

Politics of Waiting and an Expanding Gender Horizon: The Social, Political, and Legal Discourses in India

Editors:

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A. Concept Note

The proposed book aims to reimagine ‘gender’ through the conceptual framework of the ‘politics of waiting’. In other words, as we explore the social and legal discourses shaping and transforming ‘gender’ as an analytical category, we intend to push our thinking to examine the discursive intersection between gender and waiting.

While the legal codes are often interjected with socio-political interpretations, they rarely engage in holistic conversations about re-imagining gender. Thus, for an adequate engagement between the two, we invoke an anchor of a conceptual category of *wait*. Wait, here, can be defined as a perception of time; often elongated and mired in the transactions of “hope, doubt, and uncertainty” (Bandak and Janeja, 2018). Craig Jeffrey (2010) alludes to the *Politics of Waiting* in the context of the socio-economic changes propelled by globalisation— *waiting* for access to resources due to severe underemployment in India. Borrowing Jeffrey’s terminology, here, the *Politics of Waiting* refers to the way one senses ‘time’ and develops a perception surrounding it. This temporality, shaped historically, reflects upon the contemporary implications of governance— a gift of neoliberal rationalisation of statecraft (Ozolina 2019).

Therefore, the *Politics of Waiting* is timeless— both historical and contemporary. As this politics shapes, ‘hope’, ‘doubt’, and ‘uncertainty’ cease to remain in silos— hope may be shadowed by doubt; despite the uncertainty of an unpromising circumstance, there may be a ray of hope. Waiting is political as it is steeped in power relations and often can be perceived as an expression of domination— keeping people in uncertainty through waiting is indeed an exercise of power (Bourdieu 2005). We see a sense of the historic evolution of norms in B. R. Ambedkar’s (1936) *Waiting for a Visa*, documenting his arduous journey of *waiting* to be free from untouchability— which signifies hope mired with a sense of frustration. Writing from the Birmingham city jail, Martin Luther King (2000) reckons with the “piercing familiarity” with ‘wait’ often metamorphosing into an endless wait for justice— invoking a timeless experience from the marginality of political incarceration. Yet, in King, we do not read helpless frustrations of the oppressed, but a call for active defiance against the oppressor. *Waiting*, therefore, hints at an underlying power structure— the power relations, despite being

seemingly hierarchical, are all-pervasive. In this regard, we also see the governmentality of *waiting*; the migrant awaits the ‘processing’— measures determining the fate of their asylum or assigning them legal permits for work (Darling 2009; Zharkevich 2020). In fact, the act of *waiting* summons the singularity of everyday gendered lives in conjunction with the public discourse- political, legal, social. In this regard, ‘everyday’ is shaped by the events embedded in daily lives (Das 2007). The question remains: Why is *wait* gendered?

The answer takes us back to an illustration of the *Politics of Waiting* from the perspective of gender. While this indicates a direct engagement with the question of gender— not only as a lens for viewing the questions of subjection but also the way it engages with social processes for reifying gender identities. Beyond a socio-political category, ‘gendered’ denotes the values associated with the construction of gender-differentiated biases around this category. Thus, every event of ‘othering’ perpetuated through *waiting* with patterns of marginalisation and exclusion may be seen to be gendered— seeking to understand marginality from the multitude of social intersections.

It lends us an opportunity to explore its manifestations in an interdisciplinary manner where perspectives from gender studies, law, political science, sociology, history, public policy, and economics come together. The proposed volume aims to create a space for scholars contributing from across India to engage creatively with the concept of *waiting* and showcase how it may be gendered. While ‘waiting’ is by no means country-specific, alluding broadly to India gives us an epistemic advantage with most of the chapters rooted in India-centric/field-based experiences. At the same time, we firmly believe that diverse Indian experiences require closer attention bolstering the conceptual standing of ‘waiting’ and challenging the conventional locales for knowledge production.

The book is envisaged as two broad parts aiming at two broad questions foregrounded in the concept of gender and the politics of waiting: 1. How do we imagine the gendered ‘wait’ through legal and socio-economic rights and resistance? 2. How do we see the feminised lives precariously placed vis-à-vis ‘waiting’ in contemporary times? We argue that the gendered ‘wait’ manifests not only within the state apparatus but beyond the state, it touches lived experiences. These two questions will be dealt with in these two parts of the book, respectively. In the book, we propose to address five conceptually and empirically enmeshed dimensions which will be clubbed and discussed in the two above-mentioned corresponding parts.

Firstly, the book brings the question of rights to the forefront. We reckon that the socio-legal discourses surrounding us show how law is not only gendered but also phallogocentric. Though an oxymoron, especially when dealing with cases of sexual and domestic violence, the hush tonality mixed with the drudgery of the survivors’ courtroom experiences amounts to them becoming a *public secret*- known yet unspoken (Baxi 2014). An elongated *wait* for justice— the socio-legal language of the courtroom proceedings making the long road to justice even more gruelling. These rights are set in various Indian contexts— not simply as tools of state-driven empowerment but also to subvert the dominant by bringing the contingently

shaped subaltern voices to the fore. Secondly, the book, then, shifts to explore a market-driven domain of political economy erecting social barriers of gender-based norms. Thirdly, the book seeks to reimagine bodies as the potential sites of resistance—be it in a violent conflict zone, for piety, or even against gendered narratives.

Fourthly, we focus on the bodies which are imprisoned/detained. While resistance is quelled on politically incarcerated bodies, criminal/illegally migrated bodies are bereft of resistive forces—they exude a longing to break away. Fifthly, lives in precarity are also shaped amidst the contemporary humanitarian crises—the global juxtaposed vis-à-vis the local. In this regard, the book seeks to critique the hypermasculine norms shaping India's foreign policy stance around global crises as well as reckon with the implications of being 'refugees' in India. In both these instances, 'gendering' itself is tantamount to the 'wait'.

The edited volume aims to make us rethink and reimagine 'gender' in the Indian context in novel ways— especially, with the violent contemporary turn of the world events. The volume seeks to broaden and deepen the conceptual and practical underpinnings of gender in India and its discursive engagement with the *Politics of Waiting*.

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B. Chapter abstracts and keywords:

Part I: Imagining the Wait Through Rights and Resistance

Section I - Breaching the Wait: The Discourses on Rights and Legal Phallocentrism

Chapter 1 - It Will Take Time: The Politics of Waiting and Queer Rights Litigation in India
By Kanav Narayan Sahgal

Abstract: Laws in postcolonial India reflect the customs of dominant groups, primarily shaped by heteronormative and cisnormative ideals. This chapter examines how the legal system, particularly the Supreme Court of India, exercises power over queer litigants—not only by questioning the affirmation of their rights (specifically the right to marry and establish a family) but also through various other institutional mechanisms. The chapter has two primary objectives: first, to explore the relationship between power and time in the context of queer rights litigation, with a focus on the marriage equality case (*Supriyo @ Supriya Chakraborty & Anr. v Union of India*); and second, to encourage readers to consider the implications of forcing queer individuals to wait for their rights amid evolving societal attitudes, specifically highlighting how this seemingly endless waiting adversely affects queer health. Through legal discourse analysis, this chapter aims to illuminate what the social concept of ‘waiting’ signifies in the ongoing struggle for queer rights in India.

Keywords: Queer Rights; Same-sex marriage; Heteronormativity; Constitutional Courts; Supreme Court of India

Chapter 2 - Politics of Waiting Through Feminist Institutional Lenses: The Case of the Indian Women’s Reservation Bill
By Hoimi Mukherjee

Studies on cross-cultural political representation provide a multidimensional understanding of gender inequality, with gender gaps being one of the methods used to map them. The

conceptualisation of time to bridge such gaps for parity in representation is accompanied by policy recommendations. These recommendations largely involve institutional reforms with temporal and conditional characteristics: women's politicisation has to be gradual, where they bear the burden of waiting for parity within the existing masculine structures. Aligning with Bourdieu's (2000) understanding of waiting manifesting the "effects of power" and "domination of the agent", this wait offers hope at the end. This perspective is developed further by analysing the 'institutional resistances' that create and shape the delays in women's politicisation that initiate a series of gendered politics of waiting. This chapter aims to provide how the politics of waiting play out in the institutional spaces with a distinctive gendered dimension, developing women's political subjectivities in various ways.

Feminist Institutionalism interrogates the informal and formal institutional norms and structures that entrench gendered power differentials. Even when gender progressive reforms are initiated formally, informal rules, like the gendered logic of appropriateness, can hinder them. These institutional dynamics are closely rooted in culture and extend to political institutions as well. In terms of political representation, the electoral and formal representative bodies are institutions where various experiments and mechanisms have been introduced to improve women's presence. One of the most common measures to improve descriptive representation has been electoral and legislative quotas. These procedural interventions have demonstrated a mixed record and institutional resistance has been documented across contexts. From the policy design of quotas to the deliberate use of loopholes to circumvent the enforcement of quotas, lengthy procedures for redress, and unfavourable public opinions, women as political agents encounter and negotiate institutional resistance in various ways. This form of politics of waiting shapes women's political subjectivities and the politicisation process. A positive response may occur in the form of concerted efforts, as in the formation of coalitions in the form of "moral communities" to remedy these delays or cooption with institutional logic.

By utilising the case of India's recent Women's Reservation Bill, the protracted procedural aspect of its passage, the historical opposition it faced, and its uncertain future exhibit how a significant opportunity for women's politicisation can be posited in the larger frame of politics of waiting. Documents and statements of governmental stakeholders and non-governmental organisations shall be studied to sketch the institutional pathways taken and structures formed. Insights from public opinion surveys will augment the understanding of political-cultural facets. The discourses of gendered informal and formal institutional logic will outline the institutional resistance. Finally, this chapter shall account for the responses of those who advocated for the bill, which highlights the political subjectivities women develop to navigate the wait.

Keywords: Feminist institutionalism; Women's Reservation Bill; Political Representation; Women in politics

Chapter 3 - Waiting Under Buddhism's Glass Ceiling: The Debate Around Full Ordination of Tibetan Nuns in Exile

By Swati Chawla

Abstract: The chapter approaches the debates around the longstanding demand for granting full ordination (*bhikshuni upasampada*) to Tibetan Buddhist nuns in political exile in the context of another waiting—and hope—of return to Tibet. The chapter shows how the 'resolution of the women's question' within the Tibetan nationalist movement in exile has, unfortunately yet predictably, consigned monastic women to perpetual waiting. It draws on the archives of the Tibetan Nuns Project and Sakyadhita (International Association of Buddhist Women), as well as public speeches by important leaders in the Tibetan Buddhist monastic order, including the Fourteenth Dalai Lama and the Seventeenth Karmapa. Through a focus on the Tibetan Nuns Project (TNP) founded in 1987, the chapter frames the debate on full ordination within the pedagogical and curricular innovations in nunneries during the six-decade-long exile in India. The most prominent among these has been the institution of the *Geshe-ma* (the equivalent of a PhD) degree in 2013, which ensured that female monastics acquired the same level of education as their male counterparts for the first time in the history of Tibetan Buddhist monastic institutions within the Gelug sect.

Keywords: Tibetan Nuns; Buddhism; Monastic Order; Pedagogy; Political Exile; Ordination; *Geshe-ma*; Post-colonial.

Section II- 'Labour' of Love: Waiting as Neoliberal Subjects

Chapter 4- Motherhood in the Metropole: Reproductive Labour in the Family and the Market

By Aditya Krishna

Abstract: This chapter engages with the appropriation of the surplus value of reproductive labour as a facet of "wait". It seeks to employ 'waiting' as a point of reference, to construct a theoretical framework of violence arising from the structures of family and market against the child-bearing populations in global south states. It constructs an identity of a "metropole"—as a location of power external to the state; and consisting of the family and the market; and of a "colony"—as the child-bearing populations. It is posited that the present vocabulary of patriarchy is inadequate to address the structures of oppression, and a post-colonial understanding of surplus value raises important questions to address the wait imposed on the child-bearing populations.

The quasi-feudal family and the post-capitalist/neo-liberal market impose violence upon the bodies of the colony, to appropriate the surplus value of the colonial labour. Since the dominant relations of production in the two metropolitan institutions have a dialectic tension;

the role of the state to reach an equilibrium between the feudal and capitalistic interests of the metropole becomes significant. This paper examines the Indian laws of marriage and employment to demonstrate how the state approaches equilibrium while simultaneously legitimising the structure of colonial violence.

Keywords: Reproductive justice; Reproductive Labour; Global South; Neoliberal; Metropole; Violence

Chapter 5- Reimagining 'Waiting' in the Platform Economy: Gender Performative and Emotional Labour in Indian At-Home Salon Services

By Ambi

The platform economy, characterised by its gig work model, has redefined traditional employment paradigms, offering new opportunities and challenges for women in sectors like at-home salon services in India. This paper explores the gendered experience of waiting within the platform economy, focusing on the experiences of women providing at-home salon services through app-based platforms in India. Drawing on the "Politics of Waiting" framework, it examines how these workers navigate uncertainty, inactivity, and emotional labour (client interaction, maintaining availability, managing uncertainty) within platform-mediated systems. It raises the following research question: how do platforms, policies, and societal expectations create and shape the gendered experience of waiting for women working in at-home salon services in India? I focus on understanding the lived experiences of platformisation, a growing field of study in India.

To this end, I meet the following research objectives of bringing out gendered waiting experiences and adding a 'missing migrant' perspective to the discourse of platform economy in India. The paper presents findings from an ethnographic study, which includes narrative interviews with 20 women working for Urban Company and Yes Madam in the New Delhi (NCR) region. The paper presents findings from an ethnographic study, and narrative interviews of 20 women working for Urban Company and Yes Madam in New Delhi (NCR region) are presented. The study finds that platform work creates complex gendered experiences for women, particularly, migrant women.

Platformisation of beauty work is closely linked with gendered temporal control and societal expectations. The research shows that women platform workers in beauty work juggle dual roles of navigating multiple temporalities on the platform, balancing algorithmic control, client surveillance, and their roles as caregivers and family members. Furthermore, the study finds that the platforms' promise of social transformation is limited, as deep-rooted inequalities related to caste and migratory status persist, leaving workers to navigate these challenges alone.

Keywords: Platform economy, gendered waiting, migrant women, at-home salon services, temporal control, politics of waiting, Urban Company, Yes Madam, India.

Section III- Instrumentalising the Wait: A Site of Resistance and Tool for Oppression

Chapter 6- Ready to Wait and the Women from Sabarimala: A Study from Kerala

By Ambareesh TS

The Ready to Wait (RTW) campaign, an online movement and neo-Savarna women's cultural formation, emerged after the Supreme Court of India (SCI) permitted entry to women of all ages into Sabarimala, a temple where entry was previously limited to non-menstruating women. Temples in Kerala held significant social and political power, and movements advocating for entry into these temples began challenging the existing power structures and caste dynamics, contributing to a renaissance in Kerala society. This study critically analyses the temple entry movement from the pre-independence period, with a focus on the Sabarimala temple entry in the contemporary period. The RTW campaign, as a political movement, challenges the religious reformation in Kerala and shapes new subjectivities that impede the ongoing reformation.

The waiting aspect of the RTW campaign serves as a form of affirmation of their beliefs and the right to defend those beliefs, particularly concerning the perception of menstruation as impure. Women involved in the RTW campaign were willing to wait until their menstruation period was over, emphasizing the importance of their beliefs. This collective resistance was directed against the state government that supported the Supreme Court's order, showcasing the strength of their convictions. Their subjectivities were redefined as protectors of tradition.

Waiting, often associated with a lack of resources or unmet desires, is reinterpreted in the RTW campaign in line with Talal Asad's understanding of wilful submission to religion. It becomes a positive ethical formation, challenging the conventional understanding of secular agency as liberatory, oppositional, and emancipatory. Waiting, in this context, is not viewed as a negative action or an inability to act but rather as an ethically and spiritually charged action. Various reasons, such as the 'crisis of expectation' and 'hope in the life to come', etc. contribute to this waiting. However, through this existence, they delay the processes of revival necessary in a society like Kerala, still grappling with caste and patriarchal notions, making the RTW campaign a relevant political movement and a subject to study in relation to the politics of waiting.

Keywords: Sabarimala Temple; Ready to Wait (RTW) campaign; Kerala; Supreme Court of India; Menstruation.

Chapter 7- Waiting as Resistance: Women, ULFA and the State of Assam

By Juri Baruah and Rishiraj Sen

Abstract: Assam in India's Northeast has had several movements including the Assam Agitation ever since the independence of India. The United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) came into significant limelight with their demands of Swadhin Axom (Independent Assam) in the late 1980s. ULFA cadres had ammunition and promoted a radical version of Assamese sub-nationalism. Ideologically, they stood for an invisible resistance in the frontier spaces of Assam. Their resistance to 'peace talks' that involve the state shows the constant transformation of Assamese sub-nationalism in that period. One of the reasons that such movements were born was due to the region's political economy and colonial history of state formation. In that period of ULFA's militancy, many grassroots resistance activities and movements took place in different corners of Assam. The participation in those actions was noted to be mutual between both men and women.

Women in a conflict zone are more vulnerable to injustice, patriarchal dominance, insecurity, violence of rape, social and economic inequality. Violence and protection are not contradictory but rather 'complementary concepts' which implies 'protection requires violence; violence requires protection'. This statement justifies the participation of women, consciously or unconsciously, in the resistance movements of ULFA in Assam. Within the organisational structure of ULFA, the predominance of patriarchy and masculine narratives around counterinsurgency are the reasons that gendered contribution and participation never received much recognition. The women ULFA cadres; the mothers/sisters/wives/children of the male cadres who are still waiting for justice are the prime respondents for this study as we aim to understand their negotiations and contestations with the state. The recent Tripartite peace agreement indicates the shut-down of the designated camps which were the only domestic space for many women belonging to ULFA cadres' families. Those women have no option to return to the societies they come from. It inevitably raises the 'gendered politics of exclusion' that failed to deliver a secure space for those women who patiently survived by waiting in those camps.

In waiting, people need to be 'patient.' Being patient also means being stuck in a spatio-temporal setting that cannot be graphed in numbers. This study is therefore based on qualitative research methodology by conducting in-depth interviews of those women who have their vernacular version of waiting, grief, and mourning. However, waiting also implicitly means the presence of 'hope' which is again politically embedded and absurd. The study indeed aims to reflect on two research questions. Firstly, why do these women exercise resistance towards the state apparatus throughout this process of waiting in the conflict space? Secondly, how does waiting become an act of resisting the structures of marginalisation? The key findings of this study will look at the advocacy issue for social justice and women's rights in the contested and conflicting terrain of Assam.

Keywords: United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA); Conflict; Violence; Resistance movement; Assam

Chapter 8- The Armed Forces Special Powers Act, 1958: A Gendered Wait for Justice

By Sharon Singh

Abstract: The Armed Forces Special Powers Act of 1958 is a security statute which confers certain special powers upon members of the armed forces in the ‘disturbed areas’ where the local state administration is rendered incapable of maintaining the internal disturbance. While the AFSPA, at varying points of time has been enforced in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Chandigarh, and the North-Eastern states, the women’s movement against the law has figured prominently in the North-East, prompting the present research to locate and expound the role played by women in their struggle demanding repeal of AFSPA.

For the present research, the argument for repeal of the AFSPA may be constructed based on two key incidents that occurred in the state of Manipur. Following the Malom massacre in 2001, Irom Sharmila launched an independent hunger strike demanding repeal of the AFSPA on the ground that the law was inhumane as it granted the power to kill any individual whom the security personnel found suspicious. Despite spearheading a 16-year-long hunger strike, her wait for justice has largely been discredited by the State. On the other hand, the ‘custodial killing’ of Thangjam Manorama in 2004 led to widespread condemnation of the Act. The anger and dissatisfaction of the civilian population against the security forces were palpable when the iconic nude protest by the members of Meira Paibis took place in front of the Kangla Fort. Following the death of Manorama, the Justice Jeevan Reddy Committee which was set up by the Central Government had noted in its report that the popular local sentiment favoured repeal of the Act. While political negotiations have continued to take place between government representatives and civil society groups, violence and social disharmony continue to mark the lived experiences of the local population.

In the immediate context, ‘waiting’ has been contextualised with reference to a law that is a colonial vestige. In order to challenge the Act, different forms of ‘active waiting’ including peaceful protests and hunger strikes have been pursued by women but the long continuum of wait has been marked by feelings of vulnerability, alienation, and powerlessness. Further, the constant socio-political tension underscored by hoping for a meaningful conclusion to political negotiations has brought discomfort and doubt into the state-citizen relationship, thereby, deepening the distrust.

The paper aims to look at pathways to justice that have been explored in challenging the AFSPA. In this context, the paper will aim to answer the following questions: 1. What is the contribution of women in pursuing a constructive dialogue on repeal of the law and redressing community grievances of injustice? 2. How have courts responded to the long wait for justice and challenges to the AFSPA? 3. What should be the future trajectory of the law to end the wait for justice?

Keywords: Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA); Manipur; Irom Sharmila; Justice

Part II: The Precarious Lives in Waiting: Integrating Political and Personal

Section IV- The Caged Bodies in Waiting

Chapter 9- Waiting to be Free: National Security Regime and Prolonged Incarceration in India

By Madhur Bharatiya, Fawaz Shaheen

Abstract: Anti-terror laws and laws relating to offences against the state are animated by the discourse of national security. These laws construct certain communities (whether religious or ideological) as suspect categories, and operate in a way that ‘otherises’ them and weakens constitutional and procedural protections in the cases prosecuted against them. The phenomenon of waiting in such cases is propelled by ‘exceptions’ to the criminal procedure. However, it is not just the legalised bypass of procedural protections that creates the conditions of wait and prolonged incarceration, but the entire discourse of national security and its attendant jurisprudence of suspicion that enables these phenomena. This jurisprudence of suspicion and the larger national security discourse built around notions of exemplary punishment, anger, and retribution is in itself a gendered fact of law. We will explore how, in the operation of these national security laws, waiting to be free is wielded as a technology of power in the hands of the state and policing agencies through selected prison literature. We also propose to look at the authors of prison memoirs as political agents engaging in myriad acts of resistance not only during, but also because they were suffering prolonged incarceration.

Keywords: Political Incarceration; Anti-terror laws; Memoirs; National Security

Chapter 10- Waiting to Get Out of Jail: Gendered Social Stigma and Politics of Waiting among Women Prisoners in Maharashtra

by Sayali Sudhakar Suradkar and Ashok Kumar Mocherla

Abstract: This paper attempts to engage with the idea of ‘waiting’ in the social context of imprisoned women in India. It deals with multiple dimensions of ‘waiting’ by problematising the idea from the lens of prison spaces and beyond. In terms of technicality, the idea of waiting has numerous reasons driven by parole, legal bail, medical treatment/urgency, on the grounds of good behaviour, or serving their prison sentence. Theoretically speaking, connotations of waiting go way beyond the prison space that comes with the desire to meet their spouse, kids, and kinship members and, most importantly, to get rid of the post-prison social stigma. The intensity of waiting greatly varies across social categories of women prisoners in terms of age, social background, and marital status. The degree of intensity of

waiting is, perhaps, largely determined by the social conditions of a prisoner's family/kinship networks. For instance, a married woman prisoner longs to reunite with their spouse for significant life events such as death/birth anniversaries or children's marriage. For them, it's a task sustaining their marital relationships amidst separation and legal complexities, compounded by emotional strain and uncertainties about their future. At the same time, these prisoners face social stigma, discrimination, isolation, and lack of family support, leading to extreme struggles to rebuild a life independently. Waiting has a different meaning for orphans who are imprisoned, those neglected by society and family, and those who do not have anyone to go back to after a jail term. This paper further aims to analyse one of the most profound forms of waiting, i.e., breaking free from the shackles of societal stereotypes and judgement that follow them and their children for a long. Employing qualitative methods, including ethnographic observations and narratives from the field, this research delves into broader social processes connected to the idea of 'politics of waiting' in the light of narratives drawn from imprisoned women in contemporary Maharashtra.

Keywords: Imprisonment, Parole, Jail, Women Prisoners, Social Stigma, Ethnography, Maharashtra.

Section V- Waiting Amidst Humanitarian Crises: Juxtaposing the Global and Local

Chapter 11- Gendered Waiting and India's Foreign Policy: The Biopolitics of Humanitarian Response in Gaza

By Shreejita Biswas

Abstract: The chapter addresses the 'politics of waiting' with regard to international norms of humanitarian protection in spaces of international conflicts by analysing it through the lens of India's foreign policy. In this context, at the global-local spectrum, it aims to fulfil two-fold purposes: Firstly, it investigates the debates pertaining to biopolitics of vulnerability associated with human rights violations and its response to international crises. In this regard, it analyzes the gaps in realizing the 'gendered' perspectives of international norms such as the Women Peace and Security (WPS) agenda in addressing sexual violence in conflicts. Secondly, building on this, the study analyses the variations in the WPS agenda in the specific political setting of India. It explores India's inconsistencies associated with the gender-inclusive approaches in reconciliation processes in international crises such as in the recent Israel-Gaza War (2023). Therefore, the objective is to understand the dynamics of the 'waiting' in terms of India's response to the crises in general, and locate the position of women in particular viz-a-viz the WPS agenda. Through this process, it tries to unveil the myriad ways in which the politics of waiting shapes the stance of women through the interplay of vulnerability- from 'spatio-temporal' to 'agential' role of action in humanitarian crises. Methodologically, the study uses a qualitative path and examines the different UN

documents, resolutions, and government speeches to highlight the apertures pertaining to gendered perspectives on humanitarian protection.

Keywords: Biopolitics, Vulnerability, Israel, Foreign Policy WPS agenda, India, Gaza crisis.

Chapter 12- A Life Locked in Precarity: Experiences of Rohingya Refugee Women in Chennai

By Aneesha Jhony

Abstract: This Chapter examines the politics of waiting from the experiences of Rohingya refugee women living in Chennai City in India, based on which I argue for a gender responsive approach to reformulate and strengthen refugee law and policy in India. For this purpose, the chapter embraced socio-legal analysis by conducting field study through interview and participant observation in Kelambakkam, Chennai and by adopting a critical analysis of case laws involving Rohingya, refugee women and their plight across India. Analyzing Rohingya Refugee shelter from a gendered perspective associates waiting with the interplay of access to justice and access to resources. This chapter demonstrates that Rohingya women face multifaceted vulnerabilities including delay of legal recognition of refugee status, lack of meaningful livelihood opportunity, access to basic necessities and social welfare measures etc during this waiting period in India. In addition to the gendered and migration lens, this research offers a socio-political analysis of the condition of refugees as the primary focal point opening up different possibilities, unique experiences, and crucial insights. My interactions revealed that waiting due to non-recognition was not only doubtful and uncertain but also an endurance test for Rohingya refugee women.

Keywords: Rohingya refugee; Women; Chennai; Myanmar; Violence; Lived experiences; Migration; Refugee Camps

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