Tracing scope of Feminist Praxis in New Media : A Critical Analysis of Social Media from a Feminist Perspective

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This is to certify that the thesis entitled **"**Tracing scope of Feminist Praxis in New Media: A Critical Analysis of Social Media from a Feminist Perspective" is bonafide work carried out by **SAMPRITI MUKHERJEE** under our supervision and guidance for partial fulfillment of the requirement for M Phil in Women's Studies during the academic session 2019.

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Abstract

We are living in a time of despair, defiance and decadence. We are witnessing a trend of organised hate-mongering and regulated violence on marginalised identities/communities. With the advent of IT-cells, campaigns composed for digital media etc, virtual media has become a platform of execution and functioning of exclusive ideologies of cultural and economic power, particularly in our country's demography. As hybrid of communication and technology, virtual is becoming a reality or a copy of reality replicated by socio-economic relations. This thesis wants to enquire the claim of 'newness' in new media and investigate the space as emancipatory for oppressed (specifically discussed in feminist scholarships as such); focusing on the interconnectivity of women's movements and social media replications.

The quest of this thesis is to trace constituents of feminist subjectivity and possibilities of collectivization in the realm of 'virtual reality'. Feminist academia suggests communication technologies as crucial tools, recrafting women's bodies. The study suggests, these tools embody and enforce new social relations for women world-wide. This is a 'new' communication realm and ultimately a 'new' medium, whose backbone is computer network, language is digital and users are globally distributed and globally interactive. The question is, (a)can the networked society, coded by command-control-communication be traced for constituting feminist subjectivity /'oppositional' consciousness'2? (b) can the virtual be explored as the intersection/alliance between social movements and feminist desire?

The project will proceed with tracing the convergence of virtual media and women's movements (turned as social movements) and look for transgressed boundaries, potent fusions and contested meanings of phallogocentric society. To do that, this thesis will study the timeline of significant women's movements (Nirbhaya protests to me-too movement), its replications (written narratives, images, political statements, campaign materials) on virtual media and changing dynamics of feminist contingent politics in Indian demography throughout that timeframe.

In the first chapter, the thesis will focus on the expedition of Indian feminist movement and locate the moments rupture in the trajectory. The aim is to discuss the contesting character of Indian feminism itself, to develop an understanding of the newly formed movements in the platform of new media. This chapter will be an attempt to understand the journey of Indian feminist movements, until Me_too and LOSHA. Thus I intend to a) unfold the complexities appeared within the praxis of feminism in India, b) trace the newly formed language of feminist movements and finally to identify the newly found relations between new media and Indian feminist consolidations.

The next chapter will reflect upon the age old conflict between feminism and technology .Taking insights from feminist scholarships it will conceptualize the trajectory of complexities between technology and feminism. Thus investigating whether the contemporary technologies (read virtual media) can offer the radical political potential to 'contest the meaning of the breached boundaries' and produce a new mode of communication against the perfect communication of coded binaries central to phallogocentrism. In this chapter I want to discuss a)How cyber space posed alternative scopes for feminist desires ? and b) how the scopes progressed with the emergence of new media ?

Tracing and citing instances from social media and analyzing those regarding the convergence of women's movement and cyber space, will be subject of the next chapter. The aim is to find the self-generated/directed/selected narratives(contents in social media) of feminist subjects and their subjectivity (constituted under both 'juridical' and 'productive' notion of power) in the space of new media ,with analyzing those subjective representations with constraints (Englishspeaking, technologically driven users).

The quest here will be to understand the contingent politics of a feminist subject(not as a presupposed one).It aims for looking at the feminist political subjects (beyond the limited understanding of feminist subjects) and situate the performativity of those subjects in the contemporary feminist discourse. This project will conclude with asking, whether the 'nomadic subjects' are individual consumers ,negotiating for herself in the 'culture of real virtuality'5, OR the 'nomadic subjects' (produced under the juridical and productive notion of power) are performing contingent feminist subjectivity, taking both social movements and technology as mutual constitutive factors??

Introduction

Occurrences of movements like Me-too and LOSHA (List of Sexual Harassment in Academia) indicated arrival of a new momentum in the discourse of Indian feminist praxis. The emerging new contained multiple moves both in the spectrums of Indian feminist movements and communicative media. Past years witnessed women coming out with their experiences of sexual harassment in public.The collective experience of personal was forged in the public paradigm of social media. An assimilation of written narratives in virtual media ruptured the prevalent silence on sexual harassment in public and private sectors. Survivors as active agents shared narratives of harassment across the networked domain of virtual, beyond the partitions of nation-state. Hash-tags connected accounts of intimidation and exploitation. Repressed tales of violence exploded through the streams of networks in virtual media. The collective explosion mediated via the attributes of virtual media (like hashtags/google forms) invaded the hegemonic institutions of academia(LOSHA), film-industry(Me_too second wave) and society over all. Accounts of sexual exploitation from the Me_too second wave clearly indicated towards the vivid existence of patriarchy in one of the biggest work-industries in India ie Bollywood film industry. According to statistics, two and a half lakh employees run the industry whose net-worth is near to 350 billion. Me Too gained prominence in India with the increasing popularity of the international movement, and later gathered sharp momentum in October 2018.Actror Tanushree Dutta accused Nana Patekar of sexual harassment. This incident led many women from the industry to come out with their accounts. These accounts of harassment ranged from verbal abuse, molestation to forceful penetration or rape. Coming out of these experiences shed light in the very reality that all of our institutional spaces are rooted in patriarchal origin. It took years for the survivors to break their silence in public and build solidarity amongst each-other. Indian feminist movements found a new expression in act of breaking silence on sexual harassment gendered violence) in social institutions and new media being the podium for this collective eruption of feminist expressions.

As alliance of communication and technology, virtual is becoming a reality or a copy of reality, Virtual the public domain of communication is replicated by socio-economic relations marked by the complexities of gender, caste, class. In the post-industrial and post-structuralist time when the 'hybrid' of technology and experience, the alliance between machine and representation is taking place, every citizen can construct her own custom lifestyle and 'select' her ideology from a large (but not infinite) number of choices. Rather than pushing the same objects/information to a large group, globalised capitalist marketing strategies tries to target each individual separately through the medium of New Media. With the advent of IT-cells, campaigns composed for digital media etc., virtual media has become a platform of execution and functioning of exclusive ideologies of cultural and economic power, particularly in our country's demography. We are living in a time of despair; defiance and decadence .The citizen of India are witnessing a trend of

organized hate-mongering and regulated violence on marginalized identities/communities. Terminal manifestation of violence on Muslims, Dalits, Women are not only being uploaded but propagated ,celebrated and defended on interfaces of virtual media. Sights of violence and resistance are switching place in trending hashtags of media interface. In this backdrop I intend to look at the possibilities of alliance between social media and feminist desire. The project will proceed with tracing the convergence of virtual media and women's movements (turned as social movements) and look for transgressed boundaries, potent fusions and contested meanings of phallogocentric society[1]. To do that, this thesis will study the timeline of significant women's movements (Nirbhaya protests to me-too movement), its replications (written narratives, images, political statements, campaign materials) on virtual media and changing dynamics of feminist contingent politics in Indian demography throughout that timeframe.

I intend to critically unfold the complexities between these two mentioned moves and finding a conjuncture between these two moves, if possible .Feminists have claimed the virtual to be liberating for women .Especially writing and negotiating as an individual in the cyber place . First I will look in the trajectory of Indian feminist movements to try and find the linkage of personal enforcing in the political space. My first task will be to find the moments of coming out by survivors in public. It will treasure the moment of gender entering in the political discourse of India. The thesis will be to trace the new move in Indian feminist praxis, find its resonance with the new mode of communication.

This thesis aims to posit a critical study of social media and it's .The study will look into the claimed feminist roots of new media and enquire the new found alliance between women's movements and new media technology.This project will conclude with asking, whether the 'feminist subjects' are consumers, negotiating for herself in the 'culture of real virtuality'5, OR the 'nomadic subjects' (produced under the juridical and productive notion of power) are performing contingent feminist subjectivity, taking both social movements and technology as mutual constitutive factors??

Chapter -I

This chapter I want to focus on the expedition of Indian feminist movement and locate the moments of shift and rupture in the trajectory. The journey of women's movement in India can be categorized into three phases.I intend to conceptualise these categories on the existing socio-cultural realities in Indian demography. By detecting various challenges posed by the movements and complexities produced throughout the time frame, I intend to unfold the 'contesting nature' of Indian feminism itself. The movements can be classified into three phases based on the issues and discourses,that the feminist praxis ought to disclose. It is important to note that the classification is not a linear trail of succession. The proliferation of feminist consciousness does

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[1] Haraway, D. (2006). A cyborg manifesto: Science, technology, and socialist-feminism in the late 20th century. In *The international handbook of virtual learning environments* (pp. 117-158). Springer, Dordrecht.

not presuppose 'woman' as a singular category. Rather this chapter seeks to analyse the new visibility of women across the spectrums of plurally coloured women's movement in India. The classification is thus based on contingent,chronological and conceptual stand-points.

The starting era of women's movement in India is marked with the discourses of colonization and nationalism in Indian demography. Hence,one can observe it's close close links with the ideas of nationalism as well as the social reform movements. The movements were an unique blend of both nationalist and feminist desires. Late eighteenth and early nineteenth century British India witnessed a paradigm shifting change in its social sphere due to introduction of modern English education. The emergence of the 'public sphere' gave encouragement to argumentative discussions. Critical and rational thinking were practised with equal participation of all its members. Evolution of printing press and public libraries played a pivotal role in shaping the public sphere that time. (Habermas, J., & Habermas, J. (1991). *The structural transformation of the public sphere: An inquiry into a category of bourgeois society*. MIT press). The key issues evolved around this public sphere were uprooting the social evil of Sati,sanctioning of widow remarriage,prohibition of child-marriage,guarranting property rights of women through legislation and more importantly the issue of women's education. the continuous contradiction between age old religious culture of India and the new western ethos were reflected in journals and newspapers of that time. This phase caused remarkable and significant changes to women's education,employability,development on one hand and on the other it brought women under the idea of universal citizenship by doing away with various anti-women practises in Indian society like sati practise, child marriage etc. While 'modernisation' remained instrumental in attaching the question of women's rights and liberation to the discourse of 'nationalism'.(Partha Chatterjee,Sarkar)."Even as middle-class Indian women modernised, becoming "new women" of the nation-in-making, their primary affiliation was meant to be to the family, the private sphere, the purity of nation and "culture." (Chatterjee 1989; Sarkar 2001). The modernised women needed to work under defined roles of domesticated arena.The 'new' women who participated in the process of nation building had to work under the binary of private and public.In the post-colonial period women were burdened with the responsibility to bear the purity of nation and culture. To re-enforce the anti-western, indigenous credentials in Indian nationalist movement, the task was on women to enact in the private sacred spaces assigned for them in the name of tradition and culture.

The second phase can be traced from the post-independence era .The first phase of women's movements was marked by massive participation of women in nationalist movements. At some point the freedom of women and nation was transcending yet contesting desires. These two aspirations were sometimes overlapping each-other or positioned with opposite interests. In coherence to this, the second phase, that is the post-independence era links the first and the second phase of women's movement. Though the concern of gender equality was introduced in the fundamental rights and resolution in 1936, Fundamental rights are a group of rights that have been recognized by the Supreme Court as requiring a high degree of protection from government encroachment. These rights are specifically identified in the Constitution (i.e. in the Bill of

Rights), or have been found under Due Process. The fundamental rights were included in the constitution because they were considered essential for the development of the personality of every individual and to preserve human dignity. The writers of the constitution regarded democracy of no avail if civil liberties, like freedom of speech and religion were not recognized and protected by the State. Through this legislation women were identified as equals in the Indian constitutional measures. Various administrative bodies were built to provide opportunity for women in both private and public sectors.1950s witnessed huge participation of women under Communist Party of India's flag participated in the anti-state agitation. In famine affected Bengal women were demanding their rights as political activists and workers. The platform of anti-imperialist struggles were strategized to claim space in the local movements. The Tehama movement marked the largest participation and leadership of peasant women in political struggle of Bengal.43, 500 numbers of women were members of "Mahila Atmaraksha committee" during the phase of Tebhaga movement. In mid 1960s only we find widespread discontent among the people, especially among the youth and the working class. These led to peasant movements,anti - price agitations in Kolkata,Bombay and Gujarat. Late 1970s can also be traced for feminist implications in radical left and in the socialist front as well. These had important significance in the growth of women's movements and organizations in the phase. One such movement is the Naxalbari movement which was started in West-bengal and later spread in Kerala,Andhra-pradesh,Bihar and Punjab. Shramik Sangathana (followed by the Shahada agitation in 1970s),The self-employed women's association (SEWA) followed by trade union movement in 1972,Ahmedabad and many other organizations were formed. The anti-price rise movement organized by Gujrat was joined by thousands of middle-class women taking the shape of Nav-nirman movement in 1974.In 1973-74 many women from the Communist Party of India(Marxist) came to form the United Women's Anti-price rise Front. Maoist women established the Progressive Organisation of Women, instigating a feminist ciritique of the radical leftist politics, indicating patriarchal traces crafted in the practice of left political spaces.

These feminist collectives of the 1970s and 1980s –educated,middle-class(if not elite),and urban-focused on the recognizable constituencies of poor,grass-root women,with the nation-state as their main point of address(John,1999).The shift of left-led focus from women's practical gender interests around material inequality (and the subsuming of gender under class) to more strategic /visible instance of gender discrimination such as violence against women could be noticed in this phase .In 1972 the custodial rape of a 14 year old Adivasi woman named Mathura epistomised. Feminists took this incident to notice the manner in which sexual violence can not be separated from the logic and workings of the patriarchal state.The Mathura rape case was also significant for inaugurating series of successful legal reforms around violence against women and orienting Indian feminism itself towards legal strategies .(Kapur,2005). Even as these women's organisations built in 1970s-1980s constituted a small percentage of Indian Women's Movements(IWM),they gave it its almost abiding legacy,especially in the qualities of radicalism and autonomy that have become normative to feminism as such.

In September, 1987, incident of Sati of Roop kanwar also gave a churning in societal understanding of gender and feminism. although practice of sati was banned long back in Colonial India, it was still practised using the cultural freedom under religion, feudal reminiscence in Indian society and bureaucratic incompetence. When a huge feminist movement started demanding strong anti-sati bill, it faced a huge backlash by the religious conservatives (radha kumar, history of doing). This is an interesting observation that, the Indian judicial changes have always faced ruthless attack by the religious groups and has somehow made negotiation from colonial age. But the situation had not changed much or for better even in late 80's. Even academics like Ashish Nandi, Patrick Harrigan wrote in top English dailies like Indian Express and The Statesman, accusing the ongoing feminist movement as market driven and and held the feminists accused of being driven by capitalism ignoring India's rich heritage of pluralism (Radha Kumar, History of doing).

I intend to focus on the instance of Bhawri Devi and the moment of sexual harassment getting litigated as crime,as an instance of legal reform.On the year 1992,Bhawri Devi,a lower caste rural woman was raped by five affluent upper-caste men from her village. Bhawri was working for the state government's Women's Development Programme (WDP) since 1985.Her rape was the punishment given to her as she stopped a child-marriage from happening.It was her case that resulted in Indian Supreme Court formulating guidelines to deal with sexual harassment in the work-place,but her perpetrators remains un-acquitted till date.Bhawri Devi went public with her complain .During the course of her trial ,judges were changed five times .In November 1995 the accused aquitted of rape,instead they were found guilty of lesser offences like assault and conspiracy.This judgement caused immence outrage in India and globally.Massive protests were held in Jaipur and Delhi demanding justice.So a group of activists from Jaipur and Delhi based organizations filled a public interest petition in the Supreme court demanding,"workplaces must be made safe for women and that,it should be responsibility of the employer to protect women employee at every step." In 1997,the top court came out with Visakha Guidelines ,laying down norms to protect women from sexual harassment in workplaces(Pandey,2017).More recent instances of legal reform,namely the criminal law (Amendment)Act,2013 that followed the 2012 gang rape incident was influenced by this guidelines. Though the accused of this case remained not acquitted ,coming out of Bhawri Devi was instrumental in formulating guidelines for sexual harassment at work-place.

The growing visibility and militancy of caste politics since the 1990s has increasingly forced the recognition that Woman is not simply an already existing subject that the women's movement can mobilize for its politics. This is most clearly revealed by the debate that has been underway since the late 1990s around reservations for women in parliament. The opposition to the proposed legislation cannot simply be categorized as patriarchal, it comes from a particular caste location that includes women, which expresses the legitimate apprehension that a blanket reservation of 33 per cent for women (the current proposal being debated) would simply replace 'lower' caste men with 'upper' caste women. The democratic upsurges of the 1980s transformed

Parliament from a largely upper class and upper caste, English-educated body to one that more closely resembles the mass of the population of India in terms of class, caste and educational background. Today an immediate conversion of one-third of the existing seats into ones reserved for women is likely to bring into the fray largely those women who already have the cultural and political capital to contest elections, and in an extremely unequal society like India, these are bound to be elite women.

The scenario of the women's movement in India, particularly in the context of the Beijing conference, is characterised by simultaneous mobilisation of women by different autonomous feminist groups and by groups affiliated to formal political formations. In a situation, where the organisation of politics around difference has become a major feature of feminist politics, the organisation of dalit women around the notion of difference is bound to be a logical outcome. An independent and autonomous assertion of dalit women's identity found its first expression in the formation of National Federation of Dalit Women (NFDW) at Delhi on August 11,1995.(Sharmila Rege, dalit women talk differently…….). Newly emerged groups in late 70's and early 80's like Shramik Mukti Sangthana, Satyashodhak Communist party, Yuvak Kranti Dal, Shramik Mukti Dal and so on enhanced Dalit women's active participation in social movements. With the epistemological dependence on left framework or gendered work and women's oppression the knowledge of class structure playing role in patriarchy, was used to find its similarities with caste question (Reinventing Revolution: New Social Movements and the Socialist Tradition in India, Gail Omvedt, 1993). In early 90's demolition of Babri Masjid also was an example of women's participation in right wing politics. Where gender issues became appropriated as cultural issues and a sense of morality regulation got attached to it. Rajni Kothari says it differently, "With the erosion of institutions, the unsettled controversies over public policies, and the growing uncertainty over ideological issues, as well as the decline of democratic functioning of the political process, faith in the capacity of the modern nation-state to provide a framework of both order and equity has declined, 'and so too the reliance on mainstream governmental and party political process. The result has been the rise of a series of movements as distinct from the earlier gainer of more specific economic movements such as trade union or co-operative movements.

I start on this note to make a conscious break with concepts in circulation and a current academic propensity, which invokes 'difference' and 'plurality', celebrates 'fragments' in a manner of politically correct mantras without even being fully aware of the complex and concrete historical processes, which produce and perpetuate these differences and inequalities. But focusing on certain external factors does not provide access to the complex reality of dalit women. For example the, question of rape cannot be grasped merely in terms of class, criminality, or as a psychological aberration or an illustration of male violence. The caste factor also has to be taken into account which makes sexual violence against dalit or tribal women much more severe in terms of intensity and magnitude. This differential experience was expressed by dalit women activists at the Delhi meet and also previously at a conclave organised by Satyashodhak Mahila

Aghadi in Maharashtra. However, these activists lament that the caste factor does not get adequate recognition in the analysis done by non-dalit, middle-class, urbanised women activists.

The 2000s signified a new visibility and direction for Indian feminist activism, a third wave if you want. At the start of the decade, there were a number of spontaneous public protests and vigils led by middle-class youth in urban areas in response to high-profile cases of violence against elite women. An example is that of protests against the murder of model Jessica Lal (Dutta and Sircar 2013). There were also campaigns with explicit feminist agendas, like an Indian version of the international SlutWalk marches in 2011, and the 2009 Pink Chaddi campaign, which encouraged Indian women to mail underwear to members of a right-wing group that had attacked women drinking in a bar for being "un-Indian." These two events were important forerunners of new feminist interventions into issues of public safety, street sexual harassment, and wider rape culture (epitomised by the anti-rape protests of 2012).

Gang rape and brutal murder of psychotherapy student, Nirbhaya, in 2012, in national capital and the unprecedented nationwide protests after that, was a result of paradigmatic shift in new media, due to introduction of World Wide Web. The revolution brought by media technology played a huge role in this context. 'Mediatization' of India started widely with nirbhaya's case where media directly started formulating political communication discourses (Lilleker Darren, Key concepts in political communications, London, Sage, 2008). Nirbhaya's case stood out as an incident of human rights violation case in global discourse, due to presence of new media (M. Chaudhury). New media has changed the notion of temporality. Intense mediation and capitalization of circulation for 24*7 gave immediate access of information to people (Warner Michael, publics and counterpublics). Rather than wait for state authorities to make Indian cities safer for women, new city-based feminist campaigns encouraged women to claim public spaces by and for themselves. They emphasised women's desires for unconditional freedom in the public domain, including the freedom to access and occupy public spaces without fear, and even to indulge in "risky" behavior like "loitering" (Phadke et al 2011). Alongside local and national feminist campaigns like Why Loiter?, Blank Noise, Take Back the Night Kolkata, and Pinjra Tod, urban women challenged the stigma of menstruation, fought to enter Hindu temples, and broke taboos around speaking out on rape and rape culture.[3]

The primarily middle-class and metropolitan character of these movements influenced both the kinds of issues they were taking up, as well as how they were choosing to do so (via social media). While activists in the IWM had always been middle class, the anti-colonial and socialist roots of the movement meant that class was privileged over all other social variables. By contrast, new feminists were unapologetically mobilising around issues that had particular relevance to them, but they also argued that addressing these issues would have wider implications across class. Their activism seemed to emerge out of and respond to the deficiencies of the feminism that came before them such as a legal feminism focused on women's victimology alone (Kapur 2005).

The "third wave" also emerged in a time and place of neo-liberalism, enabled by its specific material configurations such as the growing activist use of social media, transnational links with feminist struggles elsewhere, increased education and employment options for women, and rising right-wing efforts to curtail these new freedoms, mobilities, and opportunities. Economic liberalism created, in other words, spaces for Indian women to politically intervene in ways that might not have been possible for previous generations.

For some critics, "new feminisms" were problematic for these very reasons. They were seen to embody and reflect the consumer-oriented, individualistic, and entrepreneurial dispositions of metropolitan middle-class Indian women; in short, "neo-liberal feminism" (Gupta 2016; Gilbertson 2018).[4] Their mainly middle-class composition and their over-reliance on social media as an activist tool also raised concerns of exclusivity and limited reach besides inviting accusations of elitism and Westernisation.

For younger feminists who were part of the SlutWalk, such criticisms were perceived as less to do with elitism or Westernisation than with deep-seated anxieties around the public expression of sexuality (Borah and Nandi 2012). Pink Chaddi and SlutWalk campaigns, according to Borah and Nandi, centred questions of women's sexual agency, pleasure, and desire in ways that mainstream Indian feminism never had. Generational divides thus intensified in the third wave and in ways that produced monolithic accounts of contemporary feminisms (as being elitist) as well as those preceding them (as being anti-sex).

Chapter -II

This chapter wants to seek the question of the new media (where discrete representation of data in different scales and mediums like social networking sites, blogs, websites, mobile apps, human-computer interface, computer animation and interactive computer installations) ,whether it can offer the radical political potential to 'contest the meaning of the breached boundaries'. This chapter wants to focus on the emergence of cyberspace later known as new media and gender. In this chapter I intend to discuss the foundational concepts of 'cyberspace' and 'technology'. Starting with exploring the conflicts between technology and feminism, this chapter will discuss how internet was seen by feminists as the end of 'the embodied division of sexual'.[2]

It is not surprising that early feminist analyses of technology tended to have a pessimist tone. Technology was seen as a defining feature of masculinity, producing and perpetuating occupational segregation by sex in the workplace. Since then ground breaking developments in digitalization and biotechnologies have led many contemporary feminist to surmise that the traditional link between feminism and technology is finally being served. Yet even as this

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[2] Wajcman, J. (2006). Technocapitalism meets technofeminism: women and technology in a wireless world. *Labour & Industry: a journal of the social and economic relations of work*, *16*(3), 7-20.

possibility is contemplated ,there is a suspicion that some existing power of social inequality are being reproduced in a new technological guise.Feminist perspectives of the woman-machine relationship have long oscillated between pessimistic fatalism and utopian optimism,technophobia and techno-mania.(Techno Capitalism Meets Techno Feminism,Judy Wajcman) .Social science needs to continually engage with the process of technological change,as it is a key aspect of gender power relations.

Examining the social relations: how technology and technical expertise came to be so closely identified with masculinity

The emphasis on machines dominated by men conspired in turn to diminish the significance of women's technologies,such as horticulture ,cooking and child-care and so reproduced the stereotype of women as technologically ignorant and incapable(Stanley 1993).The history of technology still represent the prototype inventor as male. Ruth Oldenziel's 'Making technology masculine(1993)' argues it was only with the formation of engineering as a white, male, middle-class profession that male machines rather than the female fabrics became the modern makers of technology. It also involved an ideal of manliness, characterized by the cultivation of bodily prowess and individual achievement.[3] Whereas the earlier concept of useful arts had included needle work and metal work as well as spinning and mining ,by the 1930 this had been supplemented with the idea of technology as applied science. Weaving is the exemplary case of a denigrated female craft which now turns out to be intimately connected to the history of computing and the digital technologies.[4]Plaiting arrd weaving are the 'only contributions to the history of discoveries and inventions (Freud 1985:167) which Freud is willing to ascribe to women. He tells a story in which weaving emerges as a simulation of what he describes as a natural process, the matting of pubic-hair to across the hole, the zero, the nothing to be seen. Sadie Plant writes in 'On the Matrix',It is because of women's shame at the abscnce which Iies where the root of their being should be that they cover up the disgusting wound,concealing the wandering womb of hysteria, veiling the matrix once and for all. This is a move which dissasociates weaving from the history of science and technology, removing to a female zone both the woven and the networks and fine connective meshes of the computer culture into which it feeds.(On the Matrix,Sadie Plant).Freud gives another game away while talking about the history of technology . Orthodox accounts of the history of technology are told from an exclusively anthropomorphic perspective,whose world-view revolves around the interests of man. Conceived as the products of his genius and as means to his own ends, even complex machines are under-

stood to be tools and mediations which allow an unified, discreet human agency to interact with an inferior natural world. Weaving, however, is outside this narrative: there is continuity between the weaver, the weaving and the woven which gives them a connectivity which eludes all

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[3] Oldenziel, R. (1999). *Making technology masculine: men, women and modern machines in America, 1870-1945*. Amsterdam University Press.

[4] Plant, S. (2000). On the matrix: Cyberfeminist simulations. *The cybercultures reader*, 325-336.

orthodox conceptions of technology. And although Freud is willing to give womcn the credit for its' invention', his account also implies that there is no

point of origin, but instead a process of simulation by which weaving replicates or weaves itself. It is not a thing, but a process. At the same time femininity was reinterpreted as incompatible with technological pursuits. Cockbun showed that men's traditional monopoly of technology results in machinery that was literally designed by men,with men in mind.Harding and others pointed out this analysis located the problem in women rather than questioning science itself. The debate was whether the problem lay in men's domination of technology or whether the problem lay in men's domination of thechnology or whether the technology is in some way inherently patriarchal.Technology was seen as socially shaped but shaped by men to the exclusion of women.

Capitalist industrial society and its division of labour between manual/non-mannual work,valued/devalued employment is based on the segregation on gender. Rather in the trends of computerization and bio-technology feminists have identified increasing association with the fundamental change in the characteristics of capitalism itself. Globalisation gurus like Castells(1996) and Giddens(1990) gave prominence to the intensity ,extensity and velocity of global flows,interactions and networks embracing all social domains.[5]

The virtuality of cyberspace and the internet is seen as ending the embodied basis of sexual difference and functionality of multiplicity of innovative subjectivities.In the wired world ,traditional hierarchies are replaced by horizontal ,diffuse,flexible networks that have more affinity with feminine values and ways of being than men's.[6]

Through the conceptualization of the specular economy,Sadie Plant suggests ,patriarchy is a system which exchanges take place between men,women,sign,commoditiesand currency always pass from one man to another and women are supposed to exist only with the possibility of mediation,transition,transaction,transference-between men and his fellow creatures,indeed between man and himself. Woman at best been understood to a deficient version of a humanity which is already male. In relation to homo sapiens,she is the foreign body,the immigrant from no-where,the alien without and the enemy within.

In Irrigaray's conclusions about the extent and pervasiveness of patriarchy were once an occasion for pessimistic paralysis,things look rather different in an age for which all economic systems are reaching the limits of their modern functioning .The relations are changing profusely because it is giving them the liberty to go to 'market' alone,to profit from their own value,to talk to each-other,without the control of the selling-buying consuming subjects.

In the early 1990s, cyberfeminism surfaced as an arena for critical analyses of the inter-connections of gender and new technology especially so in the context of the internet, which was

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[5] Diani, M. (2000). Social movement networks virtual and real. *Information, Communication & Society*, *3*(3), 386-401.

[6] Wajcman, J. (2006). Technocapitalism meets technofeminism: women and technology in a wireless world. *Labour & Industry: a journal of the social and economic relations of work*, *16*(3), 7-20.

then emerging as something of a "mass-medium". Scholars, activists and artists interested in media technology and its gendered underpinnings formed networks and groups. Consequently, they attached altering sets of meaning to the term cyberfeminism that ranged in their take on, and identifications with feminism. Cyberfeminist activities began to fade in the early 2000s and the term has since been used by some as synonymous with feminist studies of new media yet much is also lost in such a conflation.

A cyborg is a cybernetic organism, a hybrid of machine and organism, a creature of social reality as well as a creature of fiction. Social reality is lived social relations, our most important political construction, a world-changing fiction. [7]The international women's movements have constructed 'women's experience', as well as uncovered or discovered this crucial collective object.This experience is a fiction and fact of the most crucial, political kind. Liberation rests on theconstruction of the consciousness, the imaginative apprehension, of oppression, and so of possibility. The cyborg is a matter of fiction and lived experience that changes what counts as women's experience in the late twentieth century. This is a struggle over life and death, but the boundary between science fiction and social reality is an optical illusion.

Contemporary science fiction is full of cyborgs — creatures simultaneously animal and machine, who populate worlds ambiguously natural and crafted. "cyberfeminism" stands for analyses of the gendered user cultures of information and communication technologies and digital media, their emancipatory uses, as well as the social hierarchies and divisions involved in their production and ubiquitous presence (e. g. Paterson, 1992; Springer, 1996; Squires, 2000). Considered in this vein, cyberfeminism can be extended to describe feminist studies of new media (or "cyberspace").[8]For if 'she' says something, it is not, it is already no longer, identical withwhat she means. What she says is never identical with anything, moreover;rather, it is contiguous, touches (upon) . And when it strays too far fromthat proximity, she stops and starts over at 'zero': her body-sex.[9]Irigaray's woman has never had a unified role: mirror, screen, commodity; means of communication and reproduction carrier and weaver; carer and whore; machine assemblage in the service of the species; a generai purpose system of simulation and self-stimulation. It may have been u.oman's 'fluid character which has deprived her of ali possibility of identity with herself within such a logic' (lrigaray 1985b: 109), but lf fluidity has been configured as a matter of deprivation and disadvantage in the past, it is a positive advantage in a i.eminized future for lr"hich identity is nothing more than a Iiability. It is 'her inexhaustible aptitude for mimicry' which makes her 'thc living foundation for the whole staging of the workl' (lrigaray 1991: 118). Her very inability to concentrate now connects her with the parallel processings of machines which function without unified control.

[7] Haraway, D. (2006). A cyborg manifesto: Science, technology, and socialist-feminism in the late 20th century. In *The international handbook of virtual learning environments* (pp. 117-158). Springer, Dordrecht.

[8] Paasonen, S. (2011). Revisiting cyberfeminism. *Communications*, *36*(3), 335-352.

[9] Whitford, M. (2014). *Luce Irigaray: Philosophy in the feminine*. Routledge.

Neutral nets function in a way which has less to do with the rigours of orthodox logic than rvith the intuitive leaps and cross-connections which characterize u,hat has been pathologized as hysteria, which is said to be marked by a 'lack of inhibition and control in its associations' between ideas which are dangerously 'cut off from associative connection

with the other ideas, but can be associated among themselves, and thus form the more or Iess highly organized rudiment of a second consciousness' (Freud and Breuer 1991:66 7).[10] Hysteria is the point at w-hich association gets a little too free, spinning off in its own directions and making Iinks without reference to any central core. And if hysteria has

functioned as a paralysing pathology of the sex that is not one, 'in hysteria there is at the same time the possibiiity of another mode of "production" maintained in latency.

Perhaps as a cultural reserve yet to come?'.[11]

Freud's hysterical ideas group' 'out of the day-dreams which are so common even in healthy people and to which needlew-ork and similar occupations render women particularly prone' (Freud and Breuer 1991: 66). It is said that Ada Lovelace, herself declined as hysterical, 'rvove her- davdreams into seemingly authentic calculations' (Langton Moore

1977: 215). Working u.ith Charles Babbage on the nineteenth-centurv Analytical Engine,

Lovelace lost her tortured self on the planes of mathematical complexity, lr.riting the

software for a machine which would take a hundred ,vears to build. Unable to find the

words for them, she programs a mathematics in u.hich to communicate the abstraction

and complexity of her thoughts. l

Lovelace and Babbage took their inspiration from the carly nineteenth-century

Jacquard loom, crucial both to the processes of automation integral to the industrial

revolution, and to the emergence of the modern comPuter. The loom worked on the

basis of punched paper programs, a system necessitated by the peculiar complexity of

weaving which had always placed the activity in the forefront of technological advance.

If weaving has played such a crucial role in the history of computing, it is also the key

to one of the most extraordinary sites of woman machine interface which short-circuits. (Sadie plant,On the Matrix)

Like variations of postfeminism,third wave feminism, new feminism, and power feminism articulated

in the course of the 1990s, cyberfeminism has been posed as new kind of feminism accessible to diverse groups of women, and young women in particular (cf. Gillis, 2004). In a recurring rhetorical move,these new feminisms celebrate female sexuality, empowerment, and independence and situate themselves in opposition to "1970s" or "secondwave" feminism. In order to be seen as diverse and novel, cyberfeminism necessitates a departure from that which is

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[10] Plant, S. (2000). On the matrix: Cyberfeminist simulations. *The cybercultures reader*, 325-336.

[11] Gross, E. (1986). Philosophy, subjectivity and the body: Kristeva and Irigaray. *Feminist challenges: Social and political theory*, 125-143.

seen as rigid and fixed. Such fixity has been recurrently attributed to older forms of feminism, figured as essentialist, anti-technology and even anti-sex.

Cyberfeminism is an insurrection on the part of the goods and materials of the patriarchal world, a dispersed, distributed emergence composed of links between women, women and computers, computers and communication , connections and connectionist nets.

It becomes clear that if the idcologies and discourses of modern feminism were necessary to the changes in women's fortunes which creep over the end of the millennium,they were certainly not sufficient to the processes which now find man, in his own words, 'adjusting to irrelevance and becoming the disposable sex'. There is no authentic or essential woman up ahead, no self to be reclaimed from some long lost past, nor even a potential subjcctivity to be constructed in the present day. Nor is there only an absence or lack. Instead there is a virtual reality, an emergent process for which identity is not the goal but the enemy, precisely what has kept at bay the matrix of potentialities from which women have always downloaded their roles.(On the Matrix,Sadie Plant).For while Plant recognizes the importance of feminist struggles to the possibilities of women today,she considers feminist activism as both outdated and unfit for the contemporary situation in which patriarchy's tools and machines (women ,computers and media) have grown out of control and "mutate into complex machines which begin to learn and act for themselves" (Plant,1996b, p. 173). As a critical discourse both academic and artistic, cyberfeminism has been centrally about re-embodying technology and emphasizing the importance of the embodied and the carnal in cyberculture which was, throughout the 1990s, defined by Cartesian articulations of leaving the body behind, abandoning flesh in virtual reality and separating wetware (as meat) from software and hardware (cf. Brophy,2010). Such articulations were rather recurring in cyberpunk, from Gibson's fictitious protagonists leaving the "meat" behind when "jacking in" the computer terminal to John Perry Barlow's (1996) "Declaration of the independence of cyberspace" outlining a new "home of Mind" "that is both everywhere and nowhere, but it is not where bodies live".

In contrast, cyberfeminist interventions were from the start very much focused on cybernetic spaces as ones inhabited by bodies _ from VNS Matrix's clitorises connected to the matrix to Plant's (1997, p. 181) descriptions of disks being "sucked into the dark recess of welcoming vagina slits". As Yvonne Volkart (2002) points out, by "bluntly sexualizing cyberspace and digital technology", early cyberfeminists pointed out the gendered underpinnings of the discourses of computing and network society. These commentaries were part poetic, part ironic, yet, in Volkart's view, they also bordered on mimicry in the sense of reiterating familiar connotations concerning sexuality and the female body.

While the prefix "cyber" has been used to address a range of human-technology relations, future forms of media and computing since the early 1990s, the set of meanings that it is most commonly associated with has gradually narrowed down to computing and the internet-based. Artists, activists and authors addressing a broader set of technologies may have chosen other terms than "cyber" to describe their activities and focus _ for example those of "tactical media"

or "bio-art". Those addressing online cultures, again, may find the indeterminate qualities of the term "cyber-feminism" (combined with what is already almost a vintage nuance of the "cyber" prefix) equally awkward when describing their work.

According to feminist technology scholar Maureen McNeil (2000, pp. 229_230)[12], the possibilities of cyberfeminism lie on its engagement with the attractions of technoculture and technoscience that many other

feminist critics have failed to address. This is an important point. Cyberfeminists engaged with the hype and utopianism of the 1990s through ironic commentary, enthusiasm and ambivalence _ in all cases, the lure of cyberculture remained central to all kinds of cyberfeminist projects that were both utopian and ironic (Volkart, 2004, p. 103).[13] Utopianism and even enthusiasm vis-a`-vis technology made cyberfeminism a positive point of identification while, at the same time, the omnipresence of irony _ saying one thing and meaning another _ troubled this positivity with a blurriness of meaning. The balance between utopianism and irony is a difficult one and it became all the more difficult once the technohype of the 1990s begun to wear off.

At the end of her essay 'Revisiting Cyberfeminism' , *Susanna Paasonen* asks[14] ,"In order to be both effective and affective, cyberfeminism would need to move beyond the negativity and reactivity of irony, and shift towards more productive engagements with contemporary technocultures in order to map out possible solutions for current social and economic inequalities that *also* take seriously the attraction and appeal of these very systems."

 'New media' in its newness has posed numerous questions in front of us in its aftermath of public opinion formation. We analyzed various introspective accounts of 'new media' and its usage in the writing of feminist emancipation but the question of its authenticity and ideality is always there because of the unknown, unrecognized virtual space. In this paper it is discussed how phallic language has dominated the literature and language repressing the ego of women and feminist perspective in language, but the newness of 'new media' has come a long way to provide a virtual identity but an important one to writings of feminist school. The question is still there, is this virtual space democratic enough to produce feminist writing in general? When there are spaces for women to attain an identity and write their various accounts over social media spaces, the threat of phallic intervention always pose a line of boundaries towards feminist writing. If the language of new media consists of newness of feminist words and words of emancipation, it should also be kept in mind the existence of phallic intervention which uses words of repression and boundaries. So the newness of new media is always in question, whether it should be celebrated or to be afraid of? Whether it should be taken to account as a scope for feminist emancipation or not?

Feminist writing from its very begging has posed multiple possibilities time and again to rupture the phallic centric language and words and with the coming of new media, identity generation for

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[12] Paasonen, S. Published as: Paasonen, Susanna (2011) Revisiting Cyberfeminism. The European Journal of Communication Research 36: 335–352.

[13] Paasonen, S. (2011). Revisiting cyberfeminism. *Communications*, *36*(3), 335-352.

[14] Paasonen, S. (2011). Revisiting cyberfeminism. *Communications*, *36*(3), 335-352.

women has attained new possibilities. Feminist writing or the flickering subject as I stress again and again in this paper tried to bear the potential of rupturing the phallic language and new media being an agent of globalised marketing agency has chosen this language of emancipation to attain 'newness'. This newness in question is the feminist possibility where moments of resistance can be traced and fixed for subjective representations and the fixity of the political position to be seen through the lens of the contingency of feminist praxis.

<u>Act of Writing in New Media</u>

Though early feminists analyzed technology as a defining feature of masculinity, reproducing and enforcing the embodied sexual division in workplace, the advancement of technology with digitalization and biotechnologies have led many contemporary feminists into surmise that the traditional link between feminism and technology is finally being served. Feminist perspectives of women machine relationships have long oscillated between pessimistic fatalism and utopian optimism, technophobia and techno mania. Ruth Oldenziel's 'Making technology Masculine' (1999)[15] argues it was only with the formation of engineering as a white, male, middle-class profession that 'male machines rather than the female fabrics' became the modern makers of technology. It evolved as an ideal of manliness characterized by ability of conquest and individual aspiration.

As the French feminists like Irigaray or Cixous[16] would argue, it is the writing (in relation to the 'women' as a category with the language and power structures) that would rupture the logics of phallus embedded in the very language in the world of Man. This paper attempts to explore the multiple and contingent feminist possibilities in charting specific writing which are feminist in nature i.e. writings which explore the nature of sexual differences and identify hierarchy built around it. In the underlying opposition of man and women, the binary oppositions are deeply embedded in the patriarchal value system; each opposition can be analyzed as a hierarchy where the 'feminine' side is always seen as the negative, powerless, as lacking 'other'[17]. As western philosophy has been constructed around a singular subject, the fundamental model of 'human' remained unchanged as

One

Singular

Rational

Heterosexual

White

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[15] Oldenziel, R. (1999). *Making technology masculine: men, women and modern machines in America, 1870-1945*. Amsterdam University Press.

[16] Cixous, H., Cohen, K., & Cohen, P. (1976). The laugh of the Medusa. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, *1*(4), 875-893.

[17] Irigaray, L., & Guynn, N. (1995). The question of the other. *Yale French Studies*, *87*(7), 19.

Male

In western philosophy, the philosophical and literary conjectures have been caught up with the endless series of binary oppositions that always in the end come back to the fundamental couple of male/female.

Nature/History

Mind/ Body

Nature/Art

Reason/Emotion

Passion/Action

Intelligible/Sensitive

Thus in the masculine/feminine binary the former hegemonises the later with the logic of phallo(go)centrism . In the realm of language 'a subject is therefore the same as to represent the repressed desire: the speaking subject is lack, and this is how Lacan can say that '[T]o enter into the Symbolic Order means to accept the phallus as the representation of the law of the father' .All human culture in the society is dominated by the Symbolic Order, thus by the phallus as the sign of lack. For Lacan, it is the entry into the Symbolic Order that opens up the unconscious .[18]It is in other words the unconscious reemerges as the manifestation of the repression of desire. To go beyond the binary marking of sexual discrimination is to celebrate the 'many'/'other' subjugated by the 'one' hegemonic singular, masculine, heterosexual, western, white male reducing the other in the binary oppositions. My entry point is not to transcend difference rather tracing the multiple destabilized singular moments. Helen Cixous would enact this politics of difference as 'writing is imperative'[19]. To critique egalitarian feminism for its attempt to achieve equality determined by the Man, it argues for celebrating difference to resist the homogenization of political struggle and talks for intersectionality. Phallogocentrism closes the scope for feminist writing and suppressed women to emote and personify their repressed ego whereas during the 1960s when the scope for feminist writing and reading emerged with the sexual revolution it opened up the text to radical alterity and posed as alternative writing. The newly emerged feminist writing offered the scope to trace the unanticipated within the space of technology which I try to argue in this paper. Can feminist writing in new media be a space to trace (without finitude) these moments of ruptures? This is the specific objective the paper is dealing with.

Media elements, be it images, sounds, or shapes, are represented as collections of discrete samples (pixels, polygons, voxels, characters). Discrete representation of information and its

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[18] Moi, T. (1995). *Sexual, textual politics* (p. 1). New York: Routledge.

[19] Cixous, H., Cohen, K., & Cohen, P. (1976). The laugh of the Medusa. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, *1*(4), 875-893.

numerical coding allow automating numerous operations involved in media creation, manipulation and access. Thus human intentionality can be removed from the process of creation, on the contrary it cites the scope for the users to access the elements and treat those elements in virtual media space with intended utility.

The use of social media in politics including Twitter, Facebook and YouTube has dramatically changed the way to operate one's opinion building and it also changed the way of writing in social networking spaces intermediating between virtual identities. Social media has opened up a new space for writing which altered the structure of social processes which run before and now with the emergence of social media, the virtual space accommodation changed the way social processes worked e.g., media and advertisements, election campaigns, public notifications etc.

The prevalence of social media in politics has made elected officials and candidates for public office more accountable and accessible to voters. The ability to publish content and broadcast it to millions of people instantaneously allows campaigns to carefully manage their candidates' images based on rich sets of analytics in real time and at almost no cost.

In new media space, the process of public opinion formation in social system could be traced with the help of opinion dynamics. Many opinion models have been presented that explore how the local individual behavior affects collective phenomena. It is not purely the technology that defines modern phenomena of social opinions, but also cultural, economic and political factors that make up those. Influences such as religion, culture, political, and social status all shape the formation of public opinion based on the social system in question.

"**Me Too**" (or "**#MeToo**", with local alternatives in other languages) spread virally as a two-word hashtag used on social media in October 2017 to denounce sexual assault and harassment, in the wake of sexual misconduct allegations against Harvey Weinstein. The phrase, long used in this sense by social activist Tarana Burke, was popularized by actress Alyssa Milano, who encouraged women to tweet it to publicize experiences to demonstrate the widespread nature of misogynistic behavior. Since then, millions of people have used the hash tag to come forward with their experiences, including many celebrities.

While the "**Me Too**" campaign started and spread out in social media with one woman sharing her experience of violation using the hashtag "**Me Too**" and million others across the globe from different race, ethnicity, religion, caste sharing their own experience of exploitation under the same hashtag .Both the moment of resistance and social anxiety was created when women (as a category) spoke up and placed their humiliations of different kind ,which came together using one element of online media technology named 'hashtag' and created a social phenomena .Now the task of tracing feminist writing in the hybrid space of social relations and technologies can strategically enact the 'tracing' by fixing the moment of rupture and celebrate the performance of 'speaking up' personal in public, as "**Me Too**" did .

When mostly women from different caste, ethnicity, color are writing their experiences of discrimination (based on difference) in public realm of virtual media, the words can flicker away or be heard as virtual gives scope for fixity of the moment and organize solidarity around it. Women sharing experience of 'same', extending strength to one another, directions for legal due processes / debate about the same all can happen in one thread. Instances show when contents (videos, graphic images, photoshoped images) of new media are used for sexual derogatory purposes. The new media also provides space for heteronormative, patriarchal value system to consolidate bulling, humiliation, moral policing against the categorical representation of experiences which challenge the very norm of that dominant ideology.

Dealing with feminist writings in new media implies dealing written narratives which reflect experiences. When the argument is for fixing 'flickering'' subject in contingency, the subject itself is the subjective experience narrated in virtual platform. The subjective experience to be dealt and talked upon will be of a virtual identity or entity .Between the simultaneous process of opinion formation, mobility, information access, resource utility in new media, the representatives (under the category of gender, caste, class, religion, race or language) participate in the digitalized media platform ,with their virtual identity, not in flesh and blood. In the virtual place of new media, both the question of authentication of narratives and the blur space between construction and fabrication of opinions remain eminently in the discourse of experience.

To trace feminist writings or to trace writings which have potential to become a feminist subjects this paper will fix on writtings,written,uploaded and shared by women in virtual media space.This writtings would include fictions ,prose ,poems, memoir written by women in social media space .This section will engage with three writings (uploaded and shared in social networking sites)with the technique of close reading of texts and try to examine the claim of cyber space possess a 'newness' in exhibiting radical modes of communication.

'She moved her lips	'She was far	'my love for her
So did I	yet so close	was always a
We tore the silence	moon scented	translation
With the music	in my breath'	our breaths conversed
Of hurried breaths'		on moonlit nights'

An anonymous queer activist from Kolkata has named her writings as 'moon' ,while talking about them she says her verses came from an intense and intimate core which let her eloquent her emotions through her writing . The 'moon' became the imagery of compassion and sexuality performing through the writer's words

'There is silence

Which could break you

And bring an art from you'

'You are strong

You are strong

Feel this power in you,

And forget you ever feel before weak.

Weak is just a word as same like strong'

The writer is Nida Mehmood ,an upperclass muslim woman celebrated in social media for her writtings .Close reading of her verses explore the politics of difference where she breaks the opposition between 'weak' and 'strong' ,or where the writer celebrates her 'art' as breaking free from silence.

'It was a midnight in Kolkata,roads were vacant,noises of cacophony stopped ,no buses in the street,with bare legs,wounded hands I was walking from Sobhabajar,I was walking alone.

The roads were about to divide- thieves, police, drunkards were maintaining distance from me-I, Alpana, a black and ugly 19 year old reached home at 3am, in bare legs and sickle in my hand- with the wrath of Kali in me. Nobody uttered a word, not even a dog barked.

Now I know the power of Kali.I have her wrath in me and I fear her '

The writer is Alpana Mandal,a domestic laborer from Sundarban ,who learned to read and write in her workplace with the help of her employer. She was writing this memoir in memory of her childhood when she used to fear the imagery of Goddess Kali .Alpana writes about her experience of living in slams, learning slangs and knowing the harder ways to live life when she came to live with her husband. She explains how her endurance for her husband came to end one night and she went on to find him in his mistress's house. The chores of her regularity, being of a unrecognized and ignored wife to find her assertion when her earning were taken away from her were vividly contextured in her writings.

A middle class queer activist, an upper-class minority woman and a lower-caste, working class woman exposed their compassion, arguments and wrath in performing through their written narratives. Using the logic of excess and identifying the celebration of 'others' in feminine writings the possibilities of rupturing the structure of phallogocentrism and destruction of a central subjectivity .As argued in the previous section the collection of performances (in writing) by diverse ,multiple subjectivities are constructing the composition for radical alterity. Keeping

the clear distinction between performance and performativity, the linguistic performances enabled the radical capabilities of celebrating multiplicity, diversity or 'others'. Here virtual media can be seen as the space, where women from heterogeneous identity matrix are performing their emotions, writing their bodies and being the active agents to constitute their own body and materiality. Here these female writers are not to be seen as a pre-exisisting being producing pre-existing subjects in the form of writings ,rather their performativity through writing is contesting the meaning of the 'breached boundaries'.Can the literary performance by the 'newly' constituted diverse subjectivities lead to a feminine rupture in phallic language and posit the expressions of sexualities in contemporary communication mode ,is to be analyzed with contingency politics.The enquiery towards 'sameness' and 'difference' between the expressions of Alpana (a lower-caste, lowerclass woman) from the urban English educated expressions (as the other two instances are mentioned here) is required to reflect on the trends of validating and omitting experiences /narratives of the 'unheard' within the hierarchical structures of technology as a platform.

The chapter discusses how phallic language has dominated the literature and language repressing the ego of women and feminist perspective in language, but the newness of 'new media' has come a long way to provide a virtual identity but an important one to writings of feminist school. The question is still there, is this virtual space democratic enough to produce feminine writings as feminist subjects ? When there are spaces for women to attain an identity and write their various accounts over social media spaces, the threat of phallic intervention always pose a line of boundaries towards feminist writing. If the language of new media consists of newness of feminist words and words of emancipation, it should also be kept in mind the existence of phallic intervention which uses words of repression and boundaries. So the newness of new media is always in question, whether it should be celebrated or to be afraid of? Whether it should be taken to account as a scope for feminist emancipation or not?

Feminist writing from its very beginning has posed multiple possibilities time and again to rupture the phallic centric language and words and with the coming of new media, identity generation for women has attained new possibilities. Feminist writing or the flickering subject as I stress again and again in this paper tried to bear the potential of rupturing the phallic language and new media being an agent of globalised marketing agency has chosen this language of emancipation to attain 'newness'. This newness in question is the feminist possibility where moments of resistance can be traced and fixed for subjective representations and the fixity of the political position to be seen through the lens of the contingency of feminist praxis. With the problematic of representation and experience in virtual media ,the writers of self-written narratives and expressions are producing and constituting performativity and performance which can be enquired as feminist subjects .This paper argues the nature of this subjects as political feminist subjects outside the stereotypical functioning of feminist 'performance' rather probing the chances of ruptures in an intersectional paradigm. With the probability of 'new', 'flickering' subjectivities in technological arena emerging as collective subjectivities of ruptures against the

present socio-economical composition (with the impacts of prevailing social structures) - can mark the virtual technological space as liberating to shackle the inter-twined chains of oppression.

Methodology

The methodology to be followed in the research is to not go for finding a singular causal relationship between the investigating factors, rather finding the contingent foundations of feminist politics in context of the contemporary social, economical, cultural grounds. The only method the research is compassioned to follow will be-- to not follow particular methods to accomplish a predefined result rather always treasuring the 'unknowns' (to come up in the on-going process of research).The task for the research methodology is to search for a feminist one (if there any) which puts the subject of matter and the researcher in the same place of research and knowledge. It is to go beyond the andro-centric (focused or centred on Men) research, rather putting **'the new subject or matter of enquiry'.** [20]

Ethics of proposed research:

The applied approaches to the research will not the classic study of standing down approach i.e

<div align="center">

Researcher

⇩

Object of Research

</div>
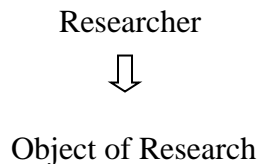
The researcher should not be an anonymous voice of authority. The subject of research is producing the researcher should be the sense as well. The conscious reflection of fragmented-hyphened identity of the researcher should be present in the research work, while representing the experiences of the research subjects. Here the ethics under discussion is which talks about non-perspective, not pre-determined, 'othered' one. The research will not be about refusing the subject, or attempt not to venture itself as rescue mission for the researcher in the continuum of power-knowledge continuum of colonization. Every action of care is an action for control' should be remembered while **the researcher positions herself with responsibility.**Jorge Luis Borges in his essay 'The Ethnographer ' [21]argues for minimizing the distinction between subject and object i.e the ethnographer and the subject ,but poses the inability of a researcher to unaccomplished his research by erasing the line between .The **'passionate detachment '** from

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[20] Feminism & Methodology, Edited by Sandra Harding
[21] Jorge Louis Borges, The Ethnographer

the research subject with **responsibility for difference** is what the ethico-political position seeks for.

Background on Feminist research methodology:

There are various feminist research methods that exist today which are used for data gathering and analysis. Feminist researchers can undertake research using two fundamental approaches; firstly, by using the traditional research process referred to as "quantitative" methodology or by using the "qualitative" ethnographic method. Quantitative methods includes, "in depth research into the motivation, attitudes and behavior of respondents or into a given situation". Qualitative methods refer to "research procedures which produce descriptive data: people¹s own written or spoken words and observable behavior". In the past several years the feminist community has increasingly debated the merits of traditional research, specifically the quantitative methodologies used in that research. According to many feminists, both those in the social sciences and in other disciplines as well, argue that traditional research in the social sciences is used as a tool for promoting sexist ideology and ignores issues of concern to women and feminists. Feminists indicate that until recently, social scientific knowledge was based on men¹s experiences of the world and women¹s experiences were particularly missing. Males are establishing the norms; more specifically they are playing the dominant roles. As a result of this, some feminists have suggested the increased use of qualitative research in order better to reflect the nature of human experience. Quantitative research consists of experimental, correlational and survey research methodologies. Qualitative research consists of ethnographic methods such as, participant observation, in-depth interviews, group interviews and content analysis.

Further, multiple methodologies, both quantitative and qualitative have produced a collection of mixed results. The limitations of single method studies can be resolved by the innovative use of triangulation.Since feminists encounter specific methodological problems, feminists have been involved to develop newer approaches for doing feminist research. Of these many feminists, Maria Mies is one that introduces a new methodological approach "consistent with the political aims of the women¹s movement". By understanding the many relevant feminist research methods for women's liberation, feminist researchers have also established different ways of dealing with the inequalities concerned with research. The different ways feminists deal with variation is to study their own personal experiences, preferences and environments along with other researchers giving them a helping hand and support when necessary.
Recent social studies of science and technology, for example, have made available a very strong social constructionist argument for all forms of knowledge claims, most certainly and especially scientific ones.' According to these tempting views, no insider's perspective is privileged, because all drawings of inside-outside boundaries in knowledge are theorized as power moves, not moves toward truth. So, from the strong social constructionist perspective, why should we be

cowed by scientists' descriptions of their activity and accomplishments; they and their patrons have stakes in throwing sand in our eyes.

Harding calls this necessary multiple desire a need for a successor science project and a postmodern insistence on irreducible difference and radical multiplicity of local knowledge.

"I would like a doctrine of embodied objectivity that accommodates paradoxical and critical feminist science projects: Feminist objectivity means quite simply **situated knowledge.** " [22]

Scopes and specification of methods to be used in research arena

As the feminist methodology depends upon the question of 'How', the process, the becoming, the methods applied here would include quantitative and qualitative methods to encounter the proposed research questions.

For quantitative approach,

Surveys, structured interviews & observations, reviews of research or documents for numeric information will be needed as secondary data, to work on the proposed ideas.

For qualitative approach,

Emphasises on social phenomena through direct communication ,observation with participants ,analysis of texts ,and may emphasis on conceptual subjective experiences over generality ,related to quality .

The project proceeded with tracing the convergence of virtual media and women's movements (turned into social movements) and looks for transgressed boundaries, potent fusions and contested meanings of phallogocentric society. To do that, this thesis studied the timeline of significant women's movements (Nirbhaya protests to me-too movement), its replications (written narratives, images, political statements, campaign materials) on virtual media and changing dynamics of feminist contingent politics in Indian demography throughout that timeframe. The methodologies applied while evolving the research so-far has been the culmination of both the quantitative and qualitative approaches. Quantitative data has been gathered by online survey questionnaire.

The individual interviews has been conducted with
1. Tejaswini Madabhushi,a gender activist from Hyderabad ,organizer of "take back the Night' in Hyderabad, organizer of 'Hyderabad for Feminism'
2. Chandrasmita Chowdhury, leader of a left women's organization based in West-bengal.
3. Nabottama Pal, one of the early organizers of Hokkolorob, now identifies herself as left activist.

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[22] Donna_Haraway_[Article]_Situated_Knowledges_The_Science_Question_in_Feminism_and_the_Priviledge of Partial Perspective

4. Joyee, one of the early organizers of Hokkolorob, ex-activist at Periods forum.

The two focus-group discussions conducted so far involved-

- Group1: A gender activist, a student activist ,a queer activist
- Group2: Six B.ED students from Alia University

Tracing and citing instances from social media and analyzing those regarding the convergence of women's movement and cyber space, will be subject of research. The aim is to find the self-generated/directed/selected narratives(contents in social media) of feminist subjects and their subjectivity (constituted under both 'juridical' and 'productive' notion of power)4 in the space of new media ,with analyzing those subjective representations with constraints (English speaking, technologically driven users).The quest here will be to understand the contingent politics of of a feminist subject(not as a presupposed one) in the newly formed Indian feminist movements.It aims for looking at the feminist political subjects (beyond the limited understanding of feminist subjects) and situate the performativity of those subjects in the contemporary feminist discourse. The task is to place a discursive study of social media and its role in forming the new movements of feminism in India.

While choosing the interviewees my target group was activists, organizers from different stream of feminist movements. For focus-group interviews I have selected two group of students. These students are from univesitites based in Kolkata,West-bengal. All the students identify themselves as women ,only one as queer. The subjects of this interview are women and queer activists involved in women's movements for past few years. The intention is to gather evidence of experiences of my subjects regarding the use of social media. Thus reflecting on the scope of feminist praxis in new media .As the thesis progress with finding both alliance and departure between social media and feminist consolidations ,I place these narratives as evidence to discuss the discourse of representation .I want to critically view the narratives of my chosen subjects ,taking their social locations in context. The selection of subjects and narratives are not random, rather placed with the quest to investigate complexity of representation in different social realities. I wanted to inquire a) who are being 'able' to write their experiences in social media,b)who are being able to access the feminist scopes of social media. I intend to focus on the difference of experiences of my chosen subjects ,thus approaching towards a complex reading of social media in a feminist light.

The methods will include,
- ✓ Focus-group interactions, in-depth interviews
- ✓ reviews of documents on women's participation in social media
- ✓ ethnography of subjects
- ✓ case-study, more detailed information on few cases
- ✓ Textual analysis/text based analysis
- ✓ Semi-structured ,unstructured response option

- ✓ Time expenditure –more in analysis, less in planning
- ✓ Close-reading of narratives, contents in social media

Collaborating with the fore-explained methods the research will primarily be of a qualitative one. It will try to encounter the subjective experiences in the discourse of representational politics .The subjects of the research are the narratives/accounts of women uploaded in social media. The research will ahead with representing and analysing the experiences represented by the subjects themselves, during the methods explained above. Taking into account the concern of 'additive, incremental mode of feminist history' ,the research questions will unfold by looking at gender and class, as constitutive, fundamental to look of various aspects of gender , and the interdependency of gender and class.

While examining/interrogating the experience or narratives of subjects as evidence ," evidence only counts as evidence and is only recognized as such in relation to a potential narrative ,so that the narrative can be said to determine the evidence as much the evidence determines the narrative."[23] Taking the identities (of those whose experiences is being documented) as self-evident thus naturalize their difference, the creates the possibility to weaken the critical thrust for history of difference.

As, Michel de Certeau, writes 'Historical discourse gives itself credibility in the name of the reality which it is supposed to represent , but this authorized appearance of the 'real' serves precisely to camouflage the practice which in fact determines it. **Representation thus disguises the practice that organizes it.** "[24]The appeal to experience as incontestable evidence and as originary point of explanation –as a foundation on which analysis is based—loses the "possibility of examining those assumptions and practices that excluded considerations of difference in the first place ." [25]The viability of 'the subject itself'[26] ,(here the category of women in social media) should be questioned as the ultimate subject of representation .Rather the questions about the constructed nature of experience ,about how subjects are constituted as different in the first place, about how one's vision is structured –about language or discourse and history should be encountered while analysing the representations critically .

The aim of the research proposal is to investigate the subjective experiences of representations in the social media interfaces; by analysing those into critical lens of feminist politics it attempts for searching for the possibility of a new feminist epistemological knowledge production in scientific research. The unending quest of the project is to explore the alliance of scientific research and feminist proess of applying methods in the premise of social media and 'women' (in their fragmented, hyphened identity) .

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[23] Lionel Gossman, Towards a Rational Historiography, Transactions of the American Philosophical Society
[24] Michel de Carte, "History: Science and Fiction "
[25] Joan Scott ,Evidence of Experience
[26] Butler_Judith_1990_Gender_Trouble.Feminism___the_Subversion_of_Identity

While examining/interrogating the experience or narratives of subjects as evidence ," evidence only counts as evidence and is only recognized as such in relation to a potential narrative ,so that the narrative can be said to determine the evidence as much the evidence determines the narrative." Taking the identities (of those whose experiences is being documented) as self-evident thus naturalize their difference, the creates the possibility to weaken the critical thrust for history of difference. As, Michel de Certeau, writes

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Today around 6.15 in the evening I was walking towards gate 4 from Jadavpur thana. The stretch was unusually empty and I realized the man walking behind me(around 35 years old, medium height, fair complexion, dressed in trousers and a shirt) was talking to me. He asked me the time, to which I replied and kept walking. He suddenly came forward held my hand and started saying he had something very important to tell me and that he wanted my number and so on. Soon he was pulling me by my hand and I pushed/hit him hard. When a friend of mine called, he abruptly ran across the street. He did not seem drunk or "mad".
I am sharing this because a lot of us leave campus pretty late in the evening and have to walk this stretch alone. When something this strange happens so close to campus, the worst of possibilities come to mind.This is to make people aware of the incident so that we are careful and vigilant enough to take measures against something that compromises our sense of security in and around the campus.

A similar incident happened with me too... Bt near the entrance of APC... He started with asking the time.. and then was constantly following me and telling me about his details and where he lives and works and was also asking for my number because he said he was new in the city. I hurriedly opened my fon cam n raised my camera to click a picture of him. As soon as he realised it, he ran across the street n disappeared. Later as i reached gate 4, I narrated the story to Rajesh and he took me along to look for the man bt he was nowhere. This incident took place some 4 months back. N i hope u r fine

Anchita Ghatak
Hope you're ok, . I think you need to talk to university authorities about this and they have to take measures in consultation with the police. The onus of safety cannot lie with individual students.
23 Nov at 04:29 · Like · 4

Alok Goswami I am in agreement with Anchita...

Yes Anchita di, I'm okay and...

Sunandita Ghosh Alok Goswami If I need help,...

For

These images are instances when women have shared their experiences of harassment in social media. She has been reciprocated with with solidarity ,concern and information about due process. The feature of 'share' and 'upload' has acted here as tool for these victims to forge solidarity and alliance amongst themselves.

These images show a contrary instance than before. Here women are being abused,their address ,contact are being shared by the same means and features of social media which played liberating role for women in a different situation. These images show how the platform of new media is used to give mass rape threats to women.In the name of nation ,communal men are sharing real locations of these women who dared to talk for peace.

Insights from interviews

- Tejaswini Madabhushi,a gender activist from Hyderabad ,organizer of "take back the Night' in Hyderabad, organizer of 'Hyderabad for Feminism'

"We started in 2013. We basically exist mostly as facebook group. Me and my friend Natha organized a mid-night's march. The idea was there earlier but when the Nirbhaya thing happened,, the country was in the mood .On January 5th 2013 we organized the march. We walked from 12 to 2 pm in night. The march was very successful. Four thousand people walked in the rally that night .It basically spread over facebook. After that mainstream media took it up. There was a facebook group named #midnight vigil .Lots of newspaper took the news from there. Basically social media helped us reach mainstream media. Though the rally was spontaneous and energetic, it was difficult to track those four thousand mass and maintain communication for further consolations. Then we came up with the idea of facebook group. That is how 'Hyderabad for Feminism ' came into existence. "[27]

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[27] Madabhusan Tejaswini,(10th October,2018),Personal Interview

- Nabattama Pal,Gender Activist,Organisor of Hokkolorob

"I joined campus in 2012.The year itself was significant particularly in the context of sexual violence and seeking justice. I remember rallies being held in campus in that year   protesting custodial rape of Soni Sori by Ankit Garg,later the Delhi rape case outrages a stream of women mainly from city space. Though in the intristic places of campus politics rape-culture prevailed. Obviously most political parties were dominated by male members and the leaders giving speeches leading slogans or deciding strategies used to be upper-caste male. They would only speak and the rest would not place their opinion-this was the regular scene in the students' general body meetings. We used be part of an independent forum named 'Irom'. In 2014 , during an ongoing meeting of Irom(an independent forum in Jadavpur University) we got a news from news channels that an incident of gang-rape has taken place in our university premises. It was shoking for us students. Incidents of rapes and murders were such central stories in media channels those days ,as series of significant incidents of sexual violence took place in that duratio. After receiving the news we wanted to reach the victim, a student of our university only. That led us to the fact certainly not gang-rape but severe account of sexual assault had happened. She was groped, assaulted, humiliated, forced to drink alcohol by a mob of students from our university only. The victim lodged a complaint in ICC. Her family members came to talk to the Vice Chancellor,he refused to talk. This incident stirred the campus. Students were questioning whether our campus is at all a democratic space,whether it is safe for women.The existing students' union were questioned too. As the union didn't do much to address the issue or to stop the extensive of victim-blaming taking place against the survivor. In the mean time we got to know two professors on behalf of ICC went to the victim's house and asked her suggestive questions which led to her discomfort and shaming. This infuriated us and a protest demonstration started in front of the administrative building, demanding an apology from the professors. Apparently, a group of students started indefinite protest demonstration demanding justice for the survivor. We were using songs, slogans to keep on spreading our voice. At the beginning, only arts faculty students were demonstrating against the violence. Science and engineering faculty students didn't participate till that point .The student unions from those faculties had contradictions over the issue. The general secretary of engineering faculty published a statement which reflected deep rooted patriarchy engraved in our campus politics. Later the statement was withdrawn. We all know what triggered the demonstration into mass-protest. One night the university administration beaten up the students and arrested us for demanding justice of a sexual harassment case. Social media was an emerging field in this trembling time.We heard,the use of hashtag can be useful for the campaign of the protest. We started using the hashtag named 'hokkolorob' to popularize our protest platform and unite the campaigns under one name. Several paged were opened up in facebook containing the word Hokkolorob .But in one of these pages the identity of the victim was revealed along with her phone number. Social media interfaces were less developed in that time. There used to be lesser

number of paid advertisements in social media those days. Facebook became the platform for campaign but it brought possibilities of abuse as well. For example victim's identity and contact details were revealed in a facebook page which contained 'hokkolorob' in its name. Social media helped joined a lot of people that's true. This incident triggered a lot of reaction among the students ,across our state. Certainly state atrocity on students in a educational institute caused the anger but the incident of gender violence which initiated the demonstration was not everybody's concern. Later when VC resigned some of us formed a forum called Periods.It was built in the intention to rupture the toxic masculine culture in our campus premises and to make campus a sensitized place. We started a campaign named 'Pads against Patriarchy' which caused many negative reactions among urban space. We were called elite feminists to use santitary napkins as our campaign material. We were shammed to break taboos. But theforum didn't last for long. Though it opened up a space to challenge taboos related women's sexuality and sexual autonomy .It led us to another campaign named kissoflove. We used social media to campaign for it. This too faced many criticisms from the many eminent sections of the society.[28]

 In the case of Me_too and LOSHA the survivors have historically been silenced . The Me_too movement has it's own limitation . The problem is the narratives are only exposed to a limited audience.More precisely,the problem is located in the individual. Gender discrimination is a structural problem,it can be dealt with over-throwing the existing patriarchal structure itself. Me_too certainly celebrated the moment of breaking silence but couldn't provide with any mechanism to deal with those accusations. Targetting individuals is not going to give a solution for a social problem such as gender discrimination."

Chandrasmita Chowdhury, Activist of AIPWA(All India Progressive Women's Associaltion)

"In post Nirbhaya phase social media played a massive role for mass mobilizations and propaganda. Back in 2013, several incidents of rape in West-bengal set the premise of mass protests against sexual violence. Different women's organizations,gender activists organized a march named "Rally Against Rape" in Kolkata. It was the first time we used social media(Facebook) to campaign for the rally and mobilize large number of mass. The rally was successful . This was the beginning to use social media as propaganda platform . In the previous cases(the interviewee mentioned Sujet Jordan's case for specific) ,mainstream media rather propagated rape culture and victim blaming. Social media provided us,activists with the space to question the normative. It was possible for us to challenge the narrative of main-stream media. "[29]

Tejaswinini

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[28] Pal, Nabottama.(2019,13 Jan).Personal Interview

[29] Chowdhury,Chandrasmita (4th Feb,2019)Personal Interview

- Focus Group Interviews

Two focus-group interviews has been conducted in the course of this research. I wanted the research to be based on 'situated knowledge' and 'to Selecting particularly two different groups from different social locations,show the

"Alliance and the possibility of alliance in social media is the only positive thing."

"Real facebook is scary"

"I started doing facebook back in the year 2008. I remember my use of facebook used to be limited to my opinions regarding Harry Potter movies, my religious believes etc etc. In the initial phase of my social media usage, I used to identify myself as an opinionated Muslim boy. I was a devotee who shared videos containing doctrinal contents on religion. And I used to suppress an intrinsic part of my identity i.e my sexual orientation. I could feel my sexual orientation does not confirm to the social normative of heterosexuality.But I wouldn't admit it to myself ,as the society and my doctrination would not let me do that. I started seeing things in new light after I admitted in JU as a Film-studies student and I took part in Hokkolorob. During the day long demonstrations infront of Arabindabhawan,during debates,general body meetings,sleepless nights sloganeering I came out to own my queer identity. The movement for bringing justice to a survivor of gender discrimination inflicted questioned in me. I met comrades who made me understood being gay is not a sin.Being queer is just as normal as being straight .It was the time when I became an atheist and this time too my social media profile reflected my conscience so to speak. I started sharing 'political', 'feminist','atheist' contents in my media profile. During the movement I got introduced to the discourse of feminist queer politics .Then I became part of feminist groups and pages in social media as well. But those were my initial days of social media. Now things have changed. The question of accessibility still remains a concern. I find my friend list represents a limited number of people. This is just a pocket in a bigger world of data. We can reach to limited number of people,but we must not forget this is a small part of the real bigger facebook. Real facebook is scary. Though we received solidarities across state,nation for Hokkolorob,through the medium of social media. "[30]

Suman

"Both are real facebook"

"We can use this as a weapon,but this is not the only way."

"The mass rally of 20th September,where approximately 70 thousand people walked against the state atrocity on students .The call of this rally was given in facebook. It spread across the virtual media platform . During the time of Hokolorob and post Hokkolorob mobilizations like Kiss_of_love or Take_Back_the_night_in_Kolkata or why_loiter social media acted as main

[30] Sohel, Abu(2019, 2nd Feb),Personal Communication, Focus group Interview

mediums to consolidate people in streets for a feminist cause. I started using facebook in 2012. In 2013 I took part political activism. Severe cases of gender violences erupted in suburbs of Kolkata. First time I walked in a march named 'rally again rape'. During this period I started sharing posts related to feminist concern in social media. As s students activist I started using social media to campaign and consolidate rallies regarding gender justice. "[31]

Second Focus Group Interview

Asmin knew about Nirbhaya from facebook. She came to know about Me_too movement from her social media profile as well. Two of the respondents did not know about these movements at all. Others knew about NIrbhaya from televised media channels.

The anonymity of social media scares them. One of the respondents,Kenija said to be a woman one needs to take care of their safety and social media does not come well along with the idea of safety.

Being asked whether they consider social media interfaces as public space all respondents answered affirmatively. The respondents added ,the public character of these virtual media interfaces like facebook, whatsapp makes the space unsafe to share personal contents. They use the space strategically,controlling the privacy settings of their social media interfaces .

Only one respondent Asmin uploads photos of herself in social media. Other respondents do not avail the provision. While discussing the provisions of sharing and uploading photos in facebook ,other respondents were criticizing the act of going public with one's photograph.That caused Asmin's hesitation.She abstained from responding.[32]

While discussing about Me_too movement and its possibilities ,all of the seven respondents welcomed the act of speaking up about violation. But when asked whether they will come up with their experiences in social media,they replied with a 'No'.All respondents said they don't feel safe to come up with their experiences in social media . They feel the act of coming out is not easy for them. They feared the act of coming up can will be always under surveillance of society. Kenija [33]and Najma stated one experience ,regarding their use of social media. They said ,the anonymous nature of social media scares them. Virtual world brought threats for them rather liberty. The 'fluidity/anonymity' of cyberspace which was supposed to break limits for women ,rather set limits for the respondents I interviewed. [34]

The primary data ie experience gathered from this interviews, led me towards perceiving social media as an alternative propaganda medium which is limited by the possibility of violence for women of difference. By women of difference I claim to represent my subjects ,who's evidence

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[31] Ghosh, Suman (2019,2nd Feb),Personal Communication, Focus Group Interview
[32] Asmin,(2019,5th Feb),Personal Communication, Focus Group Interview
[33] Khatun Kenija,(2019,5th Feb),Personal Communication, Focus Group Interview

of experience is marked by different social locations. The respondents reflected social media as a mere communication medium which can offer both liberation and repression.

Social media being the coalition between social entities and applied science; produces the space to disseminate information by options of upload, share, and comment and build mass contentious around a specific issue. The technological/virtual place has become the canon to pave up opinions which play an imperative role in socio-political arena .From parliamentary democracy to promotion of films, propagandas of student union elections, campaigning entrepreneurships, information about art exhibitions, sharing intimate experiences- 'new media' is invading our personal values, thus becoming significant in our heterogeneous socio-cultural practices. It has embraced the possibility for its users to exchange their stand-points, debate and propagate views from ideologies of far right to far left. As the propagation of 'love jihad' /'ghar-wapsi' was circulated and exhibited in new media (face book, twitter,whatsapp) by right wing Hindu fundamentalist in India ,the demands for freedom of marriage(not constrained by caste-caste-gender-religion) also affirmed its voice in the very spread of new media . Writing a blog which circulates the anxiety of an upper-caste individual around caste reservation in India could be condemned in new media by a user who believes in the contrary or vice-versa. New media has not only managed to take the personal out in public but it created the space to unfold ,disclose and represent the personal in virtual public/social arena.

Taking insights from the previous discussions , new media in the act of socializing the virtual space (where the representations from distinctive subjective positions, collaboration of those perspectives, the prevalence to both assert and dissent) have the appearance of democracy (a state of society characterized by formal equality of rights and privileges.) in practice . To introspect the scope in New Media where representations and experiences of subjects, perspectives and views manufactured and fabricated under panoptical power structures, campaigns and propaganda influenced by global political economy are flowing as stream of information ,will be to explore the significance of technology constituted under the historical socio-political-cultural contexts. In the neo-liberal capitalist age, technology can be produced but not consumed by all. Thus representation of that deprived economic class remains lost in the democracy (if proclaimed) in new-media stretch. The subject to access, communicate and represent themselves in the new media i.e. the urbanized , english educated ,upper/middle class who performs in the capitalist patriarchal social order .Their social location (homosexual/heterosexual,man/woman,black/white,bramhin/dalit,majority/minority) is to be taken account before citing their experience as evidence. In this 'android' age to be specific, hundreds of information goes up and down by one flick of touch. While the fingers (of users) scroll the data, representations and experiences of any kind can be lost in the stream of digits and algorithms, without affecting the intended by one 'flick'.

Chapter-III

The task remains to question the politics of spectacle under the mode of production and consumption. How through the components of new-media (image, video, narratives) is comprised by the very spectacle of violence vis-à-vis the spectacles created in new-media influence society with violence inflicting on the bodies of certain communities? How the normative notions produced by the power hierarchies of nation-state & market, also produce the conditions for violence and exposure to vulnerabilities in new media space?

Does this very mechanism of violence in New-media is constituted through the hierarchies and hegemonies of society? Can the technological, globalised space be claimed for its character of divergent, de-centralized networking potential to constitute a collective 'we', while introspecting the enormous possibilities of feminist praxis, related to social structures and applied science premises?

From an intersectional entry-point, can the diffusive, horizontal, flexible network space be seen not fully co-opted in the notion of power to the radical alterity of collective dealing with its vulnerability to violence?

Section-I

The spectacle is always contradictory, ambiguous, and subject to reversal and flip-flops so that a political administration and celebrities can never be sure if they will be beneficiaries or victims of the vagaries of spectacle politics. Behind the genesis and ascendancy of the expansion of media spectacle, the proliferating virtual spectacle of cyberspace, and an emerging virtual reality are the twin phenomena of the global restructuring of capitalism and technological revolution with the explosion of new forms of media and communication technology, computer and information technology, and, on the horizon, biotechnology. The technological revolution and global restructuring of capital continues to generate new modes of societal organization, polity, sovereignty, forms of culture and everyday life, and types of contestation.

Developing countries and the globalized world is emerging into a culture of media spectacle that constitutes a novel configuration of economy, society, politics, and everyday life. It involves new cultural forms, social relations, and modes of experience. It is producing an ever-expanding spectacle culture with its proliferating multimedia and interactive spectacles that are intensifying and expanding as wireless technologies develop. Critical social theory thus faces compelling challenges in theoretically mapping and analyzing these emergent forms of culture and society and the ways that they may contain novel forms of domination and oppression as well as potential for democratization and social justice. Thus, as developing countries move into the new millennium, its inhabitants, and others throughout the globe, find themselves in an ever-proliferating infotainment society, a globally networked economy, and an Internet techno culture.

The logic of the new media fits the logic of the post-industrial society of personal variability. In industrial mass society everybody was supposed to enjoy the same goods -- and to have the same beliefs. On contrary the functioning of new media in the realm of globalization and capitalist

economic strategies which hegemonies and constrain access of information and internet across class-caste-gender parity-is a necessary pretext before entering the discussion of tracing the politics of violence while simultaneously tracing subjectivities of perpetrators and vulnerabilities in new media space.

To trace the range of violence in cyber-space, the functioning of spectacle and mechanism of violence around it, must be revisited. For Debord, spectacle "unifies and explains a great diversity of apparent phenomena" (Debord 1967: #10). It describes a media and consumer society, organized around the production and consumption of images, commodities, and staged events. The concept of the "society of the spectacle" developed by French theorist Guy Debord and his comrades in the Situationist International has had major impact on a variety of contemporary theories of society and culture.1 Debord's conception, first developed in the 1960s, continues to circulate through the Internet and other academic and sub cultural sites today.

Media spectacle involves those media and artifacts that embody contemporary society's basic values and serve to enculturate individuals into its way of life (Kellner 1995, 2003)[35]. The spectacle as a tendency to make one see the world by means of various specialized mediations (it can no longer be grasped directly), naturally finds vision to be the privileged human sense which the sense of touch was for other epochs. According to Debord, sight, "the most abstract, the most mystified sense corresponds to the generalized abstraction of present day society"[36]. The correlative to the spectacle for Debord is thus the spectator, the reactive viewer and consumer of a social system predicated on submission, conformity, and the cultivation of marketable difference.

To reflect on violence in cyber space, the very category of it as monolithic has to be questioned. How does violence becomes a part of media spectacle and the spectator, reactive viewer or consumer take part in reaction to that spectacle can be our area of study. Whether this space is democratic enough or is incorporated wholly under the panoptical of surveillance and power?

The heinous act of Afrazul's lynching; which many are scared to watch, is not only witnessed but filmed by Regar's 14 year-old nephew and uploaded by Shabhulal for the world in the virtual space .This video was auto-played in timelines of individual identities ,forced the users of unique identity to witness the violence done on the body of a muslim man who acts as an embodiment of communal hatred spread by the political party ideology of our national government in power. The spectacle of violence spread across the geo-political viewers of new-media created visual threat towards the minority community (citizens of Indian state) reflects the very fascist culture of exhibiting and documenting ,thus normalizing violence on the communities exposed to vulnerabilities. The various opinions formed and asserted through the virtual media comprised of agony, indignation against the violence also the perpetrator of this heinous act, Shambhulam

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[35] Kellner, D. (2003). *Media spectacle*. Routledge.

[36] Debord, G. (2012). *Society of the Spectacle*. Bread and Circuses Publishing.

Hegre was celebrated as hero in social media communities/groups like 'Rashtriya Sayang Sevak Sangha' ,'Pashchimbanga Hindu Porishod' etc. When a tribal girl from Kushmandi,west-bengal got brutally gang-raped ,the images with her intestine tear apart was visibly shared in social media, condemnation to the brutal act .Each time the photo or the video was getting shared ,the spectacle was reproduced and consumed by the spectators .The act of violence was always present, then what did the spectacle of 'new' media do new ? Did it add on the violence or ruptures could be marked in the fluid space?

How our experience and everyday life are shaped and mediated by the spectacles of media culture and the consumer society , For Debord, the spectacle is a tool of pacification and depoliticization; it is a "permanent opium war" which stupefies social subjects and distracts them from the most urgent task of real life -- recovering the full range of their human powers through creative practice. Debord's concept of the spectacle is integrally connected to the concept of separation and passivity, for in submissively consuming spectacles, one is estranged from actively producing one's life. Capitalist society separates workers from the products of their labor, art from life, and consumption from human needs and self-directing activity, as individuals inertly observe the spectacles of social life from within the privacy of their homes .

Section-II

Raymond Williams, in his " Means of Communication as Means of Production'' raises some very pertinent queries in the realm of communication(Williams:2010).According to Williams, means of communication are at the same time produced and are themselves means of production. And this process is embedded in the capitalist historical development. He argues that this view of means of communication as 'means of production' is blocked by three ideological assumptions.

Firstly, he feels that the means of communication have been disjuncted from their role of social production in our understanding. He writes, "the means of communication, having been reduced from their status as means of social production,ar only seen as 'media''.The technologies that are used to circulate the communicative information are seen as neutral 'sender' and 'receiver'. which in turn turn creates the category of the abstract individual consumer.As Noortje Marres asks,whom are we supposed to hold accountable if we find a racially motivated content in Facebook or Google(Marres:2017).As delineated by Williams,this production of abstract individual puts the whole responsibility on the individual,the user in a capitalist DIY framework.The discussion around Facebook which puts it in the ambiguous categories such as 'community','social media' where 'social' is what stressed upon harks back on these same lines.

Secondly ,Williams attacks the distinction between the 'mechanical' and 'natural' means of communication in the sense that firstly it conceals the very fact the the everyday use of language and communication are part of the the 'mechanical' means of communication,in a different form though.And secondly because the grouping of all mechanical and technological means as medium of 'mass communication' and the subsequent capitalist production of 'audience' or 'public' as categories whose only legitimacy is their act of consumption. While this at one hand obliterates the varying degrees in which these 'medium's play out and are embedded in day to day livings,on the other hand it also creates socially deterministic categories of the polity that are in turn considered as natural categories to be analyzed and understood(like the 'assembled cinema audience or the 'home based television audience'.).Williams cites the works of Marshall Mcluhan to be one variant of this ideological stance which though identifies difference within 'media',but then proposes an overarching 'localized' technological determinism'. In his recent ethnography Tales from Facebook,Daniel Miller seems to succumb into the same kind of understanding where the 'medium' reorganizes the polity but only in the sense 'communication' within quotes,devoid of any socio-political vector whatsoever(Miller:2013).

Thirdly,William critiques the very misplaced distinction that exists between 'means of communication' and 'means of production'.This view is problematic in the sense that firstly it assume only the production of disposable and isolable concrete objects as 'production' and secondly because as a result it fall into the bourgeoise tendency of relegating the means of communication in second order to the more pertinent questions of running the world..This view then makes the understanding of means of communication difficult where this relationship is seen as natural and necessary,other than seeing them as historically situated phenomenon.

In 1977,Dallas Smythe published an article named ''Communications: Blindspot of Western Marxism'' in the Canadian Journal of Political and Social Theory.This and subsequent discussion on the journal is known as the 'blindspot' debate.In this article Smythe begins by complaining about the blind spot in western marxist theory that considered mass-media to be only some kind of 'glue' or 'ether' that binds the social by producing capitalist subjectivities.As for mass communication,Smythe argues, "The activities of these institutions are intimately connected with consumer consciousness, needs, leisure time use, commodity fetishism, work and alienation.''In the same vein as of Williams,Smythe argues that the consideration of product as of only material origin has long hindered the understanding of mass communication.Smythe asks us to think what economic function do mass communication serve fo the capital. So Smythe asks , "What is the commodity form of mass-produced, advertiser-supported communications under monopoly capitalism?''.And his answer is that the 'audience' is the commodity.It is the 'audience' or the attention of the audience that the mass media industry sells to the industrial capitalist.While the mass media industry plays a substantive role in this production,surprisingly it is the audience that bears the primary cost to be even included as 'audience'.As Smythe writes,in 1975 the audience spent three times more money than the television companies and cable

operator combined in Canada.While Smythe has been rightly criticised later on for his failure to break out from the cartesian duality he himself critiqued on his reading of Marx,Smythe's understanding of 'leisure' as a concept can be very useful in discussing the political economy of Facebook(Smythe:1977). We will come to this later.

Both Smythe and Williams highlight how the limiting of the notion of production only to material products have been proven harmful .So in this regard,it would be helpful to make a detour of the literature on immaterial labour to get a more nuanced understanding of this debate.

The concept of 'immaterial labour' has its roots in the Italian Marxist Autonomist debates.The concept of 'Immaterial Labour' was first clearly articulated by Maurizio Lazzarato in his 1996 article of the same name.Lazzarato defines 'Immaterial Labour' as 'the labor that produces the informational and cultural content of the commodity'(Lazzarato:1996).Hardt defines immaterial labour as 's immaterial labor-that is, labor that produces an immaterial good, such as a service, knowledge, or communication''(Hardt:1999).Lazzarato delineates two aspects of this concept.Firstly,the informational content refers to the gradual reorganization of the industry where skills regarding cybernetics and computer have became more important than ever.On the other hand,by 'cultural' content Lazzarato means,'the kinds of activities involved in defining and fixing cultural and artistic standards, fashions, tastes, consumer norms,and, more strategically, public opinion'.According to Lazzarato,post-70s Toyotism onwards,we see a rise of what he refers to as 'mass intellectuality',By this he means the rise of jobs that being manual in the classical sense,also involves and requires what can be termed as 'intellectual' labour.The lack of a dialectical understanding of 'intellectual' labour in Lazzarato framework sometime sounds to techno-deterministic.For example,when he says ''. This immaterial labor constitutes itself in forms that are immediately collective, and we might say that it exists only in the form of networks and flows. The organization of the cycle of production of immaterial labor (because this is exactly what it is, once we abandon our factoryist prejudices — a cycle of production) is not obviously apparent to the eye, because it is not defined by the four walls of a factory.The location in which it operates is outside in the society at large, at a territorial level that we could call "the basin of immaterial labor"(Lazzarato:1996)[37].This is where we beg to differ,but we will come back to this later.To be fair,Lazzarato(and subsequently Hardt) is not saying that job of this specific kind is going to sideline all other kinds of production.What they were suggesting is that while the industrialization of the previous centuries gradually industrialized everything from agriculture to our sleeping habits,we are now witnessing a new phase of capitalism where everything is being 'informatized'.Hardt describes two aspects of this transformation.Firstly he mentions the gradual shift from 'Fordism' to 'Toyotism' as.a ''primary structural change between these models involves the system of communication between the production and consumption of commodities, that is, the passage of information between the factory and the market''.In the classic Fordist situation the industry would depend upon the steady stream of

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[37] Muehlebach, A. (2011). On affective labor in post- Fordist Italy. *Cultural Anthropology*, *26*(1), 59-82.

demands for their production.There was no direct link between production and consumption as in the sense of reciprocal feedback,in the place of their existence they were rather 'restricted' and 'slow'..On the other hand,Toyotism represents a different alignment of the industry where this process of feedback seems to take the centerstage.As Hardt writes,''the production planning will communicate with markets constantly and immediately. Factories will maintain zero stock and commodities will be produced just in time, according to the present demand of the existing markets. This model thus involves not simply a more rapid feedback loop but an inversion of the relationship because, at least in theory, the productive decision actually comes after and in reaction to the market decision.''(Hardt 1999).So communication and networked organization become a big part of these processes.The literature of Maurizio Lazzarato,Michael Hardt,Paul Virno etc not only highlight the emergence of a new kind of economic model based on 'immaterial labour'[38],they link this with what they term as affective labour.This understanding has its roots in the gradual expansions of service industry and the new corporate mantra of seeing manufacture as a kind of service.At one hand immaterial labour gives rise to what Robert Reich terms as 'symbolic-analytic services' which basically performs the task of 'problem-solving, problem-identifying,and strategic brokering activities". Amazon Mechanical Turk can be cited as an example where people perform menial and repetitive jobs like sorting out photo album or providing academic content for a few cents. The precariousness of the labor performed in Amazon Mechanical Turk is in public domain now. The other very important aspect of immaterial labor is its embeddedness in corporeality.Hardt cites the example to Health service or any other kind of service which are facilitated by human contact. He argues that in cases like these, the labor of these kind produces ''a feeling of ease, well-being, satisfaction, excitement, passion-even a sense of connectedness or community'' which is immaterial.Hardt extended this argument by integrating the feminist analysis which describes 'women's work' as 'work in bodily mode'. This concept can then be extended to analyze a category like 'caring' where patriarchal-Cartesian-neoclassical assumptions have historically failed to see affective labor as productive. Fuchs cites the example of MPS (material product system), equivalent of GDP in Soviet Russia which started in 1920s which saw the division between productive and unproductive labor as one of the decisive force in deciding national wealth. As Fuchs writes, the kind of markers that Soviet used to distinguish between 'productive' and 'unproductive' was based on gendered vision of labour,which "built into perceptions of productivity"[39].So while transport,agriculture,manufacture etc were seen as 'productive labor' [40],the service sector,administration,education,culture etc were seen as 'unproductive labour'.Fields like medicine,education,care where there was a high female concentration were considered to be less important in the overall productivity of the country. Selma James, who was one of the chief founders of "Wages for Housework' movement has also examined how to the limited notion of

[38] Trott, B. (2007). Immaterial labour and world order: An evaluation of a thesis. *Ephemera: Theory and Politics in Organisation*, *7*(1), 203-32.

[39] Fuchs, C. (2014). Theorising and analysing digital labour: From global value chains to modes of production. *The Political Economy of Communication*, *1*(2).

[40] Fuchs, C. (2014). Theorising and analysing digital labour: From global value chains to modes of production. *The Political Economy of Communication*, *1*(2).

'labor' has been used to keep a class of population out of the main framework of productivity, so unwaged and unacknowledged labor becomes their only forte. Fuchs cites this long history of the discrimination between 'productive and 'unproductive' labor which has then reified 'wage' in capitalist framework and also historically have created pool of unwaged workers who play very decisive role in the playing out of the economy, but are not seen as workers as such. Fuchs then extends this argument by saying how we shouldn't see face booking as unproductive either. At one side every movement in these spaces are monetized, on the other hand ,as Smyth writes, these are the places users "work to market [...] things to themselves"(Smythe:1981)[41]

Face book was launched in 2004.Since its launch Face book has seen exponential growth both in the user base and revenue. When Face book made its public offering, it was valued at a staggering 104 billion. It boasts of a user base of 2.2 million active monthly users. While it is difficult to define "face book' by what it does because of its multiplicity of uses, we think we can have a rather clear grasp of Face book in terms of its economic model. From his recent published 'manifesto' of Mark Zuckerberg,the founder and largest stakeholder of the social media site, it seems that Face book is trying to pose as a 'community' in the sense it transcends the traditional public space on the basis of increased level of participatory activities. We will discuss more about the basis of such participation later on; first let's see what Dallas Smythe can tell us about Face book...

One of the very insightful argument that Smyth puts in his blind spot article is the analysis of 'leisure'. In his Grundrisse, writing in the time of cottage industry(unbranded consumer goods), Marx wrote, "The workers participation in the higher even cultural satisfaction the agitation of his own interests newspaper subscriptions, attending lectures educating his children, developing his taste etc….. His only share of civilization which distinguishes him from the slaves"(Smythe:1977)[42].During 1850's the average work week was of 70 hours. In 1850, the average American would work for 42 hours a week. By 1960's the numbers of hour spent in job was reduced to 39.5 hours per week. Obviously this excluded the time that was needed to travel to the places of work which was strategically situated in certain parts of the country and the world. In case of part-time female workers writing in 1975, Smythe pointed out to the minimum 32 hours of jobs that they perform in home. So much for the capitalist notion of freetime. In 1970, the economist for Columbia broadcasting system noted that, in average people spend 23 hours per week watching television, 18 hours listening to radio and 7 hours reading newspaper per week, which means that in average people spend 48 hours per week in consuming the products circulated through the mass media industry. Facebook has two million monthly active users in their platform. The global digital report of 2018, highlights that there are 3.196 billion social media users in the world, and 4.02 billion internet users from the total population of 7.6 billion. The global digital report talks about the 'passive content consumption' on mobile phone usage. 60% of total internet users use social sites to find entertainment. We are citing these

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[41] Smythe, D. W. (1981). *Dependency road: Communications, capitalism, consciousness, and Canada*. Praeger Pub Text.

[42] Smythe, D. W. (1977). Communications: blindspot of western Marxism. *CTheory*, *1*(3), 1-27.

numbers to point out to the previously unimaginable expansion of techno-capitalist regimes. Smythe writes, "What has happened to the time workers spend of-the-job while not sleeping is that enormous pressure on this time have been imposed by all consumer goods and service branches of monopoly capitalism. Individual familiar and other associative needs must be dealt with, but in a real context of products and advertising which, taken together make the task of individual and family basically one of coping while being constantly on the verge of being overwhelmed by these pressures." Here the capitalist demarcation between work and leisure stands exposed in analyzing leisure, citing Livant, Smythe argues that the leisure time should be seen as a time of production, reproduction and repair of labour power, This production, reproduction and repair are activities. They are things people must do as such, they also require labour power. To be sure, this later labour power you do not have to sell directly to capital. But you do have to use it to produce labour power in the form u do have to sell. So, the non-work time is the necessary labour that you need to perform to execute the task of your wage labour. Smythe writes, Wage labour only becomes possible itf your labour power become a personal possession, which it is possible for you to sel. You can do what you 'want' with it… non-work time is labour power which is yours not-to-sell." Smythe then asked, "Is production and the consumption of the audience commodity for advertisers a 'productive' activity in marxist terms?"(Smythe:1977)[43].So, for Smythe the division between work and non-work are particular historical conditions on which what is produced is the 'peculiar' commodity, that is labour power. So, what becomes evident from smythe's discussion is first the illusion of leisure time and second the gradual and exploitive monetization of that leisure time by privately owned corporate media houses.Now let's consider Facebook which is atleast never seen as site of work in the sense of industrial production. Facebook which was valued at $102 billion in its first public offering in 2012 stands as one of the exemplary models of that kind of system.What distinguishes this kind of media space from traditional means of communication is that here the user and the only the user creates the 'content'.And Facebook uses this content to aggregate data on the users that is then sold to the advertisers.The data is generated through the use of now mass market digital gadgets and cheap data connection,the expense of which are solely resides on the user.The apparent 'free' services are based on global divisions of exploitative labour ,and as an incentive on the other hand to get into this mode of production.On this regard we must also point out to the fact that the whole Net-Neutrality debate seemed rather lacking in critical gaze when it concentrated it's attack only to certain service providers who seem to give certain content providers free-wheel at the expense of other.The kind of content and data monopoly that Facebook and it's subsidiaries such as Whatsapp and Instagram hold are at the first place secured by the fact that you can get them for 'free',compared to other less popular platforms where you need to pay for access,which in turn crates the monopolization of these markets by the platforms.When Microsoft's online magazine went from a subscription based model to free readership,it explained "It now looks as if it's going to be easier to sell ads but harder to sell subscriptions than we thought a year ago. Ten to 15 people visit our free areas every month for

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[43] Smythe, D. W. (1977). Communications: blindspot of western Marxism. *CTheory*, *1*(3), 1-27.

each one paying subscriber … It's painful to think of turning away so many Slate readers from so much of our content … The spreadsheet wizards figure that ad revenue from the increased traffic will more than compensate for the lost subscriptions(Fisher:2017).Same with Encyclopedia Britannica;when it decided to go online,the content was provided for free.As one of the officials put it,''whatever form users need it. We made it free because we felt it was the only way to get the critical mass of people visiting the site that we need to make money from sponsorship and e-commerce ''(Fisher:2017).[44]So we can say that the circulation of a commodity as 'free' is complicit in the capitalist process of accumulation. As Fisher writes summing up the overall shift to Web 2.0 ,'' On top of the shift from subscription to advertisement, we can note the increased popularity of registration, as a practice that allows tracking user's behavior, leading to the ability to collect Information II'' (Fisher:2017)[45].

In this regard we can cite Cote and Pybus and their work on the political economy of Myspace, another social networking site acquired by Rupert Murdoch's News Corp. They write "there has been a conflation of production and consumption and elision of author and audience- especially in the virtual ICT networks that literally comprise an increasing part of our everyday life; and that therein, our communication, our cultural practices are not only constituted of social relations, but are also a form of labour and increasingly integral to capital relations"(Cote,Pybus:2007)[46] It is no different from facebook, where our navigation through the 'comments', 'likes', and 'friends' creates socially embedded (aggregated and reworked datawise) relations are shown to the advertisers as lucrative and 'affective' way of reaching to the consumers as Zuckerberg said in 2007 "We are building a massive network of real connections between people, through which information can flow more efficiently than it ever has in the past." In 2007 Facebook started a new service called 'Facebook Beacon' that track the purchase of Facebook users on certain websites (44 commercial sites signed this agreement with Facebook which included websites like Tripadvisor and NY nights) and notified the other members on the user's friend list about these purchases. In 2007 after the class action lawsuit Lane versus Facebook, Facebook abandoned this service and agreed to pay $9.5 million in settlement. Facebook's terms of service in 2007 stated "by posting User Content to any part of the Site, you automatically grant, and you represent and warrant that you have the right grant, to the company an irrevocable, perpetual, non-exclusive, transferable, fully paid worldwide licence (with the right to sublicense) to use, copy, publicly perform, publicly display, reformat, translate, excerpt (in whole or in part) and distribute such User Content for any purpose, commercial, advertising or otherwise, on or in connection with the site or the promotion thereof to prepare derivative works of or incorporate into other works, such User Content and to grant and to authorize sublicences of the foregoing." While through various litigation and other policy activism,it was

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[44] Fisher, E. (2018). When information wanted to be free: Discursive bifurcation of information and the origins of Web 2.0. *The Information Society*, *34*(1), 40-48.

[45] Fisher, E. (2018). When information wanted to be free: Discursive bifurcation of information and the origins of Web 2.0. *The Information Society*, *34*(1), 40-48.

[46] Coté, M., & Pybus, J. (2007). Learning to immaterial labour 2.0: MySpace and social networks. *ephemera*, *7*(1), 88-106.

possible to bring Facebook into the negotiation table,the new terms are as economically ambiguous as they can be,amenable to further manipulations. This can be seen as part of the larger goal of media companies to place increasing restrictions on intellectual property by extending "IP as a method of 'protecting' the rights to profit maximization." As Zuckerberg said " it gets to a point when we are publishing more in a day than any other publications have in history of their whole existence", all in your newsfeed, all for free.While this comment has an underlying connotation that valorizes the current regime of data mining surveillance,we must not be fooled by it's claims of even being able to cater to our interests.So for example,it is not unusual to see circulation of a certain kind of data in Facebook based on a thematic unity which anyway privileges the monopoly news publications at the expense of a more nuanced and political reading. As Cohen writes, sites like Facebook work as "capital reacting to and attempting to exploit the way in which people see non-commodified relationships online"(Cohen:2008).

Eran Fisher writes,''Facebook is inherently "biased" to communication so that even some personal activities on one's own profile automatically translate into communication''(Fisher:2012)[47].This is an important argument in the sense it points out towards the underlying design of Facebook,where devoid of our consent,most of the activities are 'public' anyway.This cannot be seen merely as communication anyway because of its inherently public nature at one hand,and military monetization of our activities based on the digital regime of surveillance.

Conclusion

The quest was to find an overcoming of all forms of separation, in which individuals would directly produce their own life and modes of self-activity and collective practice .Whether the multiple and fluid innovative subjectivities enacting through the complexities of de-centred networked space is marked by the dominant hegemonic discourses of society which makes certain communities exposed to vulnerability in new-media space? If so, can the convergence of technology of society reflected in new media is wholly co-opted under the 'juridical'/'productive' notion of power or it encompasses the radical political potential to disrupt and rupture the non-monolithic, diverse mechanisms of violence ,to place and collectivize the dissent within is to be traced as well.

In the past years of course, the 'National' and 'anti-national' debates took a rift through the threads of new-media space; where the sovereign and self-centered subject as Indian state operated to maintain its mastery by establishing a normative subjectivity of citizens as nationals. This normative was built by homogenizing all Indian citizens as Hindus and necessarily negating

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[47] Fisher, E. (2018). When information wanted to be free: Discursive bifurcation of information and the origins of Web 2.0. *The Information Society*, *34*(1), 40-48.

'othered' identities. The media footages used as the rationale to inflict violence, adopted new media space for its enactment. The negation of one's citizenship and nationhood was established through abuse, harassment, threats by means of uploading, spreading, and commenting in new media space, to prohibit any dissent forming. These violence could have been communicated directly towards the dissenters of the sovereign state through the interconnected networked society of new-media vis-à-vis the dissenters used the flexible communication medium to place their opinion of dissent as well. But the dissenters containing unique identities in virtual anonymous space were attacked not as individual identities but as collectivized identities as 'Anti-nationals'. Such prohibitions enacted in the new media space ,not only shore up a nationalism based on its military aims and practices, but they also suppress any internal dissent that would expose the concrete, human effects of its violence. The assertion and exercise of state sovereignty thus implies the actual or virtual (the credible threat of) application of public violence within society, monopolized by the state. But the diffuse ,fluid place also provided the place for dissent ,when the excluded identities from the homogenized 'nationals' confronted their resistance to the monopolized violence through the very space of new-media.The de-centralised nature of networking made it possible for the 'other'ed voices (vulnerable to actual or virtual threats) to revert back by commenting in the threads (containing miss-information ,abuse,hatred and threats) and marked their resistance .Images spread by proclaimed 'nationalists', at the time of this debate ,showed the demonstrating students from Jawharlal Nehru University were holding placards named 'Pakistan Zindabad' or 'Bharat Murdabad' .This false narratives with photo-shoped images could be countered when the original images were posted under the same threads .To cite the example of Gurmeher Kaur,a student of Delhi University was attacked and abused virtually for speaking against the lynching and violence on minorities in India. Her photos were shared in social media calling her 'betrayer', as in spite army officer's daughter she talked against the brutalities inflicted on Muslims, dalits in India.Gurmeher wrote vehemently in social media against the abuse on her and repeatedly condemned the politics of exclusion and violent measures taken to implement it. The question of violence on individual subjectivity and the vulnerability exposed (as threats, abuse, harassments through image/videos or other means) is not the subject to be discussed also with looking at the very rationale and spectacle of violence as non-monolithic, non-homogenized category, practiced in the virtual space called New-media under the conditions of modern production and consumption can reflect of the diverse mechanism of violence in cyber-space. Critical introspection of new-media space as potent to radical political potential to 'contest the meaning of the breached boundaries' and mark the ruptures (in the form of self-written narratives, images, videos) of resistance can be traced along the discussion.

Also the convergence of once separate and specified media turns them into system of telecommunication with messages of their own, and tools mutate into complex machines which begin to act and learn for it. As media, tools and goods mutate, so the women begin to change, escaping their isolation and becoming increasingly interlinked.

In Irrigaray's words, the extent and pervasiveness of patriarchy were once an occasion for pessimistic paralysis, things look rather different in an age for which all economic systems are reaching the limits of their modern functionality. Contemporary feminist discourses are marked by the emergence of networks and contacts which need no centralized organization and evade its structures of command and control over the hierarchical structures of oppression.

The technological/virtual place has become the canon to pave up opinions which play an imperative role in socio-political arena .From parliamentary democracy to promotion of films, propagandas of student union elections, campaigning entrepreneurships, information about art exhibitions, sharing intimate experiences- 'new media' is invading our personal values, thus becoming significant in our heterogeneous socio-cultural practices. It has embraced the possibility for its users to exchange their stand-points, debate and propagate views from ideologies of far right to far left. As the propagation of 'love jihad' /'ghar-wapsi' was circulated and exhibited in new media (facebook, twitter,whatsapp) by right wing Hindu fundamentalist in India ,the demands for freedom of marriage(not constrained by caste-caste-gender-religion) also affirmed its voice in the very spread of new media . Writing a blog which circulates the anxiety of an upper-caste individual around caste reservation in India could be condemned in new media by a user who believes in the contrary or vice-versa. New media has not only managed to take the personal out in public but it created the space to unfold ,disclose and represent the personal in virtual public/social arena.

New media in the act of socializing the virtual space (where the representations from distinctive subjective positions, collaboration of those perspectives, the prevalence to both assert and dissent) have the appearance of democracy (a state of society characterized by formal equality of rights and privileges.) in practice . To introspect the scope in New Media where representations and experiences of subjects, perspectives and views manufactured and fabricated under panoptical power structures, campaigns and propaganda influenced by global political economy are flowing as stream of information ,will be to explore the significance of technology constituted under the historical socio-political-cultural contexts. In the neo-liberal capitalist age, technology can be produced but not consumed by all. Thus representation of that deprived economic class remains lost in the democracy (if proclaimed) in new-media stretch. The subject to access, communicate and represent themselves in the new media i.e the urbanized ,english educated ,upper/middle class who performs in the capitalist ,patriarchal society under the categories of representation.

How does a collective deal, finally, with its vulnerability to violence in cyberspace, can be dealt in the praxis of feminist politics? As Butler argues in Precarious Life, 'various routes lead us into politics, various stories bring us onto the street, various kinds of reasoning and belief. We do not need to ground ourselves in a single model of communication, a single model of reason, and a single notion of the subject before we are able to act.' With the claim of new media to posit 'newness' in exploring heterogeneous communication and multiplicity of connectivity', the paper wants to conclude with the idea of 'newness'(fluid and limitless possibilities of inter-

relations & communication) in new media -exposing radical alter ties with the entry-point of feminist praxis can constitute a collective 'we' to negotiate and strategies against the exposure to violence and also with the query of ,multiple ,innovative subjectivities (not as pre-requisite category)produced in this de-centered space of virtual invoking the scope for political agency, out of which emergence of feminist thinking and affiliation, the basis of our vulnerability, affiliation, and collective resistance to violence is possible .

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