

The Captive Body in Minakshi Sen's *Jeler Bhitor Jel*

SHAYANTANI DAS

Abstract: The connection commonly made between a subject and the ability to claim movement, understand oneself in relation to the world, and maintain a sense of self accessed through bodily autonomy become problematic when the body in discussion is that of the prisoner. The article aims to look at the conditions and limits of the autobiographical self in Minakshi Sen's work *Jeler Bhitor Jel* (1994). By taking a work of prison writing as the object of analysis, the paper hopes to comment upon the political and artistic strategies used by Sen to narrativize the lives of fellow female inmates, construct the autobiographical self and explore the captive bodies of women.

Keywords: Life-writing, prison writing, women's narratives, criminology, subjectivity

I. Introduction

In recent academic scholarship, the body has emerged as an active site for many discussions in the fields of cultural and gender studies. As Elizabeth Grosz argues, the body isn't an inert, passive, non-cultural, or ahistorical term; it is, instead, the site of contestation, in "a series of economic, political, sexual, and intellectual struggles" (1994: 19). Bodies have been metaphors for nationhood, commodities in the market, and sites of ideological contention, and have been essential for feminist theorists in particular, as connected to and reformulating traditional conceptions of gender, sexuality, subjectivity, and power. The body is also an important cornerstone for discussions surrounding life writing by women. As Smith and Watson suggest, "subjectivity is impossible unless the subject recognizes her location in the materiality of an ever-present body" (2013: 38). In the context of incarceration and writing that emerges from within the material conditions of incarceration, forces both disciplinary and extrajudicial regulate, mark, and attempt to shape the bodies of those incarcerated. These practices, combined with the physical environment of the prison where movement is contained and constrained create bodies held captive. Images of bodily confinement and the body as spectacle abound in prison narratives of women. In this research paper, I aim to make this my primary object of analysis with reference to Minakshi Sen's *Jeler Bhitor Jel* (1994).

In 1970, Minakshi Sen was arrested on false charges by the police in relation to the Naxal uprising. She was tortured and detained for a long time without trial. After her release in 1977, she completed her post-graduation in psychology, began writing seriously in the late seventies and a large part of her prison memories was serialized in *Spandan*, a literary magazine edited by her husband. Later in 1994, she published a compiled version of her prison memoir *Jeler Bhitor Jel* (*Jail Within a Jail*) in Bengali. *Jeler Bhitor Jel* is episodic in nature, and like Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn's *The Gulag Archipelago*, the narrative is told from the first-person point of view, but each chapter constitutes the narrative rendering of another inmate's life history. Most of the fellow inmates are victims of multiple marginalizations—along the lines of class, religion, occupations like sex work, mental illness, political affiliation, and illiteracy, among other things. This work hasn't been translated into English yet and I will be using my working translation for this paper.

The paper is divided into three parts and it will primarily look at the body of the prisoner, which is held captive, and its connection with life writing by women. The first titled "The Female Body

and Incarceration” will look at how traditional criminology rooted crime committed by women in their “uniquely perverse female body” (Davies 1999: 57) and how Minakshi Sen’s work demonstrates the effect of this on the lives of other female prisoners, whose bodies and selves were then separated from the larger body politic. In the second section titled “Captive Bodies and Space”, one looks at hierarchical configurations of spaces within the prison along the lines of bodily autonomy, mobility, and the ability to form any kind of community. Here, I specifically discuss the use of a space like the “degree-*ghar* (house)” to confer *sasti* (punishment) and officially dictated *chikitsa* (cure). The final section, “Autobiographical (Dis)Placement”, turns back to the question of self-writing and looks at possible reasons why the autobiographical self recedes from the narrative.

II. The Female Body and Incarceration

Bodily autonomy and mobility are important topics for prison writing. Sen’s work is replete with descriptions of their living spaces, inspections, diet, physical abuse, and medical treatment—all accounts of details of these living bodies held in captivity. *Jeler Bhitor Jel* describes how the very initiation into prison life occurs when the female prisoner is being received or “processed” through the institution. It is a time in which their physical bodies become the object of intense scrutiny, and careful procedures are administered to ensure that the individual is contained through the dispossession of any personal artifacts. Everything is accounted for, they are issued clothing and then examined extensively through inspections that occur at the level of the body. These include procedures like strip search and cavity search. On a larger level, this focus on the body is indicative of what I think Sen highlights throughout—a conception of the female prisoner as outside of the larger society, and the body politic. I would argue that their deviance is embodied. In the first chapter of the book, Asgari Begum, the inmate who is the central focus of this chapter is an N.C.L—a non-criminal lunatic. The chapter begins with the description of her body using the graphic vocabulary of a spectacle:

Two bamboo sticks were kept crosswise. And in the middle, hanging horizontally is the skeleton of a dead human. With a strong rope, the body is tightly swaddled to the bamboo sticks. And that skeletal body is being carried by two other skeleton-like bodies... The dead body is a woman. For quite some time before her death, her bones-flesh-skin had already merged into one. A bone-cage covered by a thin layer of skin. That is, a skeleton... This woman was known as Asgari Begum in a jailhouse in an Indian metropolis in the twentieth century... Asgari. Asgari Begum. A lunatic inmate. A lunatic, hence an inmate. Non-criminal lunatic. Locked up, because she was insane. (Sen 1994: 14)

As her dead body is denuded of flesh and mass, the narrative too chooses to first strip her of any identity and describe her graphically as a nameless dead body. Then the narrator-subject tells us about her name—Asgari Begum. But even this name is immediately situated within the context of the twentieth-century jailhouse in an Indian metropolis. Because the narrator-subject did not encounter Asgari outside the confines of prison, she does not attempt to fictionalize her pre-prison life. Instead, her identity emerges as something that was both constructed and systematically attacked by the institution of the prison. Asgari Begum, the prisoner, is constructed as an outsider to the larger society and the body politic, in life and death. This is an active choice the narrator-subject makes as later she chooses to fictionally imagine a conversation between the two men carrying her—an event to which she as a prisoner could not have access.

To contextualize this event, one needs to briefly discuss traditional criminology and its attitude towards women. In the essay “The Sex of Crime and Punishment” (1999), Suzanne Davies and Sandy Cook look at the work *The Female Offender* by Prof. Cæsar Lombroso and William Ferrero published in 1898 in this regard. Although their work is often considered dated now, I find it relevant to recall some of its premises rooted in biological essentialism as an explanation of women’s criminality. The work attributes every form of crime committed by women as a depiction of a “uniquely perverse female body and temperament” (Davies 1999: 57). It argues that “female criminals were biologically distinct from noncriminal women and occupy, like male criminals, a lower

place on the evolutionary scale.” These women are described as more masculine than feminine, “devoid of maternal and religious feelings, more dangerous than men, and excessively erotic.” The born female criminal was thus condemned as the “ultimate embodiment of wickedness” (Davies 1999: 57). Furthermore, traditional criminology rendered women as captives of their bodies, with their condemnation “inextricably linked to their transgression of sexed and gendered norms that frame everyday life” (Davies 1999: 53,62).

Women’s bodies and sexual desires are often subjected to control and surveillance by various discourses in everyday life. The female offender’s body must further be displaced from society and named dangerous. Sen’s work makes a case for how female offenders were both stripped of their femininity and humanity while simultaneously being trapped by their bodily specificity. For example, another chapter of her work focuses on Khiroda, who resided in a cell adjacent to Asgari. While Asgari was a non-criminal lunatic, Khiroda was designated as C.L.— criminal lunatic. She was never tried in court because of her status as a lunatic and resided in the “*pagala garade*” (insane asylum or madhouse). The narrator-subject takes a satirical tone to describe her living conditions:

By court order, Khiroda was in jail for her treatment. One would think that leaving an insane person with their hands and feet in iron handcups, shackled to the iron cell walls covered in their own shit and urine had been discovered as an appropriate method of ‘shock therapy’ to cure them. This was the most prevalent method for treating lunatic inmates. Some warders would take great pride in saying: ‘Girls you won’t understand, many are cured of their madness because we keep them this way. If we had been too lovey-dovey, they would have never been cured’. They of course never even mention the little special governmental provisions ascribed to them by the doctors— Why is it that most of the provisions and medicines accorded to the insane by the doctor’s prescription, were smuggled out of jail? (Sen 1994: 60)

Sen describes elsewhere that Khiroda would stay completely naked in her damp cell, through scorching summers and chilly winters. I think the emphasis on her bodily subjection is quite important because it further highlights how female prisoners are stripped of their femininity along with their humanity, and the very physicality of the body becomes a powerful resource for those who desire to violate, humiliate and shame.

While in the general discourse much is made of women’s bodies and modesty and chastity and how bodies must be regulated and hidden, in the prison these rules are suspended not necessarily by law but by the metanarrative of the prison itself. So the law might not state that these two categories of prisoners— non-criminal lunatics and criminal lunatics should not have access to clothes, healthcare, and the basic human dignity of proper hygiene, but keeping them in the prison automatically displaces them from the rest of womanhood and body politic. And this stripping of dignity, clothes, and even human flesh through starvation and degradation is seen as normal and acceptable according to the warders. Moreover, what little provision is available is constantly prey to corruption. Since their deviance is perceived as embodied in their flesh, their bodies are seen as outside of what might be considered “natural” bodies. This includes conceptions of femininity, motherhood, and even religiosity.

Another prisoner, Soofia Mastaan is introduced to the reader as the third category of women who occupy the prison, specifically the *pagalbari*. She is neither a criminal lunatic like Khiroda, nor a non-criminal lunatic like Asgari, but ends up in the madhouse as retribution at the hands of the matron. As a Muslim inmate, she is entitled to a certain diet during Ramzan which she is repeatedly denied. Her demands are met with *kataksha* (disparaging remarks) regarding the keeping of *rozah* by thieves and robbers (Sen 1994: 350). Even though she is neither a thief nor a robber, but is in jail without trial for a passport violation, what the matron’s comment reflects is that *The Female Offender* might be a dated document in the academic field, but the assumptions regarding the body of the female captive being devoid of religious feelings is still pervasive.

The conception of the female criminal as devoid of “natural” maternal impulses is also reflected in another chapter that focuses on the inmate Meera. As a non-criminal lunatic, Meera had wandered

out of her house in a manic state and had been arrested and kept in jail for two days. After court proceedings, she was sent to the insane ward where it was discovered that she had become pregnant. According to her father, Meera had been raped in police custody but this claim could not be verified by Meera because of her mental state. What follows is a shocking description of how the law made no provisions for the basic sustenance of her child:

According to the law, Meera's infant son wasn't entitled to any food or milk... Meera was a non-criminal lunatic inmate. Her name was on a court warrant. But no warrant was issued in the name of her infant son. That son was born in the prison. The court may have issued the order that kept her mother in jail without her having committed any crime, but it could not do anything for her son. After all, he wasn't mad, hadn't married for love, hadn't been raped, hadn't been involved in politics or protest, or been arrested because of any other offense. Unless such things had happened, how can a non-criminal individual be kept in jail? Hence her son was a 'non-captive child'. (Sen 1994: 76)

This paragraph is reflective of the narrator-subject's biting satire that she especially uses in the context of the language of the law. The law can allow for a category like the non-criminal lunatic to exist and has full authority to sentence such a person to jail, but it has no such power to make basic provisions for the sustenance of children born within the system. Sen mocks this by creating her term—the “non-captive child”. This paragraph also highlights my earlier point about the female prisoner being trapped by their bodily specificity. The various kinds of crimes that land women in jail—including getting raped or marrying for love—are rooted in their bodies, desires, and autonomy. Furthermore, the graphic description of Meera's milk drying up because of the lack of nutrition and her rape at the hands of police in the first place reflects the nexus of class, gender, and mental illness that repeatedly leaves her and her body completely vulnerable in the hands of the law, while simultaneously stripping her of the socially accepted discourse surrounding women and the fulfillment of their maternal role. Sen's work creates an image of the embodied alienation of the female prisoners from the larger society, the “body” politic, and societal norms of femininity and motherhood.

III. Captive Bodies and Space

Further discussions around incarcerated bodies and captivity necessitate an analysis of space as it is configured in the prison according to Sen's work. In the chapter which focuses on Khiroda, the narrator-subject refers to her as a *nikam^a pratibeshi* (a close neighbor) who lived on the first floor while they were situated on the second floor. The narrator-subject says that in the outside world (*bairer jagate*) this difference of one floor might have meant a distance of a few stairs. But in the jail, this distance was much more (30). Space is configured differently in prison, and in this specific situation, the space between the first and second floor signified a difference of a greater degree because Khiroda was a criminal lunatic while the narrator-subject and her friends were political prisoners linked to the Naxal movement. Both kinds of prisoners were subjected to different degrees of oppression and isolation, but more importantly, both were now cut off from rules that governed the “*bairer jagate*” and the body politic. The isolation of the narrator-subject and her fellow prisoners was maintained assiduously with threats of corporal punishments for those who violated these boundaries.

In the context of prison writing, it is important to look at a theorist like Elaine Scarry who has spoken about bodies whose boundaries are more fixed than those who theorize about bodies and their capacity to spill over, break boundaries, to escape the limitations that greet it. In her work, *The Body in Pain: The Making and Unmaking of the World* (1985), Scarry talks about physical torture and its effect on the body and mind. She mentions that the tortured person is continually implicated not just by the torturer, but by the power structure of their holding area. One can apply this in the context of the prisoner where the prisoner's physical world is also limited to the room, the cell, and its contents, and this world is slowly dissolved through a process in which “the torturer's expanding world-ground depends on a demonstration of the prisoner's absence of world” (1985: 37-41). This aspect is extremely important to Sen's work as the narrative repeatedly focuses on descriptions of the

“degree-*ghar*”—the living space prisoners are often confined to as *sasti* (punishment) but also under the garb of officially dictated *chikitsa* (cure).

In the first chapter, she describes it as “a few sight-less, light-less shack houses established by the British Raj” for special types of inmates (Sen 1994: 15). In another chapter, she compares it to the dark and damp abode of the primeval man (Sen 1994: 69). The degree is the most vividly realized space in Sen’s work. She writes:

These shacks called the degree had no windows. The doors have iron railings... The path for sunlight to enter was completely shut. Darkness accumulated in this room even during the day. The wind paced to and fro before entering here, barely making its way in. The floor becomes wet on its own, it is that damp. The spine shivers with cold. Cut within the room itself is a small drain. Created apparently to carry feces and urine outside. That is to say, to ensure that the inmate doesn’t have to leave this poisonous atmosphere even to attend nature’s call—she can stay here twenty-four seven— even amenity has been arranged for. One can speculate that the British Raj created these cells to punish disobedient prisoners. In the year 1973, these cells were used again for the same purpose. (Sen 1994: 15)

This space and all that it symbolizes, which is the prisoner’s absence of the world was the most frequently used method for torture, punishment, and control. Sometimes this control is exercised by individual agents like cruel warders. Often it is through the colder and more indifferent forces of prison rules, law, and procedural language which is followed without exemptions. The narrative’s focus on two prisoners especially highlights the complex ways in which this degree-*ghar* was utilized within the jail. First, we have Asgari Begum, a non-criminal lunatic who was kept in the degree *ghar* instead of the *pagalbari* because she had contracted tuberculosis, a communicable illness. After inquiries to other warders, the narrator-subject figures out that keeping her in isolation is the only “special consideration” Asgari is afforded because of her illness (Sen 1994: 16). She is denied visits by the doctor, she isn’t provided any kind of special food and as the description of the degree has already stated, her living quarters are unhygienic to the greatest degree. Thus the space of the degree is the officially dictated “*chikitsa*” Asgari is subjected to, not by the individual cruelty of warden masters, but the institutional law of the prison which states that prisoners suffering from communicable diseases must be kept in isolation.

Then comes the aspect of punishment (*sasti*). The narrator-subject describes how Asgari “would crouch all night from cold, but in the morning she would beg the warders to let her sit in the sun. Sitting in the sun gave her such happiness, she believed she would survive only if she could get to sit in the sun.” (Sen 1994: 16). This solitary pleasure of her life is snatched away from Asgari when she makes the mistake of talking to the narrator and her friend who are political prisoners. After this incident, the narrative describes how Asgari was never seen outside. When she appears again on the wash day for one final time, the description echoes the first lines of this book, it is incredibly gruesome and uses dehumanizing language to refer to her body:

Suddenly the entire ward let out a startled scream. As if they were being chased by some kind of a *bibhishika* (a creature of horror)... Searching for the source of the sound reveals the sight of a few girls chasing a skeletal figure. A living skeleton. The skin covers some bones. Long, thin arms stretched towards the sky. Fingers spread. Hair forming three dreadlocks climbing down her shoulders... The skeleton ran unsteadily, but fast. She was completely naked except for a bit of the familiar green cloth tied around her waist. Asgari. Asgari Begum. (Sen 1994: 21)

Elaine Scarry has talked about how the person being tortured is unable to “transcend varied attempts at controlling his or her body particularly since one person’s physical pain has come to be understood as another person’s power” (1985: 37–41). I would like to argue that in Asgari Begum’s case, the narrative demonstrates how the exercise of power results from the prisoner’s pain, but specifically from her bodily containment—one she is unable to transcend.

This is further demonstrated by another prisoner—Nilima. Nilima ends up in prison because she was working as a prostitute and later due to insanity. One day she tried to commit suicide in the jail

but got noticed by other prisoners. As punishment for this act, Nilima is stripped of her clothes, denied food and water, and sent to the degree-ghar during January. This chapter is full of questions from the narrator-subject: "How is it possible for someone to strip a girl of all clothing and leave her naked in the cold?". The answer is: "It is possible. In this jail everything is possible. The name for this is *sasti*... cold, *lajja* (shame), dishonor — all these feelings weigh heavily on this girl's heart. But throwing her in a degree-ghar at the height of winter after stripping her of her clothes, this is the civil procedure for punishment in this civilized country's jailhouse" (Sen 1994: 164). The narrator further comments that under the rules of this civil country's jailhouse, Nilima has the right to die of pneumonia from the cold but not through suicide. Pneumonia would imply a natural death, suicide would mean the breaking of rules. Within the jail, Nilima's body is the property of the state and she cannot break such rules. By the end of this chapter, the narrator only leaves one question unanswered: "Was there really no other way of preventing another attempt at suicide, some way that did not strip her of clothes, blankets, and food?" (Sen 1994: 164)

This work titled *Jeler Bhiton Jel* which translates as jail within a jail aptly demonstrates the hierarchical configurations of spaces along the lines of bodily autonomy and mobility; at various points in the work, the narrator-subject describes different spaces as the jail within the jail including the female ward, the *pagalbari*, the degree-ghar. The narrator-subject describes how everyone is assigned a diet by doctors within the prison—the usual fare for prisoners in the general ward, a special diet for prisoners in the *pagalbari*, a *rozah* diet for those keeping the fast, and dietary amendments for those suffering from chronic illnesses like pneumonia, tuberculosis, etc. These special food items like milk, fish, butter, boiled vegetables, or fruits however never reach those it is intended for. Instead, they are redirected to the hospital where it is redistributed amongst warders and sold to the outside world for profit.

The only exceptions to this rule are the cell-*bari* and division-*bari* because of the composition of their inmates. The narrator says "the reason is that in these two spaces reside the educated, aware inmates who possess the capacity of presenting a united front. A calculated decision is made by the warders—to avoid the agitation that might result from denying them the food they are entitled to" (Sen 1994: 356). The intersection of identity markers like literacy, political awareness, and the ability to form a collective allows certain bodies to have inalienable rights. Consecutively the spaces they occupy like the cell-*bari* and division-*bari* get placed higher up in the hierarchy.

Sen's narrative demonstrates how an incarcerated woman is not only placed in an enclosed physical environment where there is less and less freedom to move due to gates, wire, or other deterrents, she is also marked within that environment as someone whose movement is subject to surveillance, and this mobility is a commodity that can then be regulated. Not only does the narrator describe the constant threat of a search; all the referrals, punishment, and corrective cures that can be implemented trade in "the prisoner's absence of world" (1985:37). The narrator-subject's position as a political prisoner associated with the Naxal movement is also included in this dynamic. She is being held captive not only within the female ward but also within her cell which is locked on the outside. The capacity to roam outside is designated as *mukti* (salvation), something she is denied. Fellow prisoners who talk to them are subjected to the harshest kinds of punishment at the hands of other inmates who are in the warder's favor.

III. Autobiographical (Dis)Placement

Finally, I would like to return to the question of self-writing, subjectivity, and bodily specificity and address the issues raised by prison writing in general and Sen's work in particular. The connection commonly made between a subject and the ability to claim movement, understand oneself in relation to the world, and maintain a sense of self accessed through bodily autonomy become problematic when the body in discussion is that of the prisoner. This, I would argue, is one of the reasons for the autobiographical displacement in the text. The autobiographical self in this work recedes to

a great extent, it is a fractured voice that never fully emerges as more than a witness, a commentator, and a chronicler of life inside prison. Her subjectivity is mentioned in very few instances, even though the narrator's rhetorical questions, her voice as the critic, her satire, and her condemnations frame the narrative. It also frames the lives of prisoners as each chapter episodically focuses on the life of a particular inmate.

Often there are huge time jumps in this narrativization, for example, the life of Nilima which is described from her pre-prison experiences to her eventual demise. And one of the ways in which the autobiographical self becomes hard to trace as more than a commentator is the lack of placement in time for the subject-narrator herself. She fictionalizes conversations and narrativizes the lives of fellow inmates, but we as readers do not get a concrete sense of how time passes for her. This one would argue also contributes to the fragmentation of the autobiographical self.

The other reason behind this aesthetic and political choice towards fragmentation is the narrator-subject's position as a political prisoner. In various chapters, other prisoners are subjected to horrific punishment for interacting with her. To cite just one example, the chapter that focuses on Shahnaaz talks about how the simple act of asking after the narrator's well-being has horrific repercussions for this young girl. This happens in the second chapter. I have discussed earlier how the first chapter with Asgari also describes the consequences meted out to her for talking to the narrator-subject. In various instances we see the narrator-subject being forced into the position of a witness and spectator while another prisoner's physical abuse is staged for her.

In the aftermath of this event, the subject-narrator talks about her own subjectivity for the first time: "I realized that the harsh realities of this jail are being engraved on the landscape of my nineteen-year-old heart... They leave a mark that never fades away" (Sen 1994: 43). Instances like this where the narrator-subject describes the impact of prison life on her selfhood are few and far between in the work. She instead acts as a witness to the brutalities within the prison, a commentator who uses biting satire to describe prison laws and language, an author who fictionalizes many events and conversations that she as a prisoner could not have access to, and finally, a journalist/investigator who questions matrons, warders, and inmates to uncover details like corruption and mismanagement.

The narrator-subject seems to have an awareness of her privilege as a member of the literate community. This could be another reason why she recedes from the narrative, using her literacy to document the subaltern voices of other prisoners instead. She uses her literacy instead to frame the work for the readers. Chapter titles are often followed by epigraphs from other fictional works. For instance "... and it's a mad, mad, mad, world" (Sen 1994: 37) is the epigraph in Chapter Two, quoted in English in the Bengali original, referring to a 1963 American comedy film produced and directed by Stanley Kramer. The epigraph in chapter five is a quote from Tagore's poem titled "*BrahmaG^a*": "*janmechila bharrhina jabalara krore*". The line roughly translates as: "you were born in the lap of husband-less Jabala". The context of this line is as follows: Jabala was a prostitute who did not have a husband. When her son, Satyakam, asks her about his father's identity, this is the reply she gives. The chapter's focus is on Meera, the lunatic inmate who is raped in police custody and struggles to feed her child in prison. I would argue that by frequently using such epigraphs from fictional works to echo and in some ways frame the lives of the prisoners she is describing, Sen's narrative creates a subject-narrator who has literary sensibilities and actively chooses to employ these skills to narrate the lives of others rather than herself.

IV. Conclusion

In prison, the intrusion onto the sense of selfhood, autonomy, and physical and emotional being is not just another relation in discourse that all people are subjected to. It is direct and geared specifically at disabling the entire notion of willful, independent selves. *Jeler Bhitor Jel* (1994) as a work of prison writing emerges from these spaces which engage in the "institutionalized killing of the subject" (Rodríguez 2006: 85). The article has argued that *Jeler Bhitor Jel* demonstrates the difficulty of

maintaining a sense of self in the face of receding bodily autonomy through narrative strategies that are both aesthetic and political. The effacement of the speaking subject, that is the voice of the political prisoner to represent the 'Other' categories of prisoners is one such choice. One of the ways in which the autobiographical self becomes hard to trace in this work is the lack of placement in time for the subject-narrator. The autobiographical self in *Jeler Bhitor Jel* is the commentator, critic, witness, and author who narrativizes the lives of fellow inmates, revealing the nature of embodied deviance ascribed to female inmates. She also reveals how space is used within the prison ecosystem to create a hierarchy between types of prisoners. Sen's narrative strategies highlight that within the prison, the bodies of incarcerated women are continuously shaped by restrictions concerning their movement; everything from diseases, political affiliations, occupation before coming to prison can have an impact on reducing mobility, bodily autonomy, and their ability to form any kind of community.

Hindu College, University of Delhi, Delhi

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