MAPPING MOTHERHOOD: A FEMINIST-MARXIST STUDY OF MAHASWETA DEVI’S BREASTGIVER/STANDAYINI

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ABSTRACT

This paper intends to approach the text “Breast-giver” from a Marxist-feminist perspective, how a poor woman from an upper caste Brahmin family is forced to survive at the cost of her own body. It will focus on women’s labour, domesticity, and motherhood, which is still being side, tracked in the colonial and post-colonial historiography. It will bring into light the question of social reproduction and reproductive labour and the underlying issues of cruelty, labour, gender, power, money and emotion that underscore the employer-domestic relationship. Before analyzing the aforesaid issues, this paper would endeavor to trace a brief history of wet-nursing and child-care in Bengal during nineteenth-twentieth century.

KEYWORDS: Mahasweta Devi, Stanadayini, Breast-Giver, woman.

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