

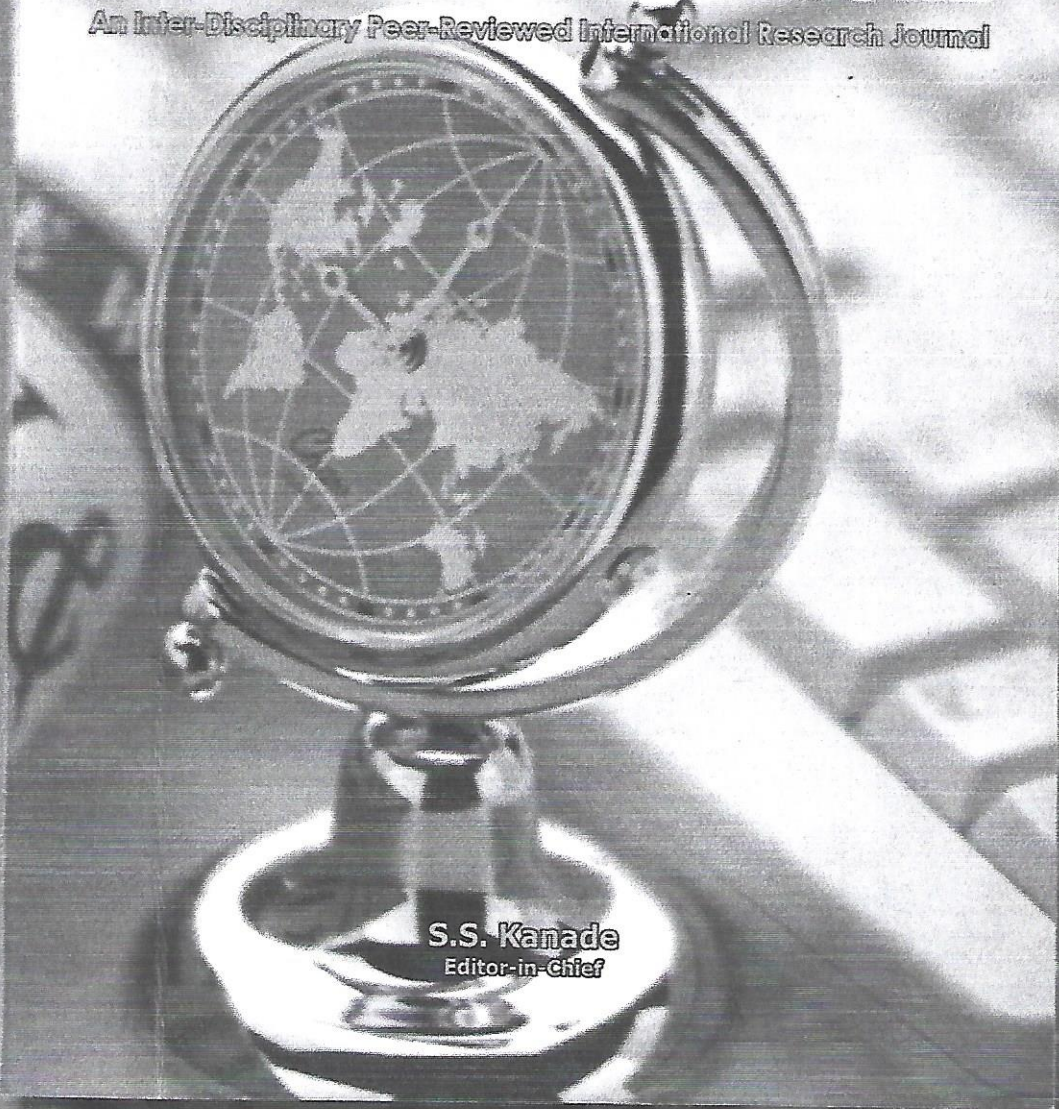
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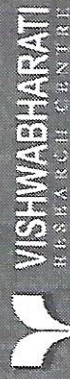
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Literary World of Mahasweta Devi: A Social Perspective

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Human being is walking his life in the visible and the invisible social complexities. There are scores of issues that are responsible for the agony and tyranny of human being. As a result, he or she is swinging like a pendulum between the pleasurable pain and the painful pleasure. The world becomes the global village, but the human being is taking pleasure to give pain to other helpless human beings through his various means. Subsequently, he or she forgets to globalize the social values by making blind eyes towards the human soul and psyche.

The research is undertaken to explore the LITERARY WORLD OF MAHASWETA DEVI. The novels are *Aranyer Adhikar*, *Bitter Soil*, *Agnigarbh*, *Imaginary Maps*, *Chotti Munda and His Arrows*, *Dust on the Road* and *Mothers of 1084*. The present paper focuses on these works.

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Literature is a significant platform of expression for social, political, cultural and religious concerns. However, objective and subjective discourse play a noteworthy role in the interpretation of the subject matter of the particular literary work. Consequently, the aim of this research was to probe into the literary world and to discover the social milieu with new experiences the author opened up. Subsequently, the research also aimed to trace out the attitude of Mahasweta Devi towards the entire issue of the social consciousness. The objective of this endeavour was to unfold the new world of social sensibilities and a new perspective on her treatment of nostalgia, rootlessness, pain, and loss before the readers. These aspects are seen in different degrees and from different perspectives in her literary world.

Many renowned critics have cast light on the literary world of Mahasweta Devi. However, the aim of this research was to look afresh at the works of the author and discover those areas which have remained untouched and thus unexplored with special reference to social milieu. In the course of this research, the researcher has taken a new critical stance, which has not been undertaken so far to the best of the researcher's knowledge.

Social milieu has been a prime issue of discussion of an assortment of authors since ages. Class, race, and gender have been explicitly reflected in literature particularly by writers of ethnic groups living in the India. The literature produced by these writers aims at liberating and emancipating people of their race from various impositions at all domains. Thus they strive to create an 'identity' in such an alienated 21st century world. Sarah Grimke observes:

Man has subjugated woman to his will, used her as a means of selfish gratification, to minister to his sexual pleasure, to be instrumental in promoting his comfort; but never has desired to elevate her to that rank she was created to fill (67).


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The social milieu is a testimony of varied experiences that imbibed by human beings, who have encountered several problems as psychological, social, global, economic and emotional. Their experiences inspire many writers to share their several experiences with world through the writer's words. Consequently, social milieu escorts the problems like psychological, sociological, ideological, religious and so on. Human sense and sensibilities are the highest flying distinctiveness of Indian literature.

The present research aims to focus on social milieu in the literary world of Mahasweta Devi. Subsequently, other objectives are: To find social perspective in her literary works; To place her works in an international perspective; to cast light on the cultural perspectives and to bring out identity crisis and inventing the seeds of human sensibility in her literary world.

The present research paper is an attempt to explore the social milieu from various aspects. Therefore, the research is not merely an examination of textual elements, but it has the ground of reality. It is the contribution to the study of Indian tribal life with the human approach. The work has tried to manifest the authentic circumstances of rural villagers. It presents the need for global human vision and universal brotherhood for peace and healthy life to touch the new horizons of human life. Hence, the work shall be a significant resource for the researchers to comprehend social sensibilities and human emotions.

The space between margin and center intensifies the gap between the inhabitants of two poles. It seems, the margin is a part of the whole but stays outside the core. The margin, because of its position, is enforced to comprehend mainstream society as well as its suburbs, and intermitantly surge between the two. To understand marginalized folks as well as the practice and upshot of marginalization is centrally crucial when it comes to analyzing social issues because of the fact that people at the margins have a widespread sense of the

larger group in which they exist. Mahasweta Devi is a prominent name in the history of modern Indian literature because of her avid vow and anticipation, to her exposure of discrimination and exploitation of the segregated folks. She is a nifty architect to build an ingenious dialect to the callous realities of socio-economical and political exploitation in the present society. Her characters who are living on the edges dare to confront center ignoring consequences. Her women characters dare to break duel bondages, one patriarchy and second, subaltern shackle and to write this alien history, they are found to walk on the fire (Rai 334).

The present research attempts to study the social milieu in the works of Mahasweta Devi. The research does not take into consideration any other literary and non-literary aspects represented in the selected works. Hence, the focus of the research is studying the representation of social sense and sensibilities. It examines the dialectics of human predicaments. The present research work is quite useful in understanding the tribal experiences. This is an attempt to perceive human emotions in various dimensions.

The research is based on the original work of the Mahasweta. It also seeks resourceful assistance from critical works on the writer and the issues of human being in Indian society. She is not merely a champion of the underprivileged or a successful creative writer but also a sincere and determined narrator of the world of the exploited. What makes her a distinct writer is her authority to combine realism with melodrama, irony and the documentary with creativity to create a wonderful and strange blend that confronts several accepted replicas.

This research work has brought major significant pronouncements. In Mahasweta Devi's literary world, the human being requires the society for more than aesthetic enrichment. To the writer, the individual and the society are interdependent, both must be cognizant of and contribute to the good of the

other for healthy and wealthy human life. A recurrent theme in each of the six novels studied is that human cannot achieve full growth in isolation. A rich human existence results only when personal satisfaction and continuous self-development are interlocked with significant activities which contribute to the welfare of the society and humanity.

Human being is a goal-seeking creature with innate dignity and worth, who can achieve growth, meaning, and wholeness in personal and social life. He is an ethical being, who must adopt a system of constructive human values derived from both his nature and earthly experiences and relationships. He seeks beauty and rejoices when aesthetic experience becomes a pervasive reality in existence. For Mahasweta Devi, no single virtue ensures spiritual growth and wholeness; rather, human's spiritual triumph depends on total life orientation in accordance with social values proven constructive through varied experiences. Devi remarks:

"I wish for no more sati's, no more dowry deaths, no more honor killings, no more flesh being bought or sold....." All her strong women characters like Jashoda, Dopdi, Dulali, Andi and many more, all have left a very strong impression. She says: "let the downtrodden awake, let the forgotten faces and muffled voices arise to claim their own.....let my India awaken again and again. It is a big dream, I know, but not an impossible one...."

Mahasweta Devi fruitfully projects her vision on writing history. She takes up a variety of issues like moral corruption and hypocrisy of the middle class, police excesses, exploitation of the poor helpless people by the land lords. She takes up the assignment of documentation of tribal history, their revolts, their culture and their conflicts with their oppressors. The indestructible stability in the tribal history is revealed to us. She evidently shows us how the sense of justice and equality has turned out to be futile exercises in the post-independence context.

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