the community would get rupees two hundred to rupees two hundred fifty for a day's labor in the field. Not working for a day during menstruation can take away a day's meal for the family with no pay.

Adolescent girls in the communities would have little agency to talk about menstruation. The few NGOs and their projects, the inconsistent meetings by ASHA workers, and the discussions with friends were the sources of understanding menstruation (Chakraborty, 2019). However, there has been a 'silence' between mothers and daughters around the conversation on menstruation. In most cases, during any particular session, the mothers and the daughters would even talk about menstruation in a closed room for the first time, while it must have been two years by then that the girls had their menarche. The absence of dialogue between a mother and daughter was not solely patriarchal but was linked to knowledge as, in most cases, mothers did not indulge in conversation because they managed it in isolation during puberty without much knowledge about menstruation themselves. Girls would learn in their puberty that bodies that manage their period are 'good bodies' and any menstruators failing to do so has a troubled body at risk (Bobel, 2019).

6.5. Biopower and Surveillance in Bodies:

The finding chapters focused that the understanding of being an 'Other' and the marginalized in the given set is the phenomenon through which the identity of being feminine is constructed every day and lived through the adolescent bodies as 'one is not born a woman but becomes one' (Beauvoir, 2010). There was a visible pattern of passive construction of bodies which needed to be ensured every day by not allowing girls and women to be a part of the *Gram Sabha* for any political discussions or discussions around development.

Women were not allowed to attend any form of *Gram Sabha* as there prevailed a gendered demarcation of the spaces women could occupy with their bodies in the community. These spaces were areas of constant surveillance on gender as we know that power comes from below and the complex local interwoven relationships in our everyday lives. There was constant surveillance of adolescent girls and their mobility post-puberty in spaces outside the home, too, through a 'Panopticon gaze' (Foucault, 1977). Surveillance was silent, just like the *Gram Sabha*, which by controlling spaces, controlled the lives of the young girls and internalized in them the idea of living through a 'gendered' body from a very young age. The lived realities around 'biopower' and the control it had on maternal health and the social positions of women and girls in the community have been evident in Chapters 3 and 5. Disciplinary power worked mainly through the institutions, while biopower worked through the state and gradually optimized its capabilities to perform in a structured pattern. The ability to control the data related to birth, contraceptive methods, and women's health are one of the crucial aspects of biopower exercised by the government in marginalized communities and identified through this study, which questions women's rights in reality. For example, the story of an adolescent girl and her pregnancy before marriage was termed unfit for

the community, which led to the ritualization of symbolizing the village getting contaminated. Chapter 5 has detailed narration where the girl's family spent a large amount of money to 'purify' the village and feed every man in the village with alcohol, chicken, and rice. The new rule of the land was the mastery of exercising power over life instead of taking charge of a life that gave power access to the body. Adolescent girls in these situations often find themselves within this institution and practice as an 'alienating self' where the control over the knowledge of anything related to sexuality, marriage, and motherhood takes away their autonomy from them (Young, 2005, p. 47). The control of sex is essential to keep the discussion on biopower running as it is not only controlling the body, but it is about exercising the right to who has to bear the context of dignity and maintenance of the 'purity' in question for girls and it is prevalent in the Adivasi communities too. More than the threat of death, the power that has access to the biological life of civilizations and their bodies and control of the data on maternity and contraceptives runs the risk of manipulating adolescent lives and their identities.

6.6. The Politics of Space and the Bodies:

The relationship between eating and sociability has not been eradicated in the contemporary era, as gender inequalities continue to be evident in these activities. Women traditionally have less access to food than men but more responsibility when preparing it for consumption (Shilling, 2005, p. 205). Chapter 4 highlights 'space' as one of the essential contexts associated with the rituals and the rites of passage that tends to nurture the gendered identity through the lived bodies because 'spatiality' informs the bodily practices of women within diverse contexts and settings (Niranjana, 2001). On one side, 'dance' is a traditional way where the whole community participates and choreographs together through the 'shared vocabularies of body idiom' (Goffman,

1963, p. 35); girls had certain restrictions on the other hand, around spaces they could occupy in the community or during festivals. For example, girls in the communities I interacted with were never allowed to go to *Jeharthaan*, where their ancestors were worshipped. Post marriages, when the newly married couple visits the *Jeherthaan* as a welcoming gesture, the new bride is not allowed to enter the *Jeherthaan*. However, she will take the blessings from outside the wall, whereas the groom can enter the boundary walls. In a different context, satisfying the *Bongas* or ancestors in every ritual is the most crucial part of any festival in the Santhali community, and several forms of sacrifice were attached to it. Chapter 4 narrates in detail how a corner of a room in the house is selected as sacred for the sacrifice, and men would sacrifice a chicken remembering the ancestors where women were never allowed to enter the room during the offering, nor were they allowed to eat the sacrificed meat after the offerings were done. From a very early age in their maternal house, adolescent girls internalize that to hold the connection with their ancestors is supposedly a manly phenomenon, and the sacrificial meat was an embodied object to validate that women were not allowed to occupy all spaces and positions with ease. Rituals played a fundamental role in the social construction of gender lived through bodies connecting food with property rights and mobility. It was interesting to identify the rituals that restricted women from nutrition as a gendered component that led to discrimination. For example, Chapter 4 also mentions that just like the offering to the *Bongas* there was the *Gada parab*, where men would collect rice and tiny chicken from every household and collectively meet at a riverbank to cook, where women again would not be allowed to participate or even consume excess food. Interestingly, no such ritual practices were done solely by women or girls in the community, where men were not allowed to participate or consume food. Hence, rituals like this which discriminate against women participating or even control

their bodies through food consumption, make it understandable that women and girls do not grasp space directly but through bodily situations (Niranjana, 2001). As Bartky (1997) writes that it is through the diminished dieting method and their relation to food that women are encouraged to take up as little space as possible.

6.7. Individuality and the Body:

Chapter 5 highlights 'tattoos' as a rite of passage and an agency lived through bodies. Most girls in the community inscribed tattoos on their bodies at a very young, where in a few cases, they would plead with their mothers to pay for the tattoos. In places where their mothers would not give them money, they would conspire ways to arrange some money or a handful of grains or rice to get the tattoos done from the *gotnewali*. Everyone shared their immense pain in getting the tattoo done and stories of how they would hit the ladies and wanted to run away, hoping they had heard their mother and never would have asked for a tattoo. Often bodies are scarred in the name of rituals, and the cut leads to pain, but as Durkheim would suggest, pain is integral to solidarity building. Pain rituals symbolize getting rid of the 'profane' to get closer to the 'sacred' by overcoming the limitations of flesh (Crossley, 2006, p. 23). No young girl would miss out on the chance of adorning the rite of this passage to get closer to the inner circle of the women around them as an agency where the individuals identify with their collective. Therefore, altering the body has a profound social significance as a celebratory moment when mothers, grandmothers, and adolescent girls sit together to apply turmeric and oil on the swollen bruises on their hands and chest and listen to stories about getting united with their ancestors someday after death. However, girls who once desperately wanted to be a part of the woman's group and enjoyed having tattoos as that one entry point into the group when they were very young would react

to the permanence of tattoos while growing up. Some young girls would say they did it when they were young and did not want it when they grew up as their body parts look further darker. Bartky (1997) mentioned the normalized discourse of the body in society by arguing, 'A woman's skin must be soft, supple, hairless, and smooth; ideally, it should betray no sign of wear, experience, age, or deep thought.' For example, the contractors would pick the girls and women every morning during the migration season, identifying them as laborious by tattooing them on their bodies. Girls would not want to be associated with a laborious body with the understanding of a deeply rooted inferior status inscribed to their bodies. In an entirely another context, tattoo permanence bothered college-going girls too. They shared that when they started college, girls wore full-sleeve *salwar kameez,* covering their tattoos as a negotiation strategy with their bodies getting marked from a particular community. The modification of an individual's body is usually an event for the whole community or a select group to identify it on several occasions differently as it confers several meanings imposed through it (Crossley, 2006, p. 23).

7. CONCLUSION:

It is the amalgamation of the stories from the adolescent girls on the ground, which is not of the dominant culture but of the excluded, that this dissertation got its existence into the literature of the Sociology of Body. As much as the themes in this study considered the social construction of the bodies, it also considers emotions, risk, and negotiations guided through rituals establishing a lived gendered identity. The length and breadth of this dissertation echo an understanding that bodies do not perform 'culture' in a vacuum, and neither are identities created in isolation. Common threads of fear and joy, pleasure and danger weave across the narratives in this study. On the one

hand, where we experience young girls voicing out the internalized gendered oppressions around mobility and controlled sexuality, there were specific relational dynamics and fear of being rejected for not performing labor and motherhood in marriage. On the ground in recent times, when the girls were interviewed during this study, they would often surprisingly laugh at the innate need for me to document stories of girls as mundane as them. *"What is so special in our stories that you are documenting it?"* they would ask me. The context of *Nirbakization* (Mahato, 2000) leads to a culture of silence in the marginalized population where they think their stories are not worthy. The writing of this thesis takes into consideration the culture of silence, which is sometimes latent to the extent that our representation of the subaltern says more about us than the subaltern themselves, where we produce the subaltern by our own gaze and end up reinforcing 'subalternity' (Spivak, 1988). Hence, if one follows the pages from *Manushi* (a set of journals created back in the 1980s in India) and studies the status of women in undivided Bihar and then thirty-five years later tries to analyze the context of women and girls on the same ground defining their everyday lives, this study becomes sociological enough in documenting this longitudinal analysis over time through the representation of stories and perceptions around gender, body, and sexuality in the same region.

END NOTE

[1] Santhal Pargana derives its name from two words: 'Santhal,' a significant tribe of India, and Pargana, a unit of administration used primarily by medieval rulers. Santhal Pargana is one of Jharkhand's divisions and comprises Godda, Deoghar, Dumka, Jamtara, Sahibganj, and Pakur.

[2] We want grains, not iron!

[3] https://jharkhandlive.org/blog/2018/07/02/0009/

[4] https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/24984990

[5] https://www.indiatoday.in/education-today/news/story/literacy-rate-jharkhand-309523-2016-02-19

[6] The Santhal tribe follows the Sarna religion and worships the *sal*/teak (*Sarna*) tree, considered the abode of the goddess *Sarna*. However, in due course of time, Santhals practiced Christianity too. A vast majority of tribals reside in rural areas. Tribals largely depend on forest re-sources for food, shelter, and medicine. The goddess is believed to protect the community from natural calamities and disasters (Government of Jharkhand website, www.jharkhand.nic.in).

[7] As Georg Simmel once wrote, the 'eye' has a uniquely sociological function because the interaction of individuals is based upon mutual glances. He shared that the glance in the same act that reveals the others (being observed) also discloses the one who is observing (Simmel, 1921), which is an insight associated with Cooley's "looking-glass self" (1902) as it explains one can only form images of one's self from the imaginary perspective of others (Waskul & Vannini, 2006).

[8] *The Personal is Political* is a political argument used as a rallying slogan during the second wave of feminism from the late 1960s and beyond, which challenged the rudimentary temporal family values in society back then, connecting the personal experiences of women to the larger social and political structures.

[9] *Diku* is a derogatory Santhali word for outsiders and foreigners who would intrude on the land with a hostile agenda to ruin the sanity of the land and its people by usurping land and the culture.

[10] In the provocative article 'Can There Be a Feminist Ethnography?' Judith Stacey (1988) questions the 'ethical principles' that a feminist could suffer a dilemma upon learning informants' confidences that were never intended for publication but needs to be published for the sake of the research.

[11] Clifford and Marcus (1986) in Writing Cultures have scrutinized ways that "power relations," "hierarchy," and "inequity" between researchers and their subjects are inherent in ethnographic research.

[12] You are a woman, so you will not understand much about the situation.

[13] In *Purity and Danger* 1966, Mary Douglas writes about a similar myth about women. She mentions that among the Nyakyusa tribes, a pregnant woman is thought to reduce the quantity of grain she approaches because the fetus in her is voracious and snatches it.

[14] In his discourse on *Means of Correct Training*, Foucault points out that the exercise of discipline assumes a mechanism that makes it visible to be seen on whom the effects of power are applied (1977).

[15] *Jatra* is a famous musical folk theatre that originated in the states of Bengal and Orissa. *Jatra* performances resemble the art forms of *Nautanki* in Uttar Pradesh and the *Tamasha* in Maharashtra.

[16] Waskul and van der Riet (2002) explain that 'a person does not 'inhabit' a static object body but is subjectively embodied in a fluid and a negotiated process of being. In this process, the body, self, and social interaction are interrelated to such an extent that distinctions between them are not only permeable and shifting but also actively manipulated and configured.'

[17] As Synnott (1993) would also say that despite the hyper-intellectualism of the Western cultural tradition, which has historically privileged mind over body, as they said, 'mind is for man, and body is for women' the body was unquestionably there, needing and demanding attention and we are all 'embodied.'

[18] The unapologetic presence of women in public disrupts societal expectations. The female body, the embodiment of honor, should be located in a private space because it is considered unmanageable and a potential threat to the power structure if in public (Phadke et al., 2011).

[19] See Chapter 3, *Experiencing Body and Sexuality in Everyday Life*, for the section on 'Adolescents and the Onset of Sexed Bodies'

[20] Member of Legislative Assembly of political parties contesting elections

[21] A 1983 article in Manushi named *Women Headloaders in Tribal Bihar* pointed out that historically, most head loaders in undivided Bihar have always been women. The reason was that more employment and work as daily laborers were available to men than women and that women were primarily responsible for feeding their children and family. If a man is unemployed, he can accompany the woman to the forest to cut wood, but men rarely take responsibility for fetching the wood from the forest. This article was a condensed report by N.G. Basu, T. Bhaduri, V. Surin, and Victoria Soreng from a survey conducted by Xavier Institute of Social Science, Ranchi.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bartky S. L. (1997). "Foucault, Femininity and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power" in K. Conboy, N. Medina & S. Stanbury (eds.), *Writing on the Body: Female Embodiment and Feminist Theory*, 129-154, New York: Columbia University Press.

Basu, N.G., Bhaduri, T., Surin, V. & Soreng, V. (1983). Women Headloaders in Tribal Bihar, *Manushi. 17.* The reports were based on a survey conducted by Xavier Institute of Social Science, Ranchi.

Bara, J. (2009). Alien Construct and Tribal Contestation in Colonial Chhotanagpur: The Medium of Christianity. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *44*(52), 90–96.

Berger, P. and Luckmann, T. (1991) [1966]. '*The Social Construction of Reality*' *A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, London: Penguin Books.

Beauvoir, S. de. (2010) [1949]. *The Second Sex.* London, England: Vintage Classics.

Bobel, C. (2019). *The Managed Body: Developing Girls & Menstrual Health in the Global South.* Palgrave Macmillan.

Bordo, S. (1993) *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture and the Body*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Bourdieu, P. (1977). *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Translated by R. Nice, Cambridge University Press.

——(1984). *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste.* Routledge & Kegan Paul, London.

——(1986). The Forms of Capital. in Richardson. J. (ed.), *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. 241–258. New York: Greenwood.

Bryman, A. (2001). *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Chakraborty, S. (2019). Talking about Gender and Sexual Reproductive Health Rights of Adolescents and Youth in Jharkhand. *Asian Journal of Women's Studies, 25*(3), 468-481.

Chodorow, N. (1978). *The Reproduction of Mothering: Psychoanalysis and the Sociology of Gender.* Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Clifford, J. & Marcus, G.E. (1986). *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography: A School of American Research Advanced Seminar.* Berkeley: University of California Press.

Corbin, J. & Strauss, A. (1988). *Unending Care and Work.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Crossley, N. (2006). *Reflexive Embodiment in the Contemporary Society.* New York: Open University Press.

Dammery, S. (2016). *First Blood: A Cultural Study of Menarche.* Monash University Publishing.

Denzin, N.K. (1997). *Interpretive Ethnography: Ethnographic Practices for the 21st Century.* Sage Publications, Inc.

Dube, L. (1988). Socialisation of Hindu Girls in Patrilineal India, in K. Chanana (ed.), *Socialisation, Education and Women: Explorations in Gender Identity*, New Delhi: Orient Longman Ltd, 166–192.

Durkheim, E. (1912). The Elementary Forms of Religious Life. in Jones, R.A. (ed.), *Emile Durkheim: An Introduction to Four Major Works*. 1986, Sage Publications, Inc., Beverly Hills, 115–155.

Douglas, M. (1966). *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo.* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Frank, A. (1995). *The Wounded Storyteller: Body, Illness and Ethics.* Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Frost, L. (2001). *Young Women and the Body: A Feminist Sociology*. London: Palgrave.

Fetterman, D.M. (2010). *Ethnography: Step-by Step Guide. 3rd Edition*. LA: Sage.

Foucault, M. (1972) [1969]. *The Archaeology of Knowledge and the Discourse on Language.* Translated from the French by A. M. Sheridan Smith. Pantheon Books, New York.

——(1977). *Discipline and Punish:* The Birth of the Prison. New York: Pantheon Books.

——(1980). *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings*, C. Gordon (ed.), 1972–79.

——(1994) [1966]. *The Order of Things: An Archaeology of the Human Sciences*. Vintage Books.

Geetha, V. (2002). *Gender.* Calcutta: Stree.

Goffman, E. (1956). *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life.* Social Sciences Research Centre, University of Edinburgh.

—— (1963). *Behaviour in Public Places. Notes on the Social Organization of Gatherings.* New York: The Free Press.

——(1989). "On Fieldwork". Translated by L.H. Lofland. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography,18*(2), 123–132.

Grosz, E. (1994). *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism*. Indiana University Press.

Grosz, E. (1995). *Space, Time, and Perversion: Essays on Politics of Bodies.* New York: Routledge.

Guha, R. (1983). *Subaltern Studies II: Writings on South Asian History and Society*, Oxford University Press, Delhi.

Hammersley, M. & Atkinson, P. (2007) [1983]. *Ethnography: Principles in Practice* (3rd ed.). Routledge.

Kelkar, G. & Nathan, D. (1991). *Gender and Tribe: Women, Land and Forests in Jharkhand.* New Delhi: Kali for Women.

Kishwar, M. (1987). Toiling without Rights: Ho Women of Singhbhum. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *22*(3), 95–101

Kishwar, M. (1989). Dowry and Inheritance Rights. *Economic and Political Weekly*, *24*(11), 587–588.

Lévi-Strauss C. (1969). *The Elementary Structures of Kinship (les structures élémentaires de la parenté).* Translated from the French by H. J Bell, et al. London: Eyre & Spottiswoode.

Mahato, P. P. (2000). *Sanskritization Vs Nirbakization: A Study of Cultural Resistance of the People of Junglemahal*. Calcutta: Sujan Publications.

McLean, A. & Leibing, A. (2007). *The Shadow Side of Fieldwork: Exploring the Blurred Borders between Ethnography and Life.* Blackwell Publishing Ltd.

McNay, L. (1999). Gender, Habitus and the Field. *Theory, Culture and Society, 16*(1), 95–117.

Mead, G. H. (1934). *Mind, Self and Society*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Menon, N. (2017). Bharat Mata and Her Unruly Daughters. The Wire, India. https://thewire.in/gender/bharat-mata-unruly-daughters

Merleau-Ponty, M. (1962). *Phenomenology of Perception.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Niranjana, S. (2001). *Gender and Space: Femininity, Sexualization and the Female Body.* India: SAGE Publications.

Patrick, J. (1973). *A Glasgow Gang Observed*, London: Eyre Methuen.

Phadke, S., Khan S. & Ranade S. (2011). *Why Loiter?: Women and Risk on Mumbai Streets.* Penguin Books.

Powdermaker, H. (1966). *Stranger and Friend: The Way of an Anthropologist,* W.W. Norton & Co.

Puri, J. (1999). *Woman, Body, Desire in Post-colonial India: Narratives of Gender and Sexuality.* New York: Routledge.

Rainbird, H. (1990). 'Expectations and Revelations: Examining Conflict in the Andes', in R.G. Burgess (ed.), *Studies in Qualitative Methodology, 2, Reflections on Field Experience*, Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

Ramirez, R. (2007). Race, Tribal Nation, and Gender: A Native Feminist Approach to Belonging. *Meridians*, *7*(2), 22–40.

Rao, N. (2018*). 'Good Women do not Inherit Land' Politics of Land and Gender in India*. Routledge.

Rubin, G. S. (2002) [1984]. Thinking Sex: Notes for a Radical Theory of the Politics of Sexuality. In *Culture, Society and Sexuality a Reader*, Routledge, 143-178.

Sainath P. (1996). *Everybody Loves a Good Drought: Stories from India's Poorest Districts*. Penguin Books.

Schutz, A. (1944). The Stranger: An Essay in Social Psychology. *American Journal of Sociology*, *49*(6), 499–507.

Schutz, A., Walsh, G. & Lehnert, F. (1967). *The Phenomenology of the Social World*. Northwestern University Press.

Shilee, S. & Shailee, S. (2002). Indigenous Identity of Tribals in Jharkhand. *Indian Anthropologist*, *32*(1/2), 75–86.

Shilling, C. (2003) [1993]. *The Body and Social Theory*. Sage Publications.

Shilling, C. (2005). *The Body in Culture, Technology and Society.* Nottingham Trent University.

Spivak G. C. (1988). Can the Subaltern Speak? in C. Nelson & L. Grossberg (eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture.* Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 271–313.

Srinivas, M. N. (1976). *The Remembered Village.* University of California Press.

Stacey, J. (1988). "Can There Be a Feminist Ethnography?" *Women's Studies International Forum, 11*(1), 21–27.

Thapan, M. (1995). Gender, Body and Everyday Life. *Social Scientist, 23,* (7/9), 32–58.

Thapan, M. (2009). *Living the Body Embodiment, Womanhood and Identity in Contemporary India*. India: Sage Publications.

Tolman, D.L, Bowman, C.P. & Fahs, B. (2014). Sexuality and Embodiment, in D. L. Tolman and L. M. Diamond (eds.), *APA Handbook of Sexuality and Psychology: Vol. 1. Person-Based Approaches*. American Psychological Association. 759–804.

Turner, B.S. (2008) [1984]. *The Body and Society*. Nottingham Trent University.

Van Reeuwijk, M. (2010). *Because of Temptations: Children, Sex and HIV/AIDS in Tanzania.* Diemen: AMB Publishing.

Warren, C.A.B. (1988). *Gender Issues in Field Research*, Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Waskul D. D. & van der Riet, P. (2002). "The Abject Embodiment of Cancer Patients: Dignity, Selfhood, and the Grotesque Body." *Symbolic Interaction, 25*(4), 487–513.

Waskul D. D. & Vannini P. (2006). *Body/ Embodiment: Symbolic Interaction and the Sociology of the Body*. USA: Ashgate Publishing Company.

West, C. & Zimmerman, D.H. (1987). Doing Gender. *Gender and Society, 1*(2), 125–151.

Westmarland, L. (2000). 'Taking the Flak: Operational Policing, Fear and Violence', in G. Lee-Treweek & S. Linkogle (eds.), *Danger in the Field: Risk and Ethics in Social Research*, London: Routledge.

Young, I. M. (2005). *On Female Body Experience: "Throwing like a Girl" and Other Essays. New York: Oxford University Press.*