



Linguistic Insecurity and the Body: A Sociolinguistic Reading of Maternal Statecraft in Indian Life Writing

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Abstract:

Indian mothers carry a form of statecraft that academia often dismisses as merely domestic. However, contemporary narratives prove these women are actually political thinkers who quietly challenge traditional ideas. This study moves away from cold, Western clinical views to show that a mother's story is a legitimate and powerful source of knowledge. Applying Bourdieu's symbolic power and G.N. Devy's critique of linguistic marginalisation, and Jane M. Ussher's material-discursive-intrapsychic framework, the study reveals how mothers navigate linguistic hierarchies, transforming the maternal body into a space of statecraft where "cultural capital" is governed. Women's life writings reveal these domestic spaces as integrated systems of political reasoning, where justice, identity, and resistance take shape. This study reinterprets linguistic insecurity not merely as an issue of language, but as a deeper break in indigenous governance. Here, the maternal practices step in as an internal diplomat, navigating epistemic hierarchies, shaping the child's voice, and challenging dominant disciplinary frameworks. In the end, these narratives stand as serious sources of theory in their own right, not just personal stories. Through a comparative sociolinguistic reading of Rassundari Devi's *Amar Jiban* and Lisa Ray's *Close to the Bone*, the paper demonstrates that maternal responses to somatic and institutional crises serve as context-aware forms of governance, offering a compelling challenge to dominant frameworks in the social sciences.

Keywords: maternal statecraft, linguistic insecurity, epistemic hierarchies, somatic crisis.

Introduction:

The traditional view of the Indian home as a quiet, apolitical space of domesticity is not just an oversight but a colonial and patriarchal residue that fails to recognise the complexity of internal governance. This study proposes the term “maternal statecraft” to describe how mothers employ deliberate political reasoning while navigating overlapping pressures across patriarchal traditions, biomedical authority, and globalised linguistic hierarchies. This theoretical foundation draws on Pierre Bourdieu’s *Language and Symbolic Power*, G. N. Devy’s *After Amnesia*, and Jane M. Ussher’s *The Madness of Women*. In Indian women’s life writing, the maternal body functions not merely as a passive biological container, but as the contested site where sociolinguistic domination and physical regulation intersect. To conceptualise this dynamic, this paper synthesises Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of bodily hexes, wherein social structures and linguistic hierarchies are “inscribed in the body” (86), with Devy’s concept of cultural amnesia, which details how colonial epistemic shifts marginalised vernacular (*bhāṣā*) modes of self-articulation in favour of dominant, alien norms (10-14). Crucially, Jane M. Ussher’s material-discursive-intrapsychic (MDI) framework prevents this synthesis from reducing bodily suffering to pure metaphor; Ussher demonstrates how women’s somatic distress is an authentic, embodied response to patriarchal “regimes of truth” that pathologise female bodily disruption (8). This theoretical triad finds vivid manifestation in nineteenth-century domesticity and contemporary life writing alike. In *Amar Jiban*, Rassundari Devi recalls being “shut up like a thief” (54) while secretly teaching herself the alphabet beneath her veil, showing how patriarchal censorship enforces a disciplined bodily posture and physical exhaustion, evidenced when she is “forced to go without food” for days amidst relentless domestic labour (48), to suppress vernacular literacy. Similarly, in her memoir *Close to the Bone*, Ray details her experience of physical collapse and steroid-induced transformation, describing it as a “radioactive dance party under my skin” (271) and a swelling

“moonface” on the red carpet (236); it reveals how navigating competing cultural expectations and medicalised institutional gazes manifests as acute somatic distress. Rather than viewing postpartum or bodily crisis as an isolated medical pathology, reading Devi’s hidden kitchen hearth and Ray’s medicalised body through Bourdieu, Devy, and Ussher reveals how physical distress constitutes the tangible, embodied price women pay when negotiating oppressive sociolinguistic and institutional hierarchies.

In her reading of Devi's *Amar Jiban*, Tanika Sarkar argues that the nineteenth-century household was never an isolated entity. The nineteenth-century household served as the nursery of the modern world, where the tensions of colonial rule and indigenous identity first emerged. Sarkar writes that “[Women's narratives] search for texts...the path of knowledge, for the ability to express their dialogues with God through writing. The divergence is immensely significant, for women's religion is supposed to be spontaneous, unlearned, instinctive” (59). Because patriarchy tends to portray women's spirituality as unthinking and emotional, women's demand for access to reading and writing became a political act. By deciding for themselves how to work out their relationship with the world through writing, they were engaging in an early form of self-governance. This internal shift marks a vital historical precursor to challenging the broader colonial and patriarchal structures designed to reduce women to childlike subjects. Critiquing the severe patriarchal prohibitions and forced secrecy surrounding female literacy in nineteenth-century Bengal, Devi reflects on her arduous journey to self-education, asking, “Wasn't it a matter to be regretted, that I had to go through all this humiliation just because I was a woman? Shut up like a thief, even trying to learn was considered an offence” (54). Concealing her literacy from her family allowed Devi to cultivate a private realm of self-governance, demonstrating that “the secrecy ensured the autonomy of her mind” while simultaneously revealing “her capacity for opposition” to patriarchal restrictions (Sarkar 222).

Admittedly, pairing Devi's nineteenth-century Bengali autobiography with Ray's contemporary memoir risks collapsing vast historical, linguistic, and geopolitical divides if both are uncritically subsumed under a monolithic category of Indian life writing. As Devy cautions, invoking India as a singular cultural label creates simplistic categories that obscure the specific, heterogeneous dynamics of *bhāṣā* (vernacular) traditions and their complex entanglements with colonial epistemic hierarchies (40). Rather than asserting an essentialist national continuity between Devi's enclosed domesticity in nineteenth-century Bengal and Ray's cosmopolitan, Canadian-born mobility, this paper deploys a comparative framework grounded in what Kamala Visweswaran terms the "hyphenated" subject position and "critical regionalism" (116, 131). While Devi's text captures the emergent moment of colonial modernity, where patriarchal bodily hexis enforced female illiteracy to suppress vernacular agency, Ray's memoir exemplifies the contemporary postcolonial mutation of this dynamic across transnational borders. Ray explicitly records her sociolinguistic insecurity and cultural illegitimacy, navigating a globalised media landscape where she is judged as "not quite brown enough...not quite white enough" (153) and feels compelled to study Hindi at an orientalist institute in London to remediate her "rusty" language skills before portraying a 1930s Hindu widow on screen (156). Reading Ray alongside Devi does not homogenise the diasporic into the indigenous; rather, it demonstrates how maternal statecraft and sociolinguistic marginalisation persist across historical shifts through distinct yet structurally analogous regimes of truth. Whether through Devi's hidden kitchen hearth or Ray's medicalised, post-transplant body navigating competing cultural expectations, both narratives show that the maternal body remains the primary site where the somatic cost of negotiating linguistic capital and institutional regulation is exacted. While Devi's autobiography records a colonial-indigenous domestic rupture where secret literacy resists "the habit of the tamed bird" (Sarkar 250), Ray's memoir illustrates its contemporary neoliberal-diasporic counterpart, using life

writing to navigate the “added 'not enough'” of racial liminality (161) alongside biomedical pathologisation.

The Architecture of Maternal Negotiability

Rather than deploying Pierre Bourdieu, G. N. Devy, and Jane M. Ussher as disparate theoretical reference points, this study synthesises them into an interlocking, three-stage analytical lens that traces how structural inequality translates directly into bodily distress. First, Pierre Bourdieu supplies the socio-market mechanism of symbolic domination, demonstrating how language operates within an institutional field where access to legitimate speech constitutes “symbolic capital” (Thomson 2). Within this field, dominant structures force marginalised subjects to internalise market sanctions through “an anticipated censorship, of a self-censorship” (Bourdieu 77) that disciplines their “bodily hexis” defined by Bourdieu as “political mythology realized, embodied, turned into a permanent disposition, a durable way of standing, speaking, walking, and thereby of feeling and thinking” (13). Second, G. N. Devy historicises this market mechanism within the postcolonial condition, illustrating how imperial domination and elite orthodoxy induced a profound “cultural amnesia” (10). Through this structural dislocation, colonial rule “coercively [introduced] an alien value structure in the existing value structures of its subjects, colonial domination causes serious dislocations and fragmentations in the intellectual discourse of the colonized” (50) while suppressing vernacular (bhāṣā) modes of expression. Third, Jane M. Ussher’s material-discursive-intrapsychic framework delivers the somatic and clinical outcome of this causal chain. Ussher demonstrates that female bodily breakdown is neither a passive biological pathology nor a mere literary metaphor; rather, it constitutes “a reasonable response to the material circumstances of their lives, to gendered roles and their discursive or intrapsychic concomitants” (186). Bio-psychiatric “regimes of truth” (Ussher 2) subsequently pathologise this distress to maintain institutional regulation. Together, this triad establishes that sociolinguistic marginalisation

(Bourdieu) under colonial epistemic disruption (Devy) exacts a tangible corporeal toll that clinical structures attempt to pathologise and silence (Ussher).

This quest for symbolic capital, however, triggers what Devy identifies as “amnesia,” the loss of tradition that occurs when colonial literary standards marginalise local *bhāṣā* (2). The integrative link here is critical: the mother’s attempt to secure her child’s “symbolic power” through a prestige language results in “linguistic insecurity,” the domestic manifestation of this amnesia. When English displaces the maternal tongue, it creates a paralysis of the imagination (Devy 131) and a state of epistemic “silence” (159). The physical toll of this invisible diplomacy is best understood through Jane M. Ussher’s critique of the pathologised body. *In The Madness of Women*, she argues that “misdiagnosis and mistreatment by experts” is common as an example of abuse of power in women’s bodies, which establishes the root causes of “women’s experience of prolonged misery or distress”. She navigates how frequently a socio-political construction is used to pathologise women struggling with impossible societal demands, as the distress in “the context of women’s lives...can be conceptualised as a reasonable response, not a reflection of pathology within” (Ussher 1-2).

When biomedical authority attempts to reduce Ray’s cancer diagnosis to clinical subversiveness by demanding that she “learn how to be a patient” (183), Ussher’s framework reveals how institutional “regimes of truth” (Ussher 1) pathologise bodily crises to enforce submissive compliance, a power structure Ray disrupts by insisting on becoming the “CEO of [her] own health” (Ray 387). Similarly, when clinical management mechanises her reproductive choices by reducing egg extraction to an agricultural transaction aimed at “a good crop”, Ray exposes this medicalised fertility process as part of broader “social pressure around reproduction... to control women’s bodies and sexuality” (307), asserting self-governance by deciding it is “essential to do something, to not just be a patient” (308). When integrated with Bourdieu and Devy, the mother’s postpartum reality ceases to be a biological failure and

emerges as a reaction to fragmented subjectivity. Her distress is the somatic cost of navigating epistemic hierarchies; it is the body speaking through madness because the legitimate language of the market provides no vocabulary for her marginalisation (Bourdieu 83). Thus, the maternal body becomes a space for “resistance to regimes of truth associated with madness” (Ussher 13), against a statecraft that demands perfect cultural reproduction while inducing linguistic and epistemic amnesia.

Historical Precedent

This three-faceted framework functions as an active diagnostic lens when brought into sustained contact with the autobiographical texts of Devi and Ray. In *Amar Jiban*, Devi records the nineteenth-century Bengali prohibition against female literacy—a patriarchal market mechanism designed to deny women symbolic capital, recalling the severe bodily censorship she endured: “Wasn't it a matter to be regretted, that I had to go through all this humiliation just because I was a woman? Shut up like a thief, even trying to learn was considered an offence” (54). Reading Devi through Devy reveals how colonial modernity and orthodox retrenchment enforced an “enforced childhood” (Sarkar 244), while Ussher’s MDI framework illuminates the extra-discursive somatic cost of her resistance: Devi’s physical collapse and days spent being “forced to go without food” amidst unceasing domestic labour (48) were not accidental hardships, but the material, bodily price of maintaining her intellectual autonomy against a punitive social order. Transposed across historical and diasporic borders, Ray’s contemporary memoir illustrates the postcolonial mutation of this same dynamic. Ray explicitly articulates her sociolinguistic insecurity within a globalised media market where she is judged as “not quite brown enough...not quite white enough” (161) and feels compelled to take formal Hindi lessons in London to remediate her vernacular skills (162). In Ussher’s terms, Ray’s navigation of these competing cultural gazes translates directly into somatic crisis: her severe bulimia, where she recalls “lying back on my futon... my belly filled like a tomb” (94),

alongside her steroid-altered “moon face” on the red carpet (292), represent the corporeal site where diasporic linguistic liminality and biomedical regulation intersect.

In nineteenth-century Bengal, it was common for girls to marry and start domestic work so early that their childhood was cut short, before they even truly grew up. Sarkar captures the erasure of childhood under patriarchal and colonial structures of Indian society; she highlights the accelerated domestication imposed on young girls, as evidenced by her poignant description of Devi: “She also learnt how to look after a child, how to cook and how to do household chores far too early. We find in the child of ten a little adult woman, already doing most of the things that she would be doing later in life” (243). This was a gendered social condition that sought to keep a woman as a “householder” with a “childlike” mind. Devi’s narrative, however, reveals that she confronted this existential condition not through public protest, but through secret literacy, as she expresses, “In fact, older women used to show a great deal of displeasure if they saw a piece of paper in the hands of a woman. So that ruled out my chances of getting any education. But somehow I could not accept this. I was very keen to learn the alphabet” (51).

Devi’s decision to learn to read was a strategic move within the “linguistic market” of the day. At a time when religious movements often praised leaders who were illiterate or just went by instinct, Devi totally broke from that mould. Sarkar notes that Devi strategically abstracts her personal narrative from the confines of her domestic village life by invoking a vast subcontinental frame, declaring, “I came to Bharatbarsha and I have spent a long time here. This body of mine, this mind, this life itself, have taken several different forms” (9). According to Sarkar, this move aligns her self-representation with the newly emergent political reality of a united Indian empire post-1857, since Bharatbarsha itself “was the effect of a new political reality” (9) that lent her autobiography grand historical and geographical dimensions. Devi’s secret statecraft allowed her to negotiate a relationship with the sacred and the social on

her own terms. This was a “transformative” understanding of the self that “sought to change the self and the world” (Sarkar 59). A historical precedent such as this shows that the break in indigenous governance is not a new phenomenon; it is a long-standing struggle where Indian women use the tools of literacy to mend the fragments of subjectivity disrupted by early marriage and colonial amnesia. Devi’s kitchen was the first diplomatic space of the maternal state, setting the stage for modern mothers to negotiate the newer, neoliberal anxieties of linguistic insecurity and cultural capital.

In the contemporary context, Ray’s *Close to the Bone* (2019) offers a profound 21st-century evolution of this somatic statecraft. If Devi’s struggle was for the path of knowledge through the written word, Ray’s narrative explores the governance of the body in an era of globalised medical and linguistic markets. Ray’s memoir captures a journey of fragmented subjectivity, shaped profoundly by her confrontation with cancer and her path to motherhood through surrogacy. Her work reveals a modern “epistemic hierarchy” where the female body is constantly monitored by clinical and public gazes. Describing her mother’s pragmatic governance of the domestic sphere, Ray observes that “Mama [her mama] regulated our lives by seasons, a tradition passed down through the blood. Long before urban farmers’ markets, she would drive me to a farm outside Toronto...I considered the title ‘dreamer’ a compliment. What else is there to do but dream?” (12). Applying Ussher’s framework, Ray’s memoir serves as a space of resistance against the pathologisation of the maternal and female experience. She navigates what could be described as a high-stakes “linguistic market” (Bourdieu 18), where her identity as a global citizen, actor, and mother requires a constant recalibration of her physical and social self. In the context of the multicultural household, Ray’s parents navigate a space where “[l]inguistic utterances or expressions are forms of practice and, as such, can be understood as the product of the relation between a linguistic habitus and a linguistic market” (Bourdieu 17). By documenting the “postpartum realities” of a non-traditional maternal

journey, Ray challenges the “cold, Western clinical views” that often strip the maternal experience of its political agency. In the context of the medicalisation of maternal distress, Ray captures the isolating weight of biomedical authority when diagnostic labels reduce her identity to stark, clinical categories, “the pregnant pauses told me I was being inducted into a new club: ‘Fatal.’ Pause. ‘Incurable’” (9), an institutional attempt to colonise the female body that she actively resists through life writing.

Modern Disjunctions

To compare Devi’s nineteenth-century Bengali domestic enclosure with Ray’s contemporary memoir without qualification risks flattening vast historical and geopolitical divides. As Devi cautions, invoking “India” as a singular “cultural label” is “hopelessly inadequate and simplistic,” serving as a product of colonial historiography that carries “a politically coloured self-image and the suggestion of cultural amnesia” (2). Rather than forcing Ray into a monolithic national category, her text is best understood through Kamala Visweswaran’s formulation of the “hyphen” as a “political signifier” (119) and her call for a “critical regionalism” (94) that turns toward the proxemics of home. Ray explicitly records the anxiety of racial and linguistic liminality within a globalised media market, noting that for her, “there was an added ‘not enough’: You’re not quite brown enough. You’re not quite white enough” (161). Describing her displacement, Ray reflects on how she was reduced to being “trapped by an overcooked version of yourself; in my case it was as a receptacle for men’s desires” (94). It is at this precise juncture of sociolinguistic displacement and commodified bodily expectations that Ray’s medical crises must be anchored. In Jane M. Ussher’s critical framework, somatic symptoms operate as “literalizations of women’s social situation,” rendering the female body “a surface on which the conventional constructions of femininity are exposed starkly to view” (147). Ray’s severe bulimia—recalled as “lying back on my futon, so stuffed I could barely breathe, my belly filled like a tomb” (94), and her red-carpet appearance with a steroid-induced

“large, round moon” face and “my wet suit” skin while battling a diagnosis labelled “Fatal” and “Incurable” (9) represent the corporeal site where cultural displacement and biomedical regulation intersect. Just as Devi’s nineteenth-century clandestine literacy resisted being “imprisoned like thieves” (Sarkar 171) under “the habit of the tamed bird” (250), where “the secrecy ensured the autonomy of her mind, marked it out as a space of her very own where, at least, she alone could make things happen” (222) even while being “forced to go without food for whole days” (Devi 48), Ray’s life writing transforms physical breakdown into an act of self-governance. By asserting herself on the red carpet as “a woman who knew her worth was not conditional on the shape of her body, her style, her racial identity, gender or face” (300), Ray reclaims epistemic authority over her body, turning clinical pathologisation into a site of resistance.

This study follows the transition from the nineteenth-century kitchen to the twenty-first-century globalised landscape and reveals a sophisticated evolution of maternal statecraft. Ray’s memoir serves as a profound 21st-century evolution of the somatic statecraft first seen in texts like *Amar Jiban*. While Devi fought for the “path of knowledge” (Sarkar 59) through the written word, Ray explores the governance of the body in an era of globalised medical and linguistic markets (16). Ray’s narrative of being a nomad, inherited from parents who defied their cultural norms in three different countries, highlights a modern epistemic hierarchy, as she writes, “From them, I inherited the irrational optimism it takes to forge your own unique place in the world. It was passed on in my kaleidoscopic genes and settled in my marrow” (Ray 11). She describes her mother as a woman in constant motion whose frugal, preservationist routine was shaped by the shadow of war and communism. This is a form of governance, a kind of “small island of love” built on the practicalities of tidiness and efficiency. Ray contrasts this with her “gentle and introverted father,” the “guardian of culture”. This division of labour represents a strategic domestic alignment where the mother “did, while we dreamed” (12).

Ray's mother's alertness perfectly mirrors Bourdieu's "division of labour," where the maternal figure handles the "symbolic production," the canning, the tidiness, and the preservationist routine to ensure the family's social mobility and liberation (83). Bourdieu's concept of divisions strikingly matches the internal conflict and the somatic statecraft in Ray's memoir, as he writes:

The particular intensity of the insecurity and anxiety felt by women of the petite bourgeoisie with regard to language (and equally with regard to cosmetics or personal appearance) can be understood in the framework of the same logic: destined, by the division of labour between the sexes, to seek social mobility through their capacity for symbolic production and consumption, they are even more inclined to invest in the acquisition of legitimate competences. (Bourdieu 83)

By applying Ussher's framework, this study sees Ray's body as a space of resistance (Ussher 23); her journey through "kaleidoscopic genes" and a medicalised path to motherhood via surrogacy challenges the pathologisation of the maternal experience (Ray 11). The linguistic insecurity in Ray is not just about words; it is about being "neither completely Eastern nor Western," a fragmented subjectivity that she mends by documenting her postpartum realities (16). Her memoir proves that maternal practices remain thoughtful, context-aware forms of governance that bridge the gap between indigenous heritage and a globalised, clinical future. The internal diplomat encounters a crisis once clinical definitions seize control of the body. Ray's experience with cancer (110), and by extension the postpartum realities of modern motherhood, reveals an epistemic hierarchy where medical labels attempt to colonise the maternal experience. Reflecting on her mother's emergency C-section, Ray frames the disorienting clinical encounter as a "vague, confusing haze" where life "skid[ded] spectacularly out of control," yet notes how her mother met this loss of agency with "a silent promise to protect her daughter from the vagaries of fate" (20).

This study emphasises that memoirs like this must be viewed as Archival Bodies. Ray does not just tell a story; she curates a kaleidoscopic identity that mends the break in indigenous governance caused by migration and illness. Her statecraft lies in her refusal to be delicate or merely a dreamer. Instead, she uses life writing to transform her “chicken bones” and “aristocratic frame” into a source of theoretical knowledge (Ray 11). In doing so, she provides a solid counterpoint to dominant social science frameworks, proving that the modern mother governs her “brand” and her “body” with the same rigour that a diplomat governs a nation (Ray 52).

Conclusion

This study synthesises the historical and contemporary narratives of Indian motherhood, framing them through the theoretical triad of Bourdieu’s symbolic power, Devy’s linguistic amnesia, and Ussher’s critical health psychology. This study argues that the domestic sphere is not a passive retreat from the world but a high-stakes frontier of maternal statecraft. By reinterpreting linguistic insecurity and postpartum realities through the memoirs of Devi and Ray, it emphasises that an Indian mother acts as an “internal diplomat,” navigating a break in indigenous governance that is both historical and ongoing. The transition from the nineteenth-century kitchen to the globalised neoliberal stage highlights a persistent struggle for agency. As Bourdieu suggests, the power of words is often “[t]he delegation of authority which confers its authority on authorized discourse. By focusing exclusively on the formal conditions for the effectiveness...one overlooks the fact that...the conditions which produce the recognition of this ritual are not met” (113), where this authority to speak is granted by an institution rather than possessed by the speaker. For the mother, this institution is the family, a soft container that requires her to perform a specific social essence. Ray’s description of the “Himalayan mask of Mahakala” serves as a profound metaphor for this performance: “I employed this different persona often on sets...but on a day-to-day basis, the habits of the mask

seep into you on a darker and more subterranean level” (138). This mask is the somatic cost of maintaining the “legitimate language” and cultural capital demanded by the linguistic market.

The study further reveals that when the mother’s “internal diplomacy” falters under the weight of these demands, the medical establishment often steps in to reclassify her political struggle as a biological failure (Ray 221). In Ray’s narrative, this phenomenon is evidenced by the “pregnant pauses” of a diagnosis that inducted her into a “club” of the “incurable” (Ray 9). By stripping the cultural and political context from women’s distress, the state silences the very statecraft that mothers use to survive. These motherhood narratives stand as serious sources of theory because they document what Ray describes as “activating the harrowing journey back to myself” (137). They prove that maternal practices are not bad science infected by rumour and fantasy, but rather thoughtful, context-aware forms of governance. From Devi’s secret literacy to Ray’s rejection of the “hoodlum” and the “mask” (137), these women demonstrate that the maternal body is a space of resistance.

Ultimately, this study demonstrates that Indian women’s life writing reframes somatic distress not as an isolated clinical pathology, but as an “intelligible response to unliveable conditions” (Ussher 185) wherein structural domination forces subjects to internalise market sanctions through a disciplined bodily posture (Devy 10). In nineteenth-century Bengal, Devi clandestine literacy subverted domestic surveillance, where young wives worked with eyes “covered, like the eyes of the oil presser’s bullock” (Sarkar 160), proving that even within a domestic sphere where “the kitchen became her prison” (Sarkar 226), she maintained “a mind of her own, unknown and uncontrolled by others” (Sarkar 226). Transposed across historical and diasporic borders, Lisa Ray’s memoir illustrates how navigating commodified media markets and biomedical scrutiny translates into physical crisis, which her writing reclaims by resolving to “dismantle this scaffolding of silence and shame” (296) and asserting “skintight confidence regardless of my weight and the shape of my body” (360). Tracing this trajectory

from Devi's secluded kitchen hearth to Ray's medicalised body confirms that maternal statecraft operates as an enduring postcolonial practice of transforming corporeal vulnerability into epistemic authority and embodied self-governance.

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