



Cartographies of Courage: Fictional Threads, Real Lives: Towards
Creating a Spatial Archive of the Female Survivors of Dalit Massacres in
India

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01. Introduction

Doctoral Work -
Written/Thesis + Spatial Archive

02. Methodology

Mixed/Hybrid Methodology - Digital
Cartography and Feminist
Geocriticism

03. The Project

Foreground the space, caste
and gender narratives in
Open-access, reproducible
format

Overview



01.



Introduction

Dalits

Caste/Jati

Atrocities

Massacres

Purity and Pollution

Dalits and Space

Caste Segregation

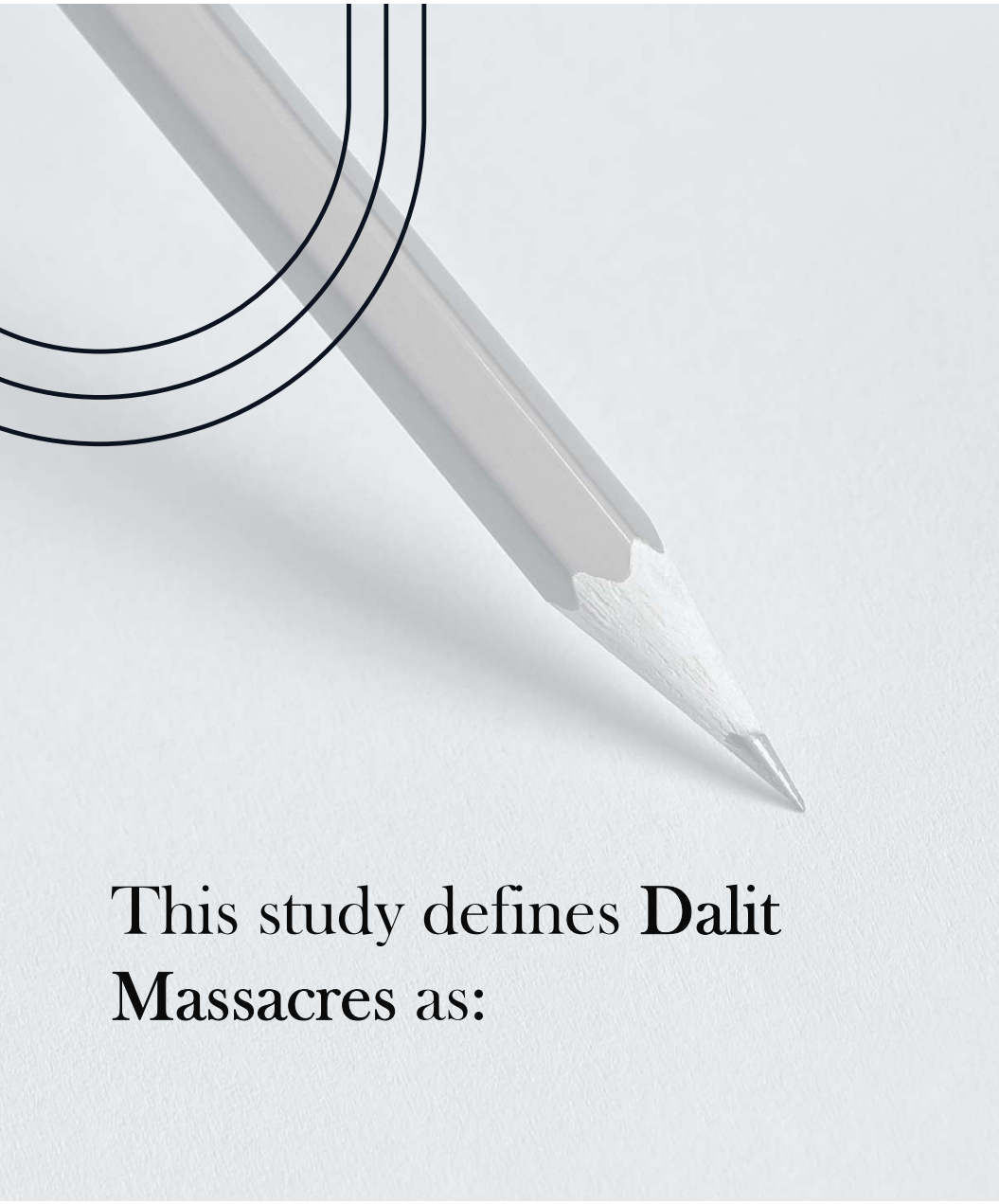
Dalit Women

Triple Burden

Space-Caste-Gender

Teltumbde 2010 notes about the **caste system** in Hinduism as:

a form of social stratification involving a mode of hierarchically arranged, closed endogamous strata, membership to which is ascribed by descent and between which contact is restricted and mobility impossible. The Indian word for caste is jati. When we refer to 'caste', we really speak of jati, although many tend to confuse it with varna, which refers to the basic classes, four in number, established in Hindu scripture (12).



This study defines **Dalit Massacres** as:

“

an organized process of caste-based destruction that leads to the intentional killing of one or more Dalit(s) by one or more people (or the state), the latter especially upper caste, which adversely impact both the lives and properties of Dalits”.

3 Phases of Massacre



Semelin 2002; 2005

Before

cultural, political
and/or economical
events before the
massacre

During

pertaining to the
questions of how,
who, where, and the
role of the state
machinery

After

causalities, trauma,
rehabilitation, survivor
responses, revenge, legal
proceedings, newspaper
reporting, research and other
studies

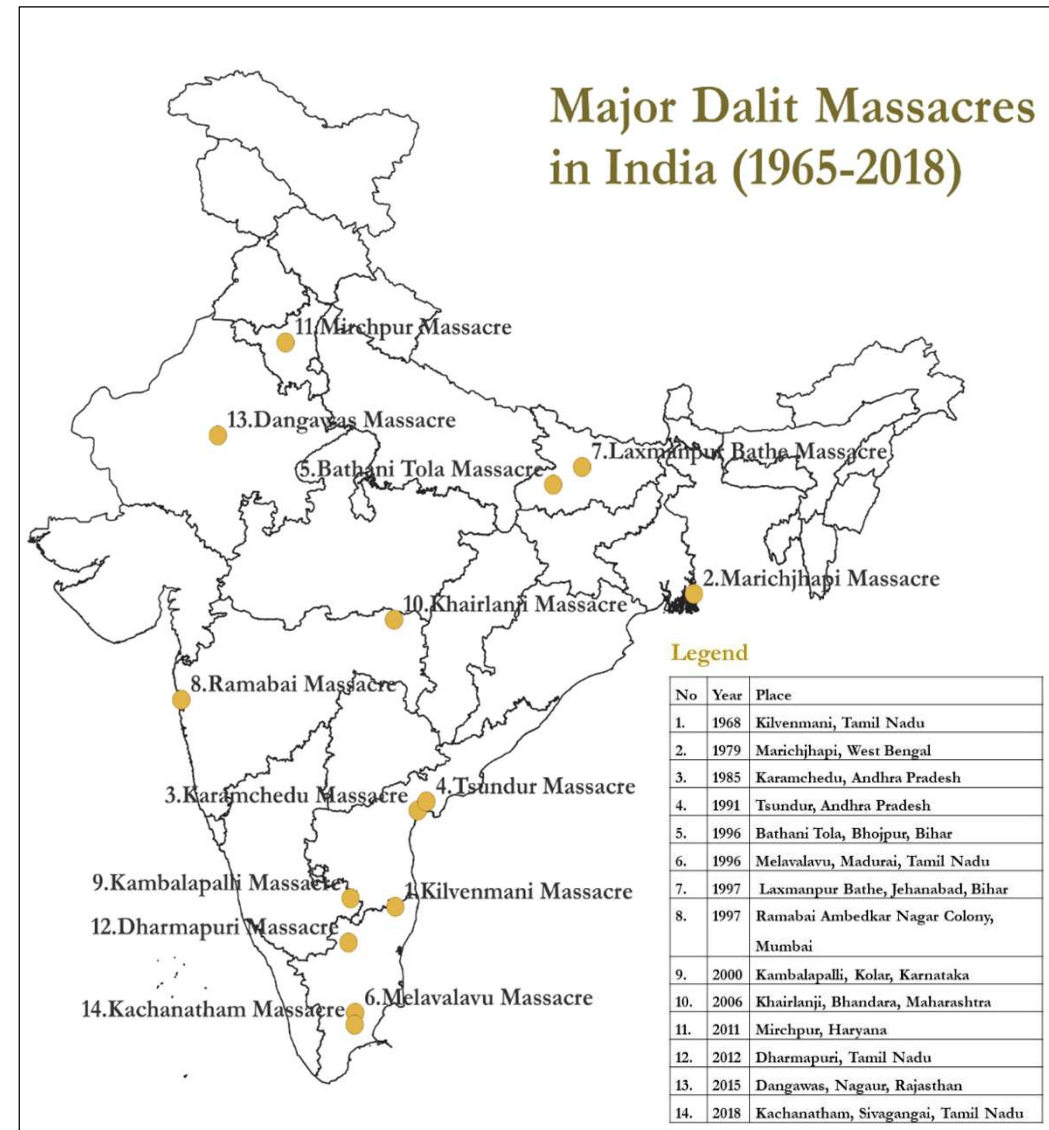
Dalit Massacres – Space, Caste, and Gender



Lack of a comprehensive study or a single document that systematically lists and analyzes these massacres in India over time.

Spatial location of Dalits and the frequency of the massacres? - Southern States.

Hypothesis - connection between caste and spatial location plays a crucial role in Dalit massacres: the caste identity of Dalits determines where they live, which makes them more visible and vulnerable to large-scale violence and massacres.



Background: Locating the women of Dalit massacres/Dalit Women - Where are they?

Politics of difference

'Gopal Guru (1998), Sharmila Rege (1998) 'Dalit Feminist Standpoint', Chaya Datar (1999).

Lack of documentation.

Dalit female experiences massacres are seldom studied or acknowledged

Space, Caste, Gender

Satyanarayana (2014) - "does not address the complexity of conceptualising caste in the context of questions raised by Dalit feminists and Other Backward Classes".

Common Patterns

Rape and Arson (Diwakar 2020)

Lack of spatial gender-based narratives

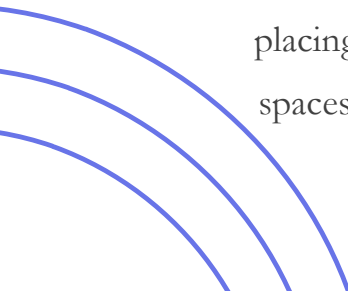
Fictional and non-fictional - Where are the women of Dalit massacres located?

Aims and Objectives



Aim

To negate the absence of female narratives in Dalit massacres of India by placing them against the spaces that they occupy



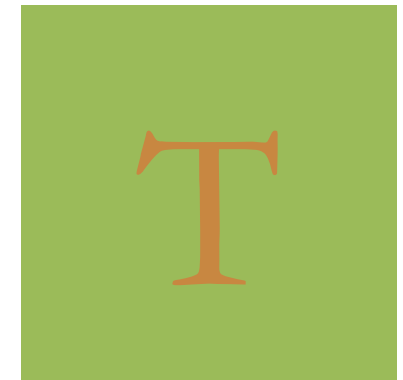
Materials

Fictional and non-fictional texts, newspaper reports, documentaries, films etc




Archive

Spatially archive the data obtained through mapping



Theorisation and Methodology

Contribute to the recent geocritical re-theorization of space in narratives from a feminist perspective

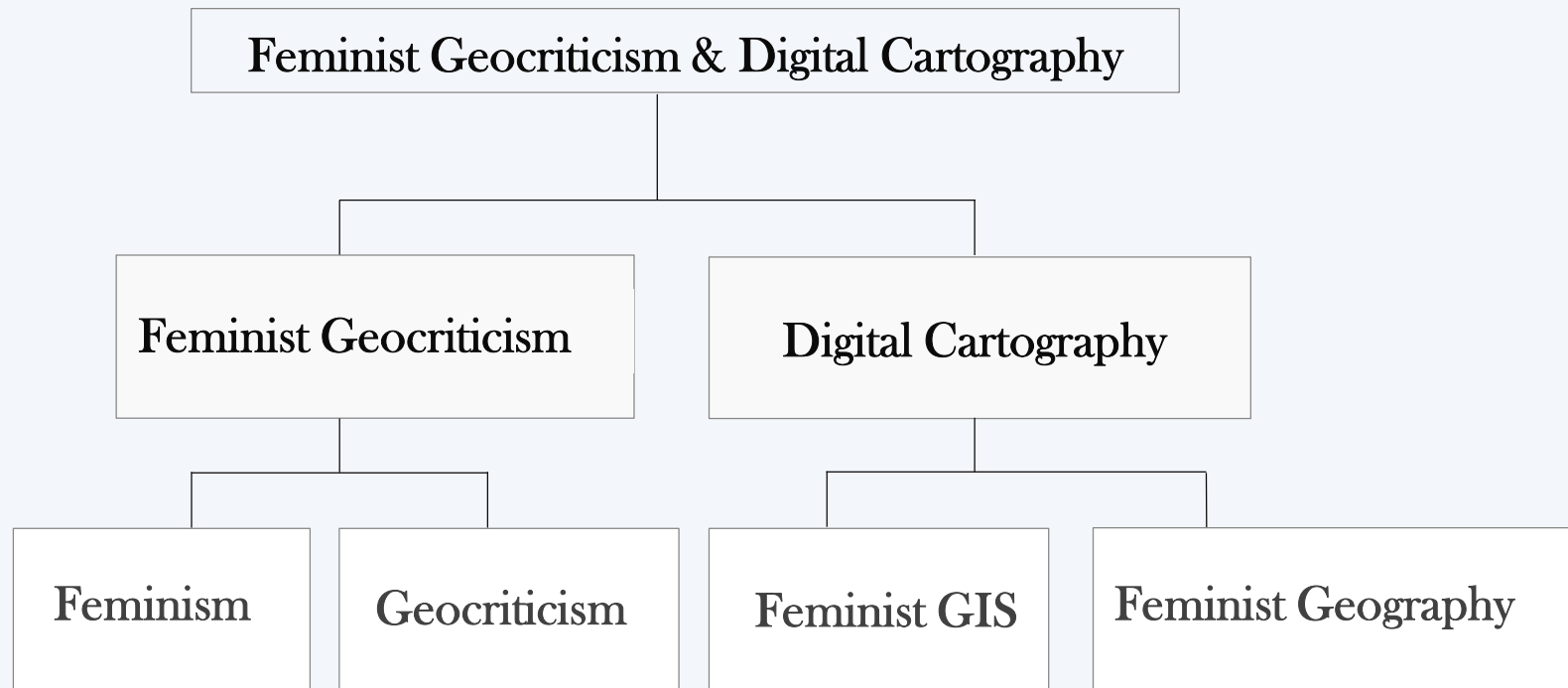


02.

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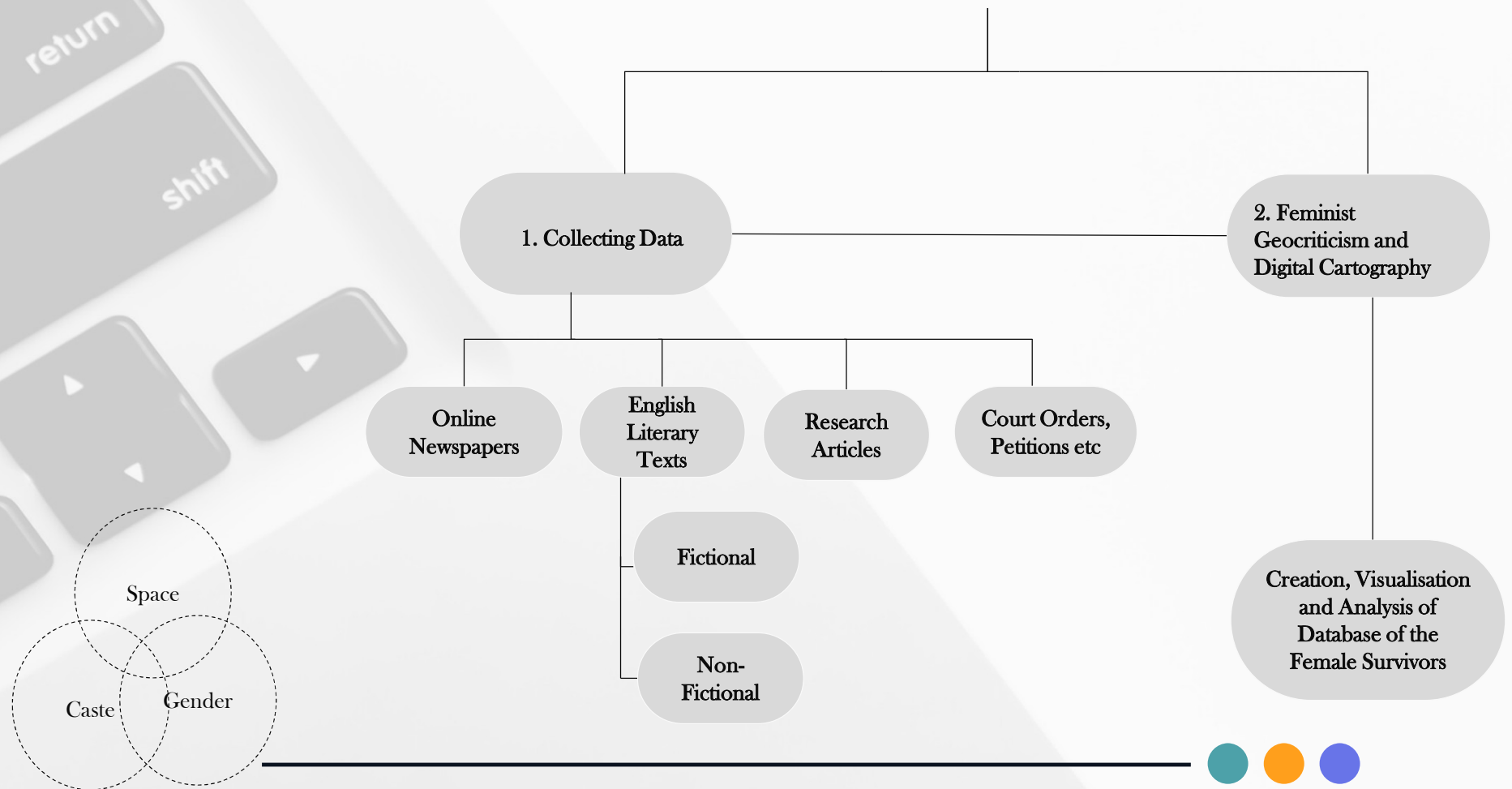
Methodology

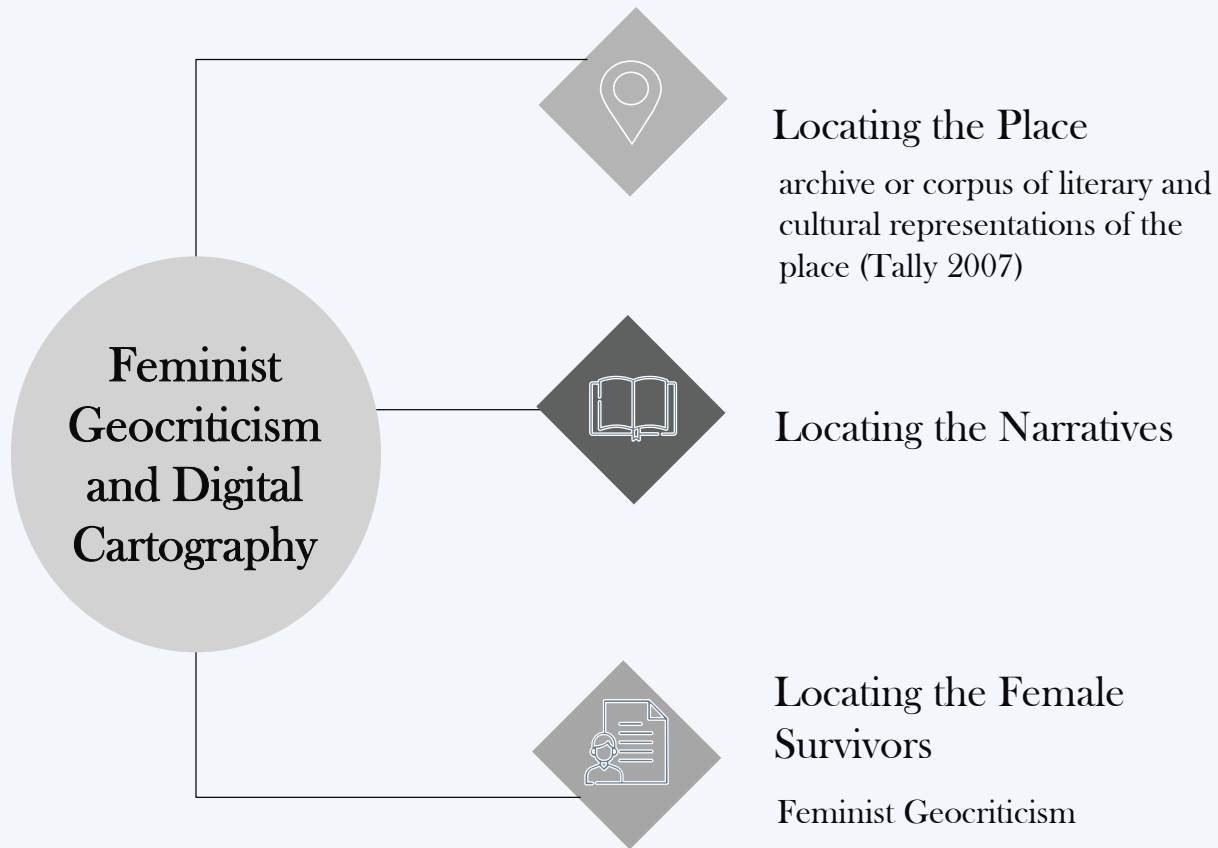
Theoretical Framework



Methodology

Feminist Geocritical GIS or Feminist Geocriticism and Digital Cartography in the context of this study **integrates feminist geocritical techniques with GIS based digital cartographical method** to understand the relation between gender and space especially from a caste-perspective.





Kilvenmani and Marichjhapi

English Fictional and Non-Fictional Narratives

Database Creation with Geolocatable Coordinates



Database

- Real, mythical and fictional survivors
- Authors
- Feminist Activists
- Newspapers
- Casteist locations

Limitations of data:

works written in English due to language constraints.

No.	Name	Origin/mas	Last know	Latitude	Longitude	Type
1	Survivor M1	Kumirmari Village		22.20589	88.92968	Historical
2	Survivor M2	Hasnabad	Shantigach	22.10111	88.90566	Historical
3	Survivor M3	Kumirmar	Kumirmar	22.20589	88.92968	Historical
4	Survivor M4	Kadambag	Kadambag	22.70726	88.54867	Historical
5	Survivor M5	Kadambag	Kadambag	22.70726	88.54867	Historical
6	Survivor M6	Dandakaranya		19.20838	81.93593	Historical
7	Survivor M7	Dandakaranya		19.20838	81.93593	Historical
8	Survivor M8	Raipur (M	Pather Ses	21.19179	81.71803	Historical
9	Survivor M9	Sunderbar	Dandakar	22.15565	88.87279	Historical
10	Survivor M10	Gopalgunj		22.06099	88.62408	Historical
11	Survivor M11	Malkangiri camp/col		18.35537	81.8827	Historical
12	Survivor M12	Malkangiri camp/col		18.35537	81.8827	Historical

No.	Name	Origin/massacre rel	Latitude	Longitude	Type	Source
1	Survivor K1		10.70806	79.7422	Historical	https://www
2	Survivor K2		10.71121	79.73353	Historical	https://www
3	Survivor K3		10.71121	79.73353	Historical	https://www
4	Survivor K4		10.71121	79.73353	Historical	https://www
5	Survivor K5		10.71121	79.73353	Historical	http://www
6	Survivor K6	Kilvenmani	10.71121	79.73353	Historical	Ramayavi
7	Survivor K7	Kilvenmani	10.71121	79.73353	Historical	Ramayavi
8	Survivor K8	Kilvenmani	10.71121	79.73353	Historical	Ramayavi
9	Survivor K9	Kilvenmani	10.71121	79.73353	Historical	Ramayavi
10	Survivor K10	Kilvenmani	10.71121	79.73353	Historical	Ramayavi
11	Survivor K11	Kilvenmani	10.71121	79.73353	Historical	Ramayavi
12	Survivor K12	Kilvenmani	10.71121	79.73353	Historical	Ramayavi
13	Survivor K13	Kilvenmani	10.71121	79.73353	Historical	Ramayavi

Stages in Mapping



Locating the survivors
within their real places
from different sources

1. Manual Geoparsing



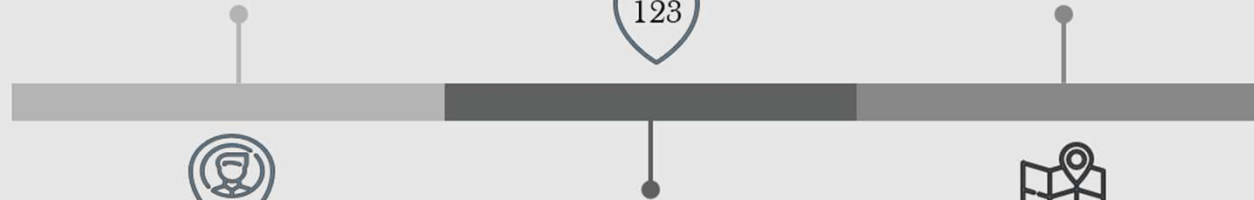
Historical maps georeferenced
through QGIS to address the temporal
concerns (Kretzschmar 2013).

3. Georectifying

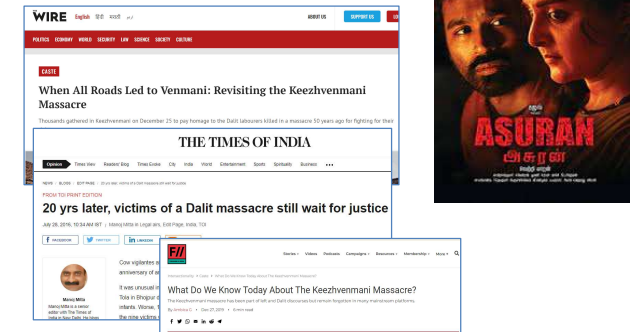
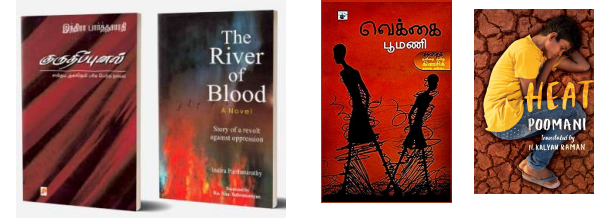
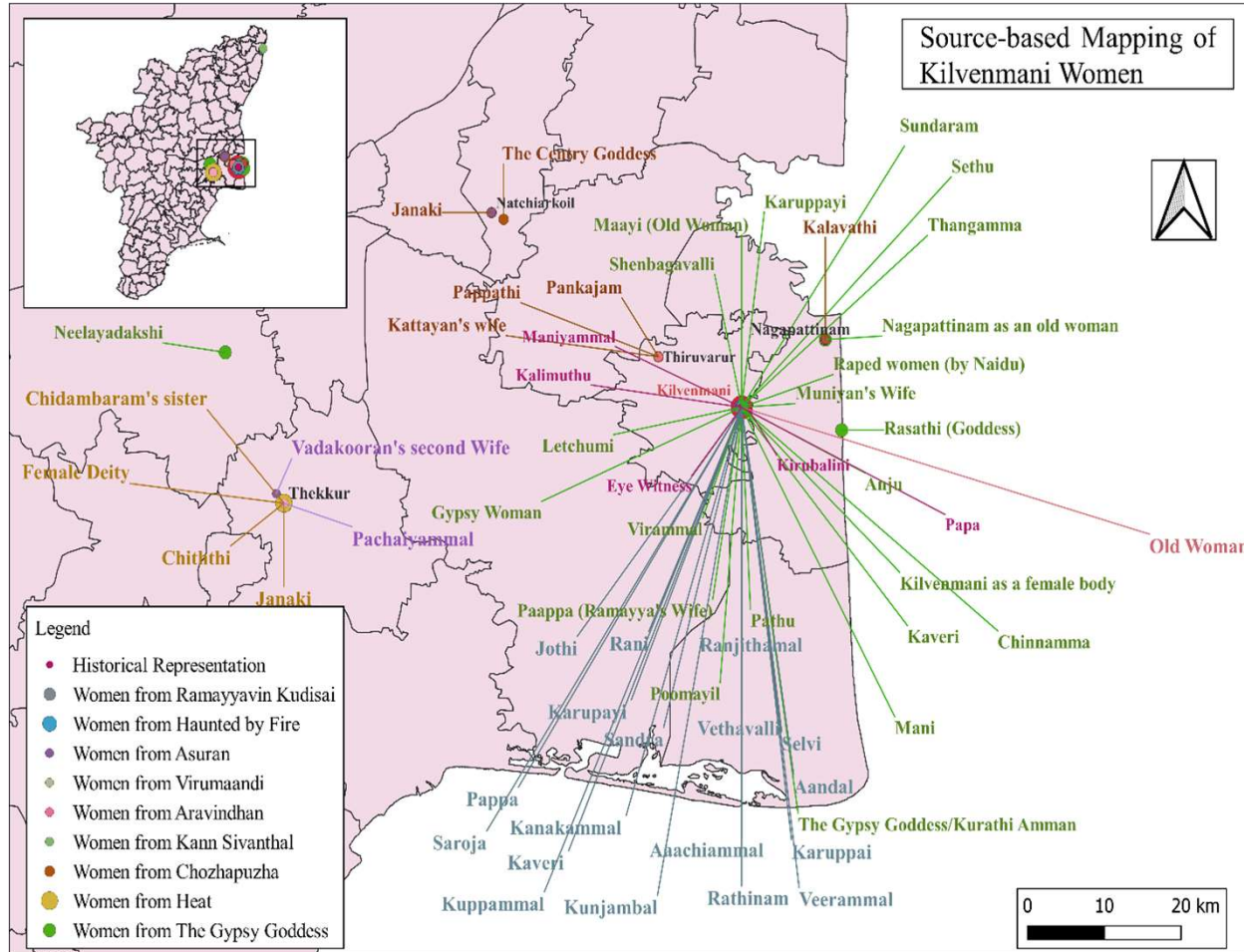


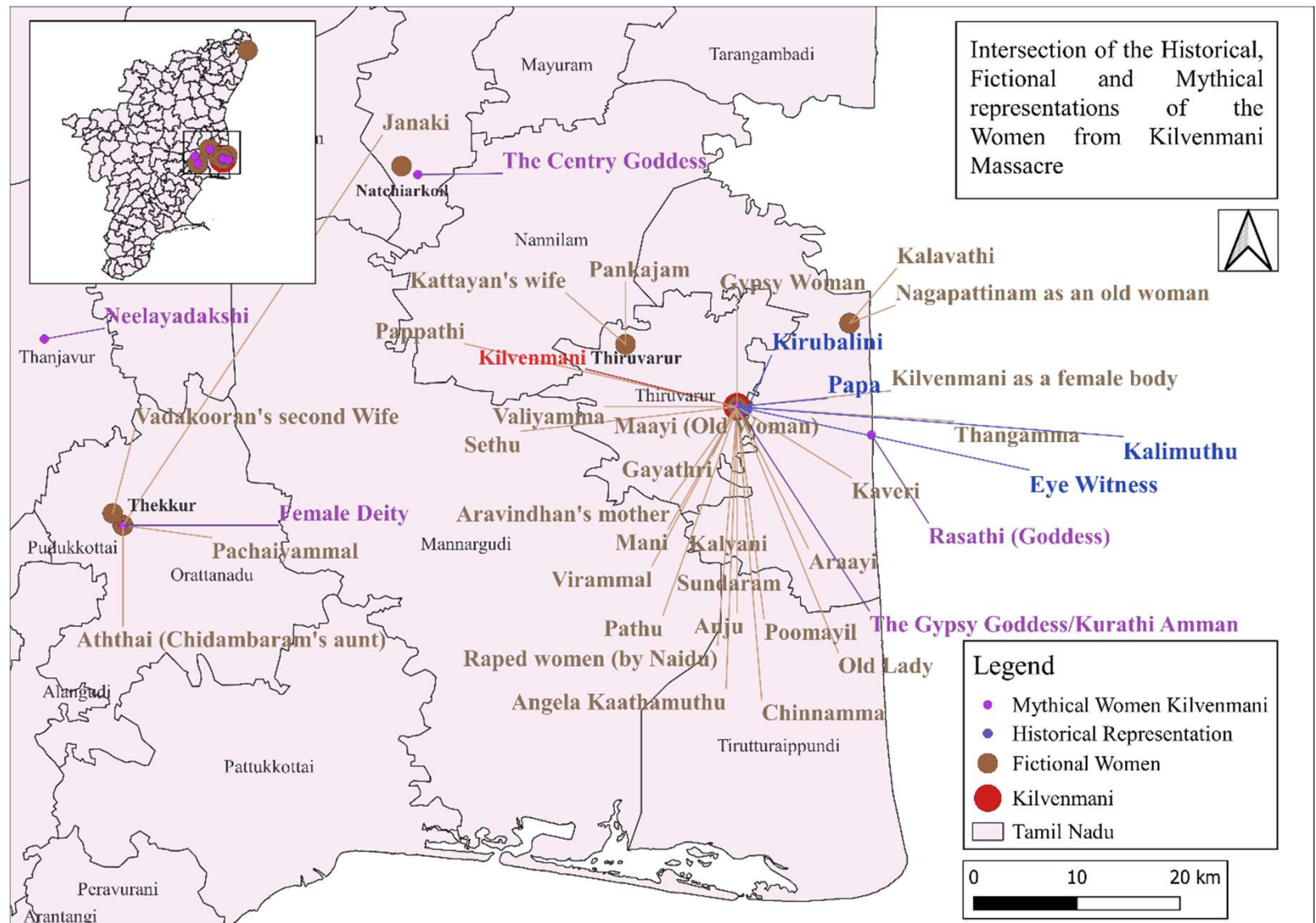
2. Geocoding

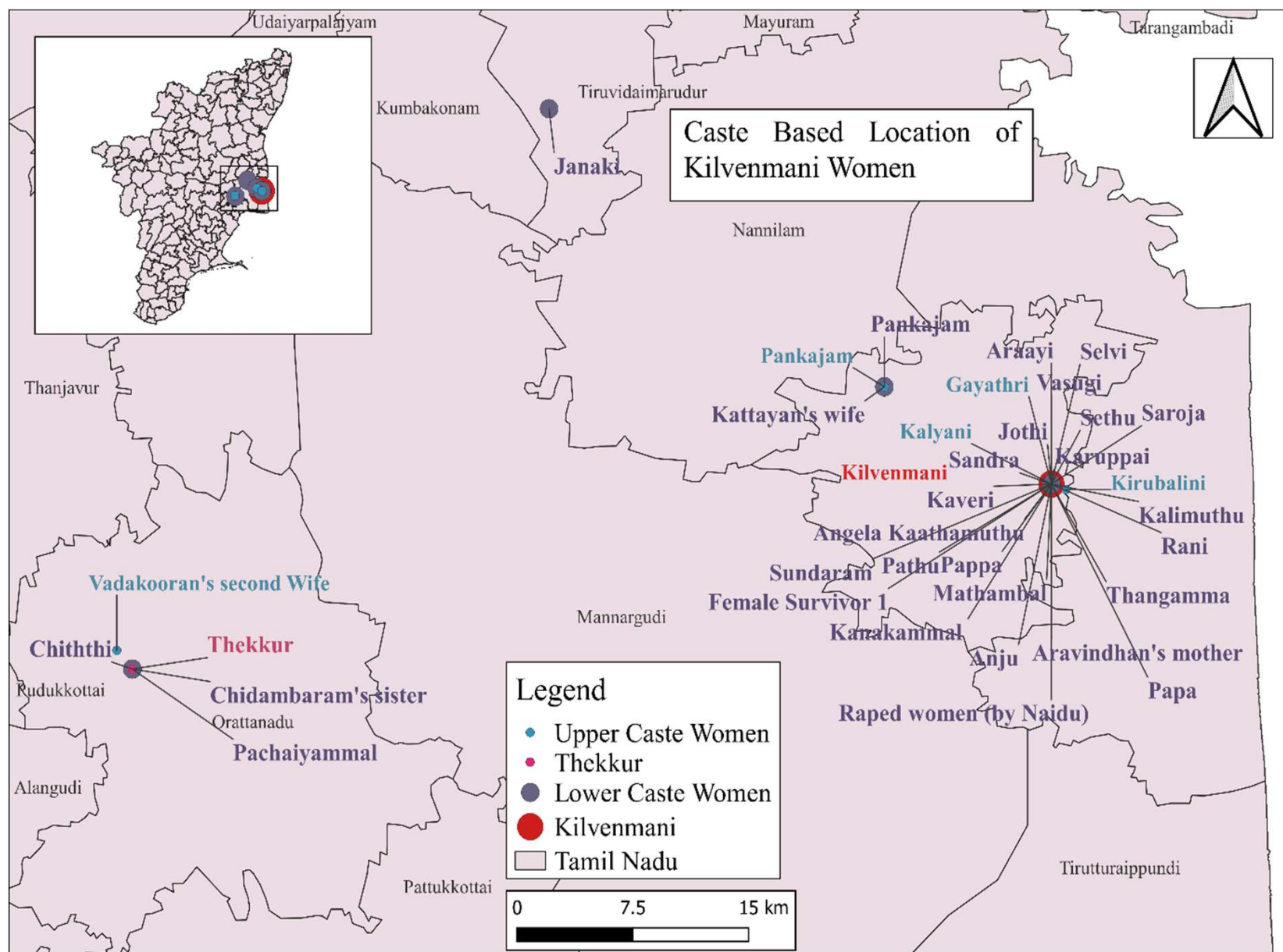
Assigning a location to the
parsed data (coordinates
for the places obtained
from Google maps)

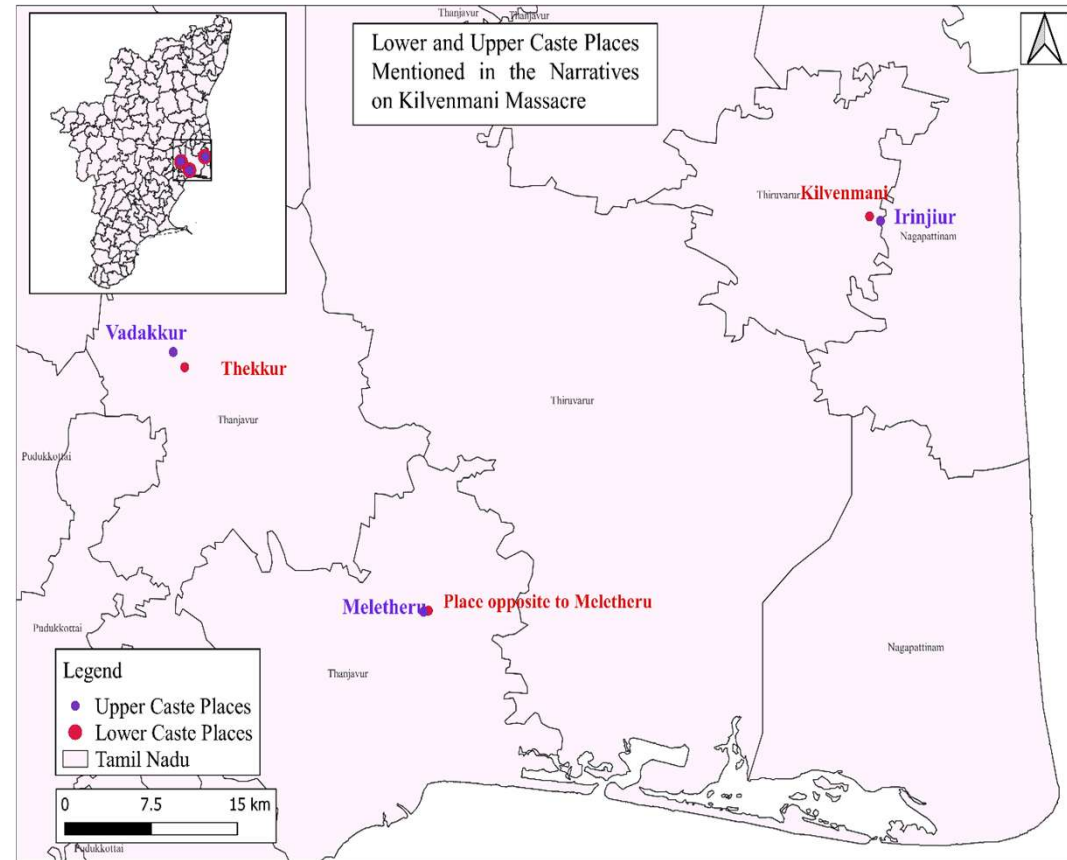
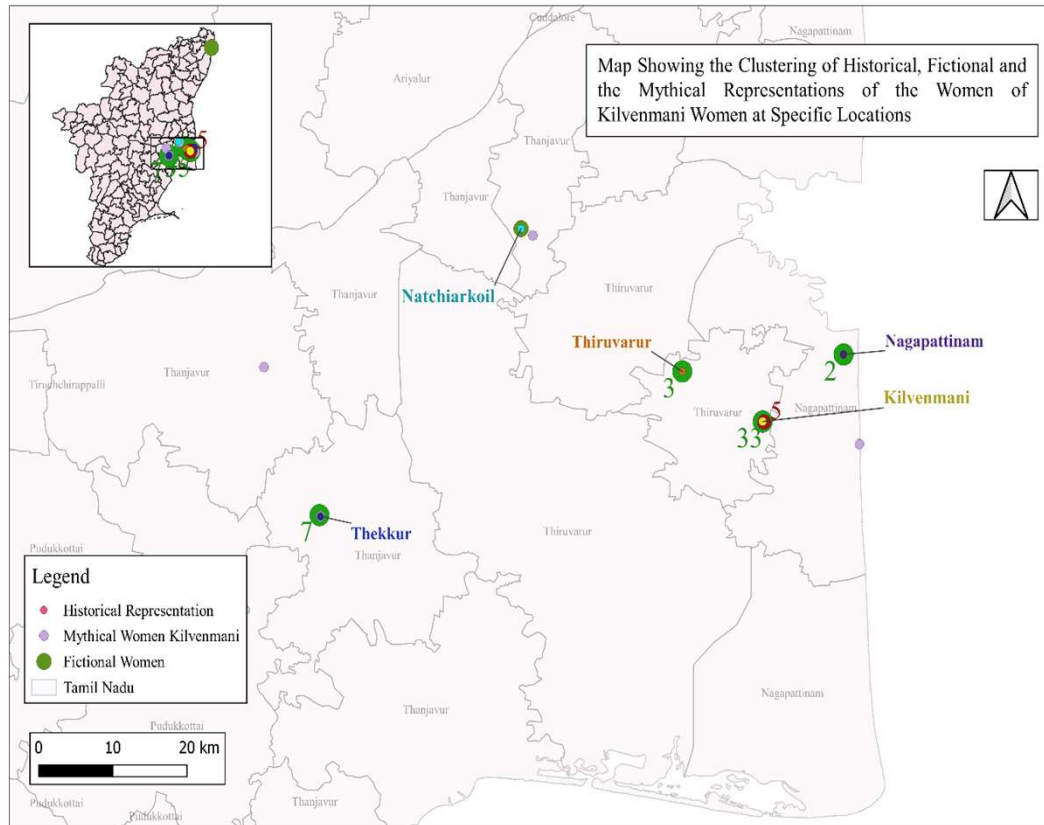


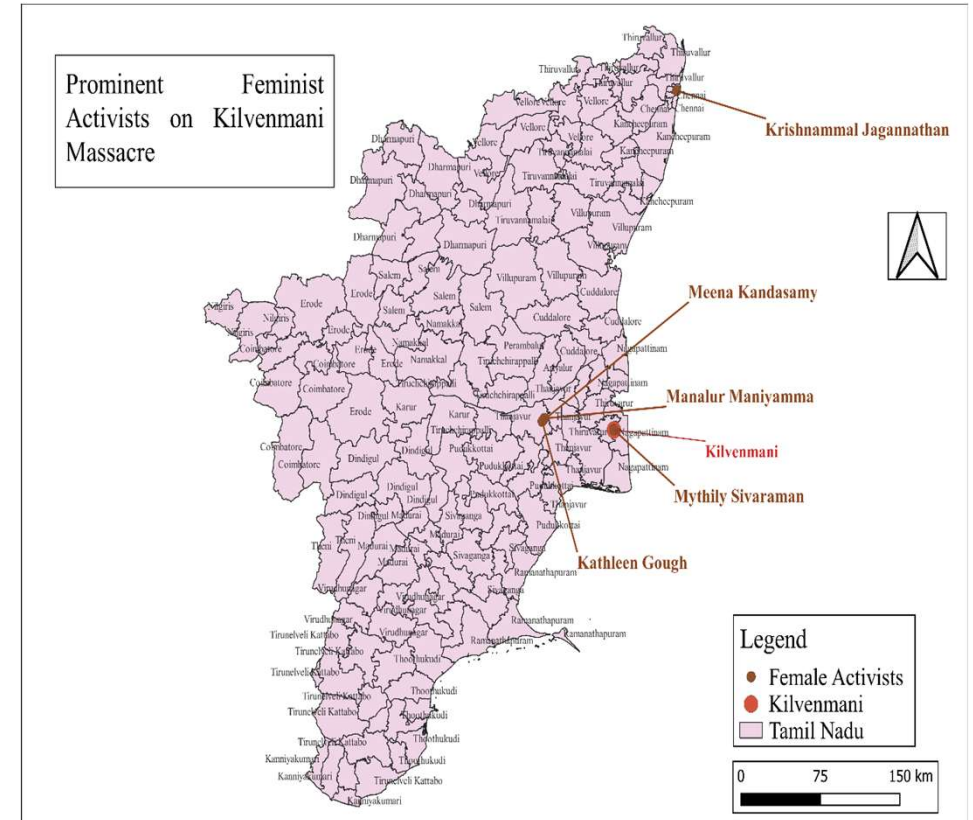
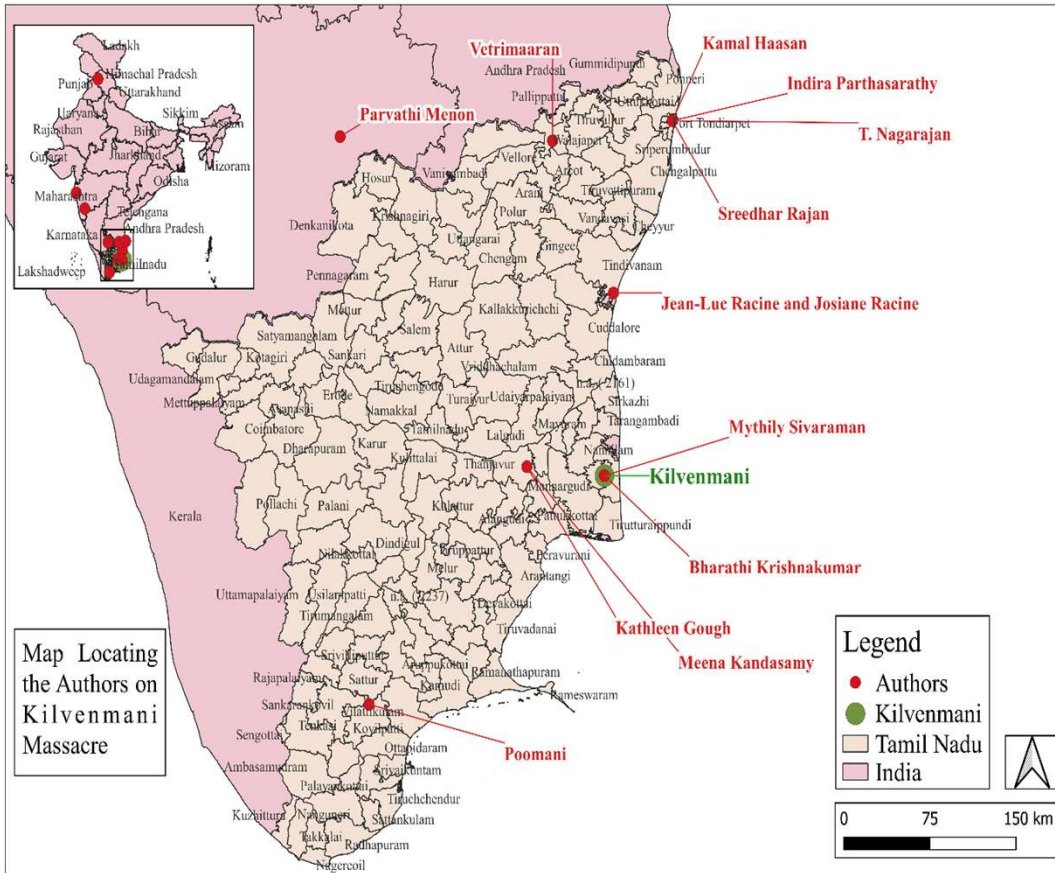
The Kilvenmani Massacre (1968)



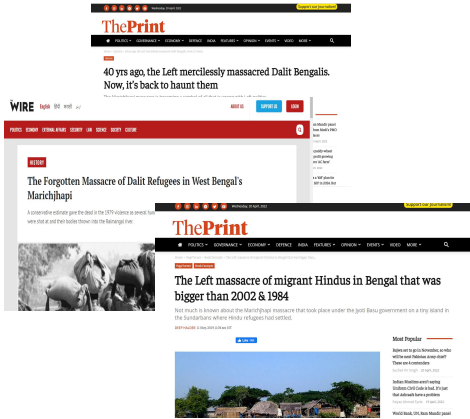
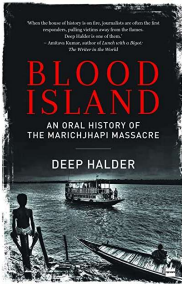
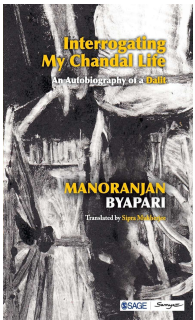
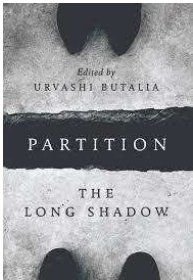
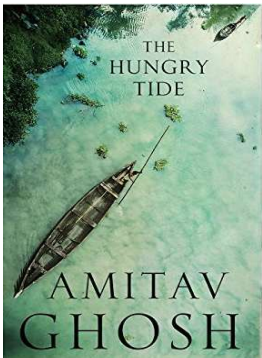
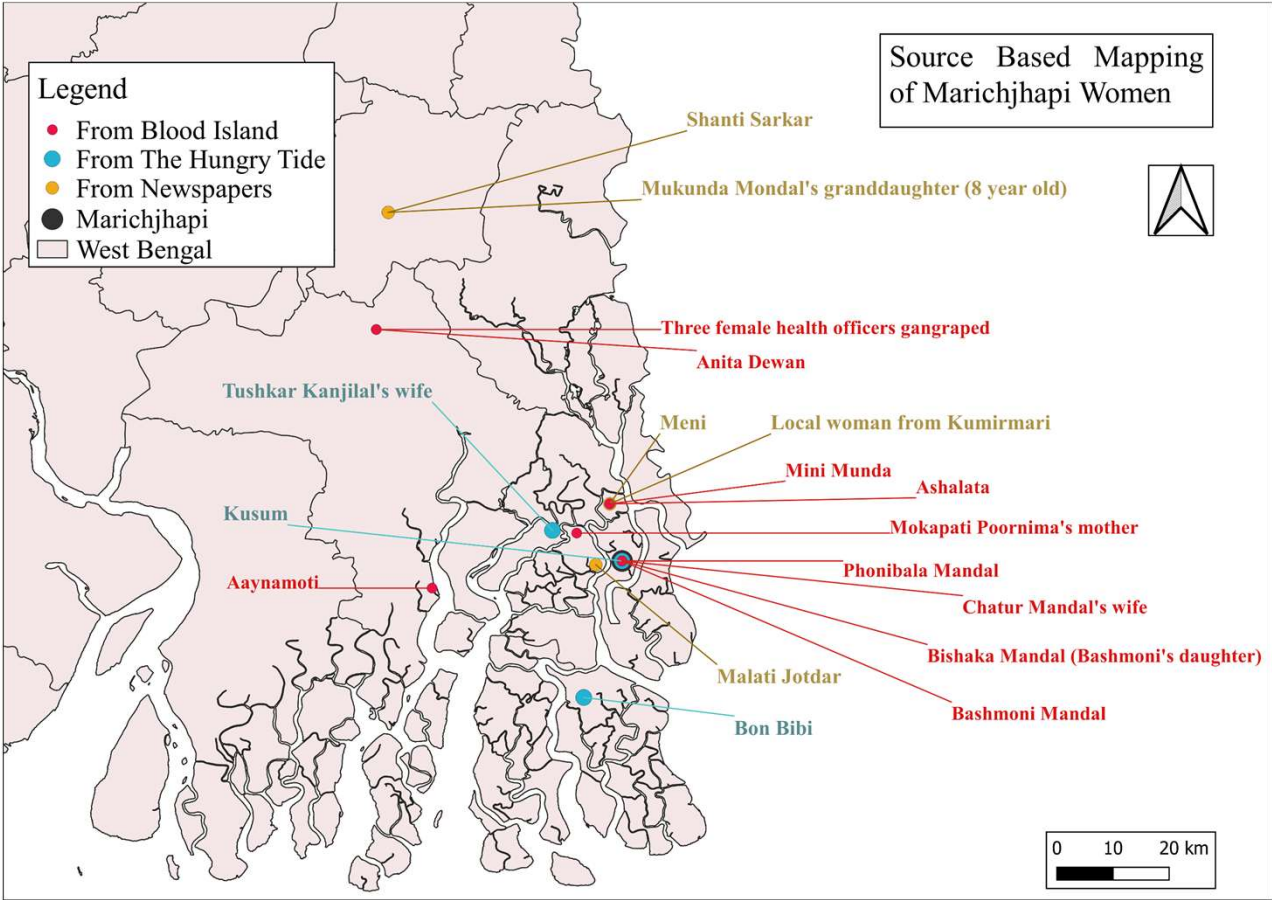


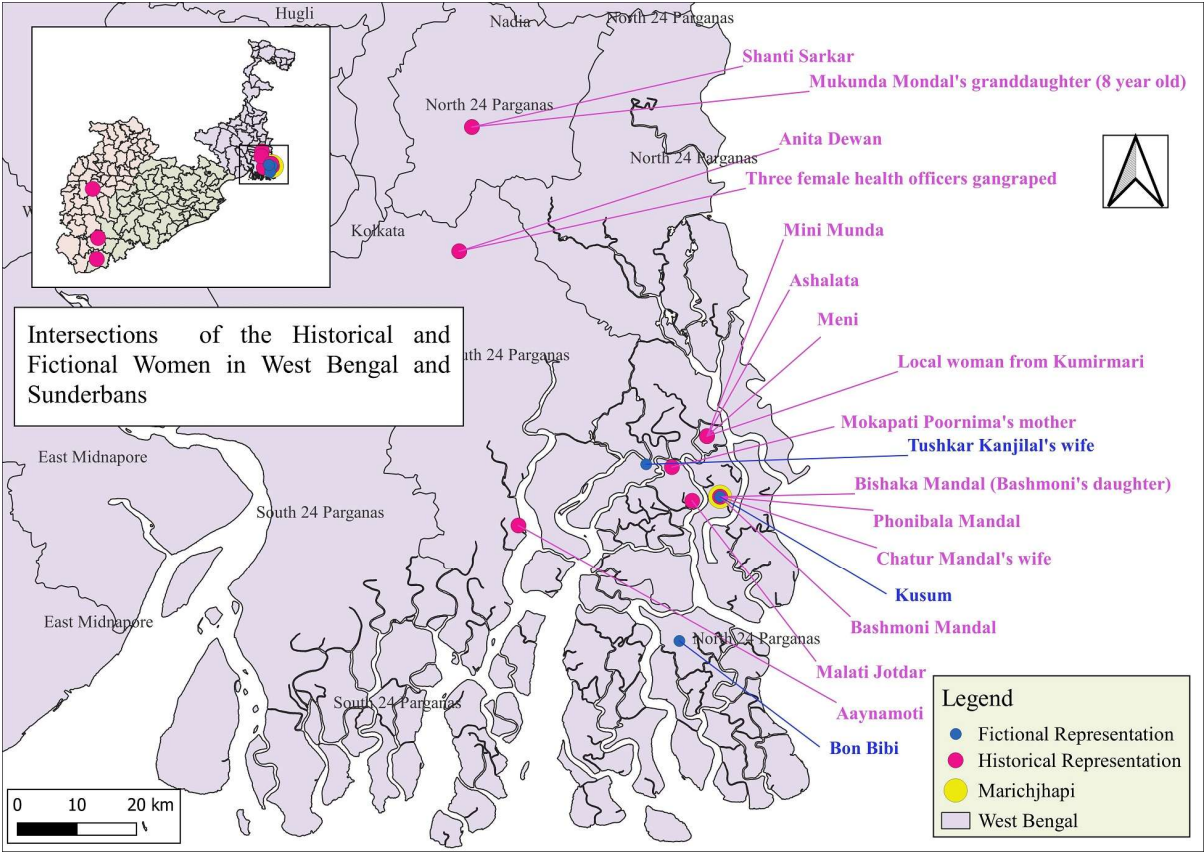
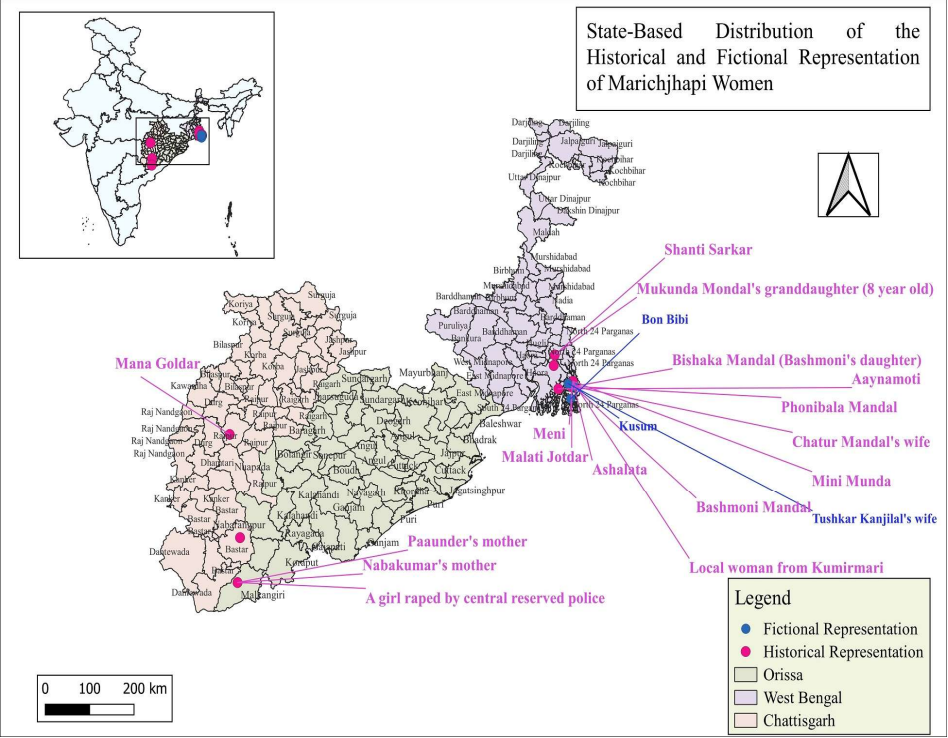


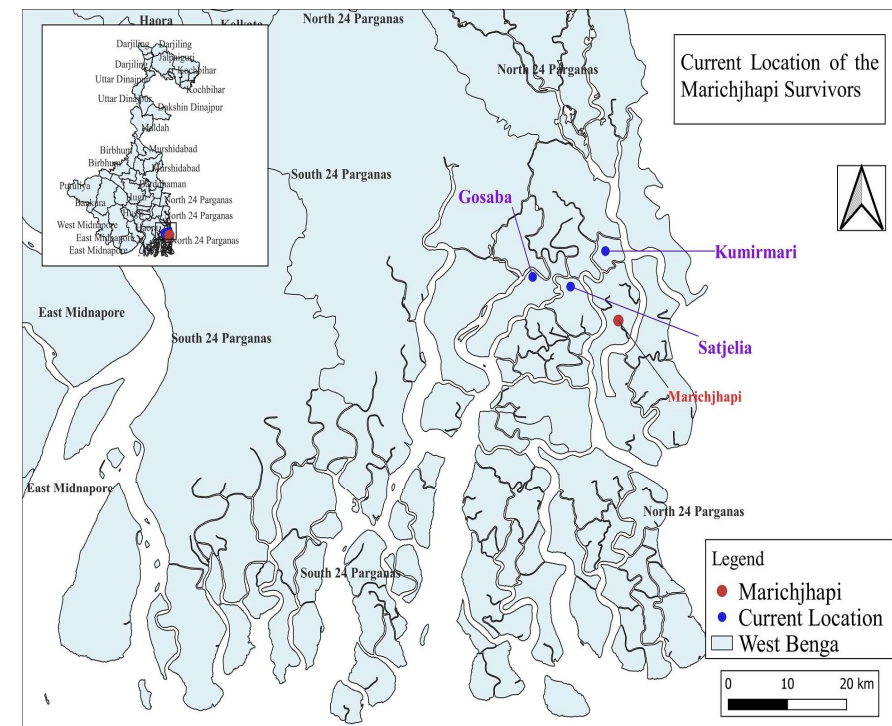
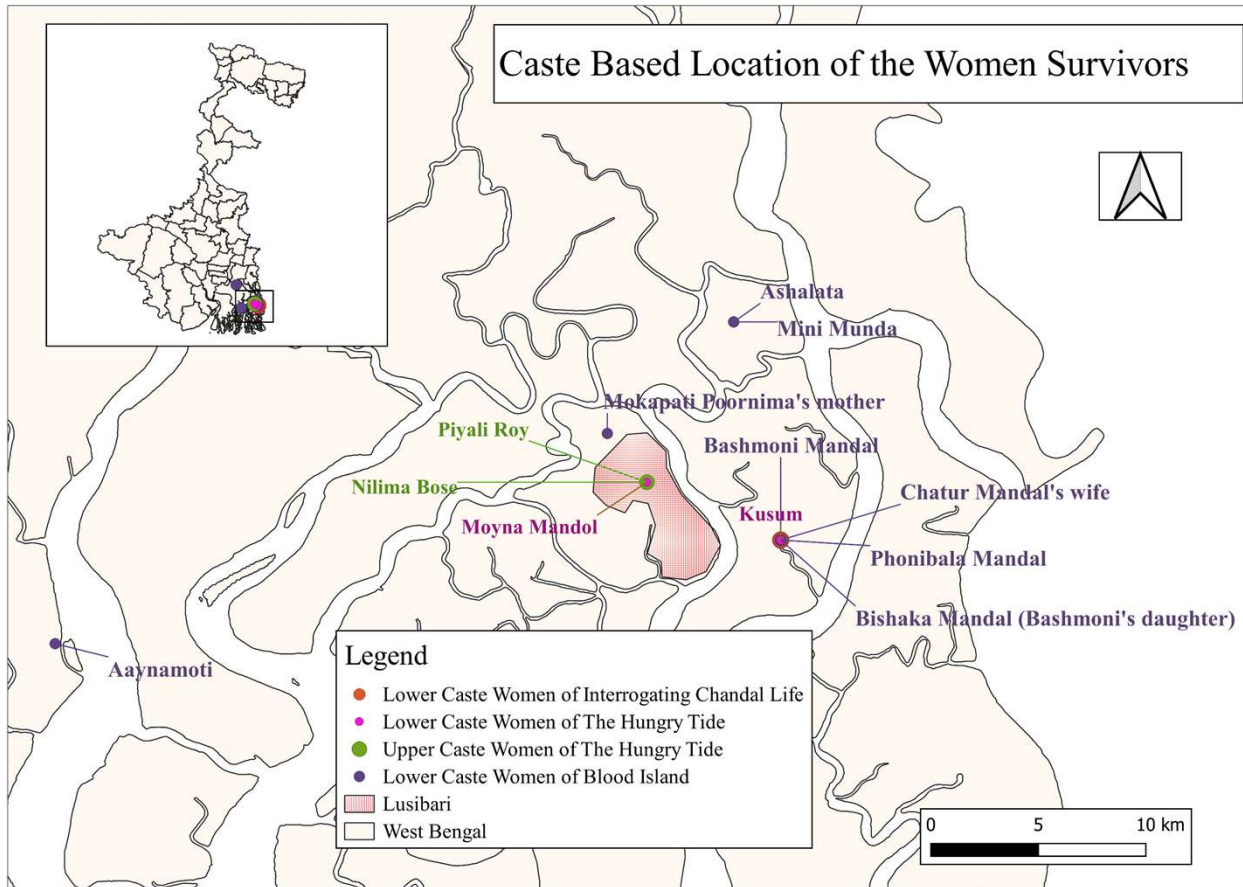


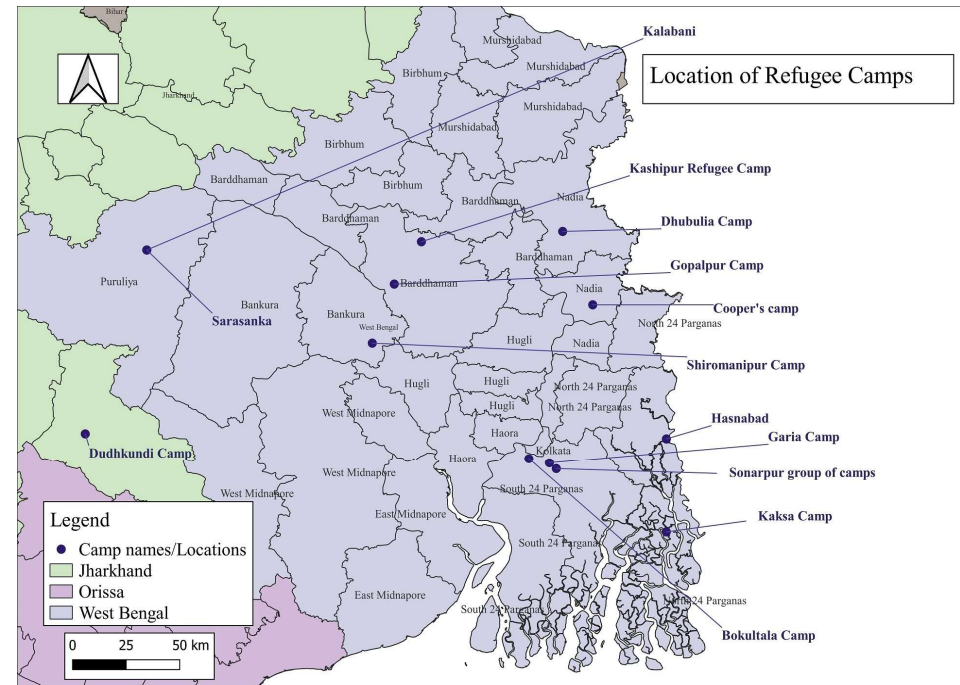
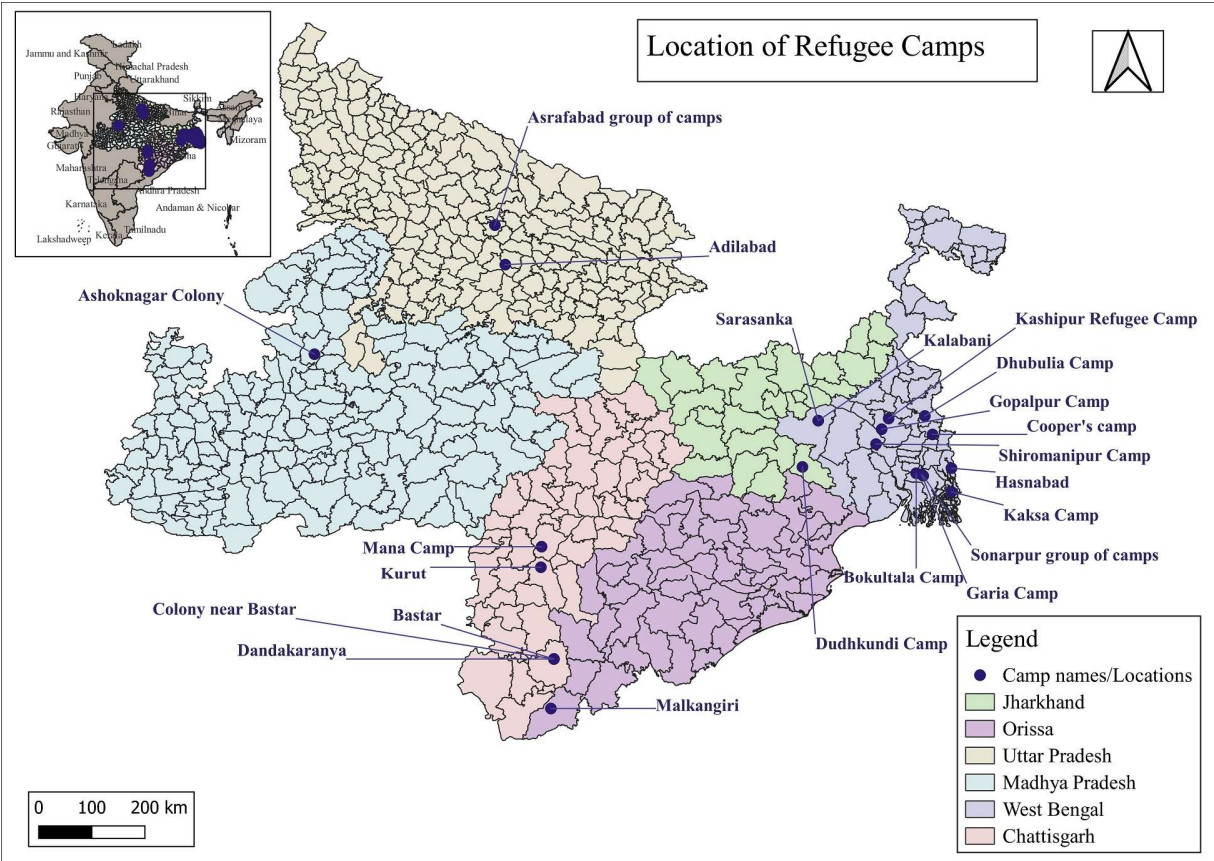


The Marichjhapi Massacre (1979)

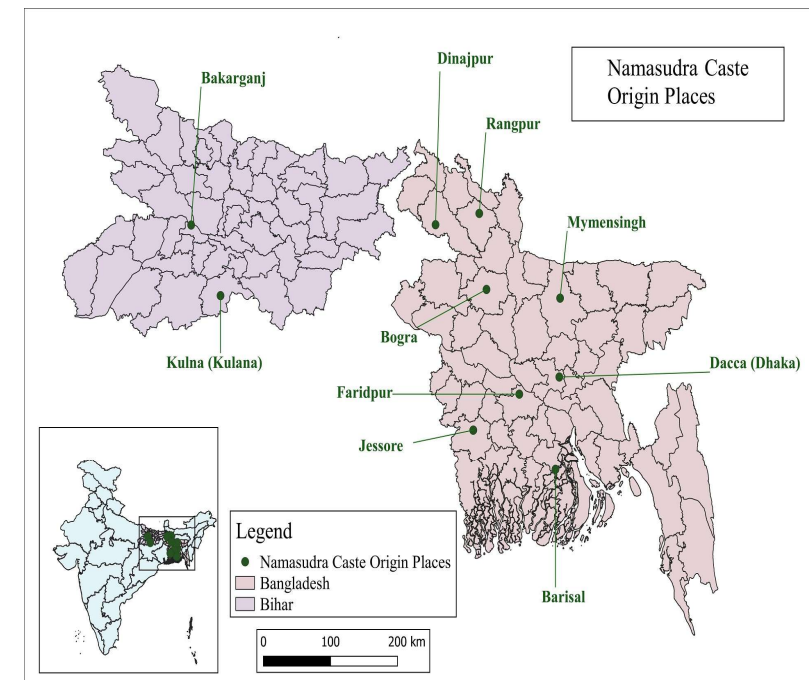
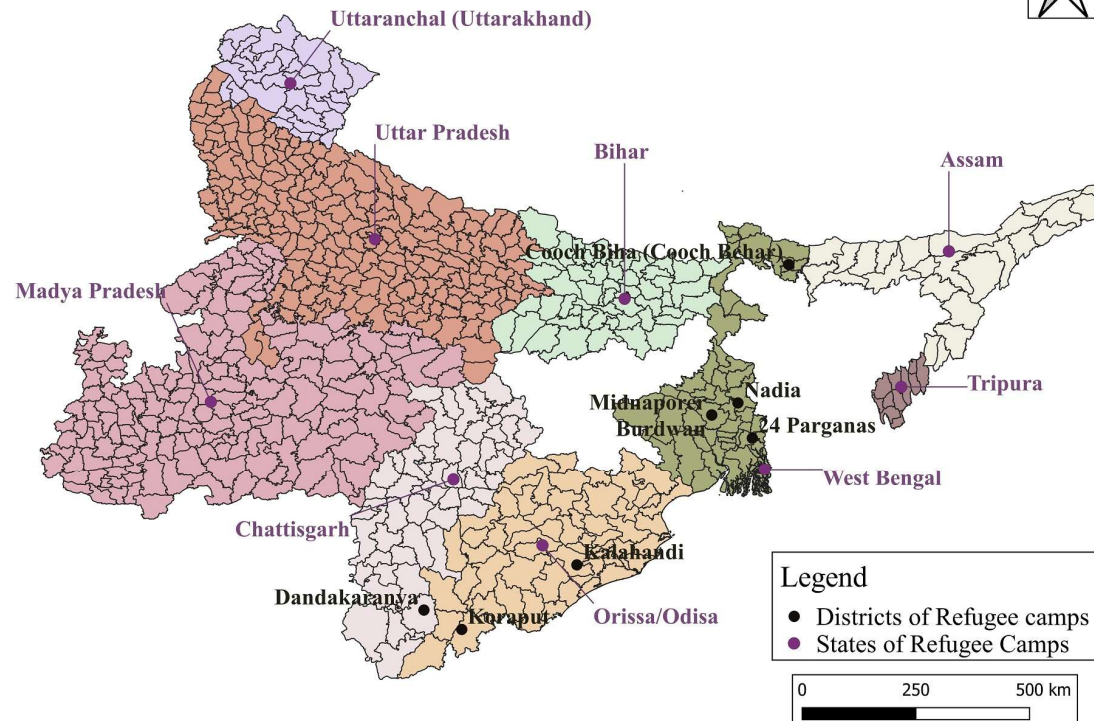


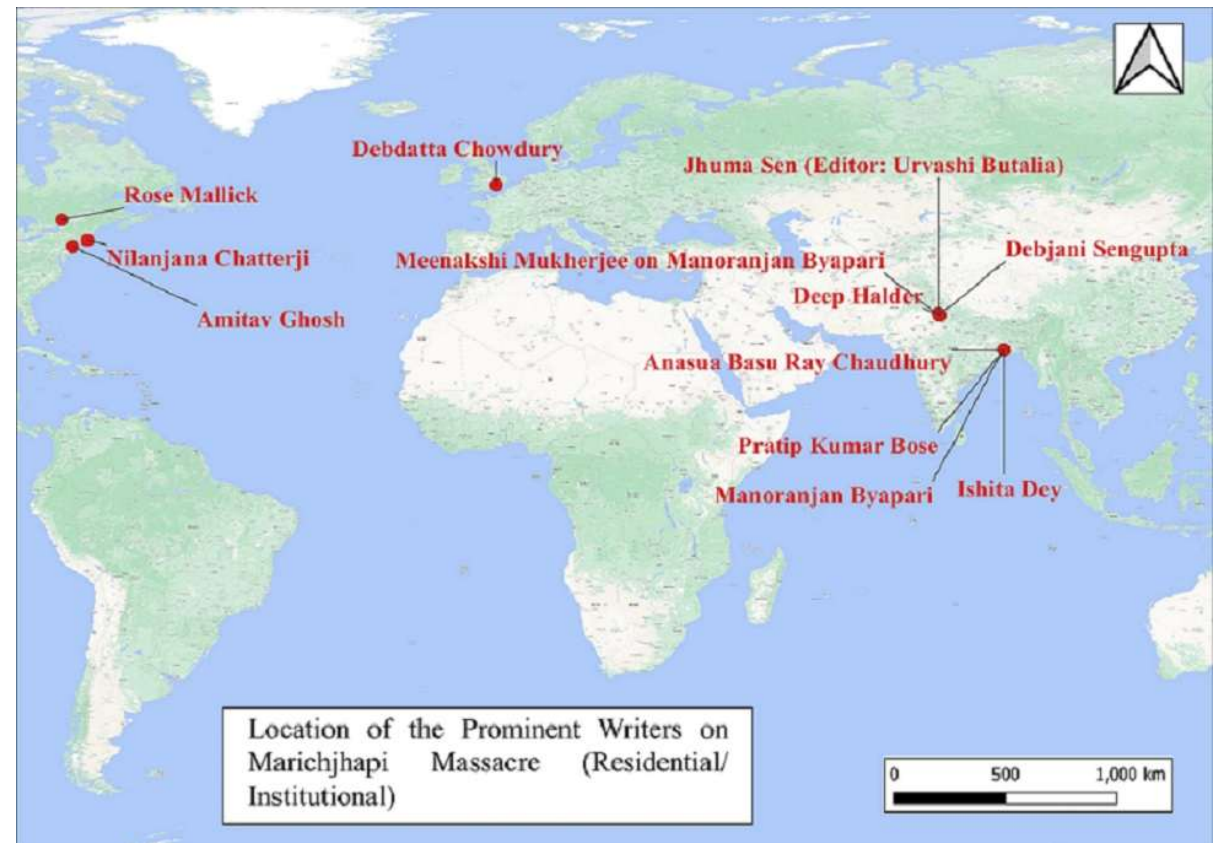






State and District Based Locations of Refugee Camps





- Differential experience of space based on caste and gender identities
- Caste determines spatial location which defines gendered experiences
- Clustering in specific spaces
- Fictional geographies and intersectional spaces
- Lack of fictional narratives – female perspective missing
- Author – space, caste and gender – influences narratives
- Eliminate caste segregation and creation of caste free public spaces



Findings

03.



The Project

Spatial Archive



“

Open-access DH projects that connect historical, narrative and or textual materials with geospatial coordinates for long-term preservation. The project then visualises the materials to physical place/s using an interactive digital map which in turn serve as a geo-spatial archive of the materials that can facilitate further analysis.





AIMS

A

Identify and record sites of Dalit massacres in Independent India (after 1947).

M

Initiate public and scholarly discussions on Dalit massacres in India.

I

Provide the first Indian record for female fictional and non-fictional survivors of Dalit massacres and providing the available evidence for each massacre site.

S

Provide open access and reproducible knowledge to the public/academicians and invite contributions.

For more info: <https://mappingmassacres.iiti.ac.in/>



Contents of the Website:

The Project

Definitions, Methodology, Theoretical Frameworks, Design Choices, and Research Outcomes.

The Massacres

Kilvenmani and Marichjhapi massacres – sources, maps and detailed analysis.

Educational Resources

Teaching and pedagogy – syllabus, resources, database and bibliography, newspaper collections.

Data and Ethics

Data pipeline, decisions, reproducibility, ethics.

Gallery

Maps and other images.

Team/Contact

Team and contact option – crowd-source.





[Home](#)

[The Project](#)

[Spatial Archive](#)

[Kilvenmani Massacre](#)

[Marichjhapi Massacre](#)

[Educational Resources](#)

[Data and Ethics](#)

[Gallery](#)

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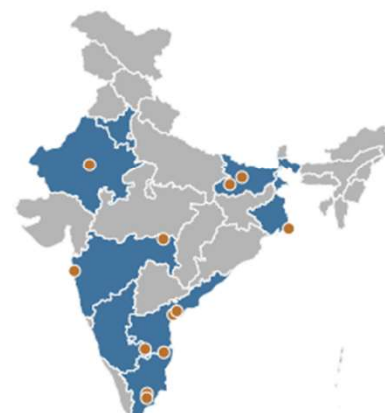
Mission of the Project

Cartographies of Courage: Fictional Threads, Real Lives is an open access spatial archive on the female survivors of selected Dalit massacres in independent India. The aim of this archive is to make use of digital cartography and feminist geocriticism as a hybrid methodology to foreground the stories of the Dalit female survivors of selected massacres. The project is under development and will be subjected to constant updating.

Dalit Massacres in India (1968-2018)

Hover over the blue shades in map to see the state-wise massacres in India post Independence.

Click on the points for additional information.





Steps:



1. Creation of base maps using ArcGIS Online API and by creating instant apps using the database created




2. Creation of Spatial Hypertext – linking the points in the base map to a deep map of the female survivors of the massacre.



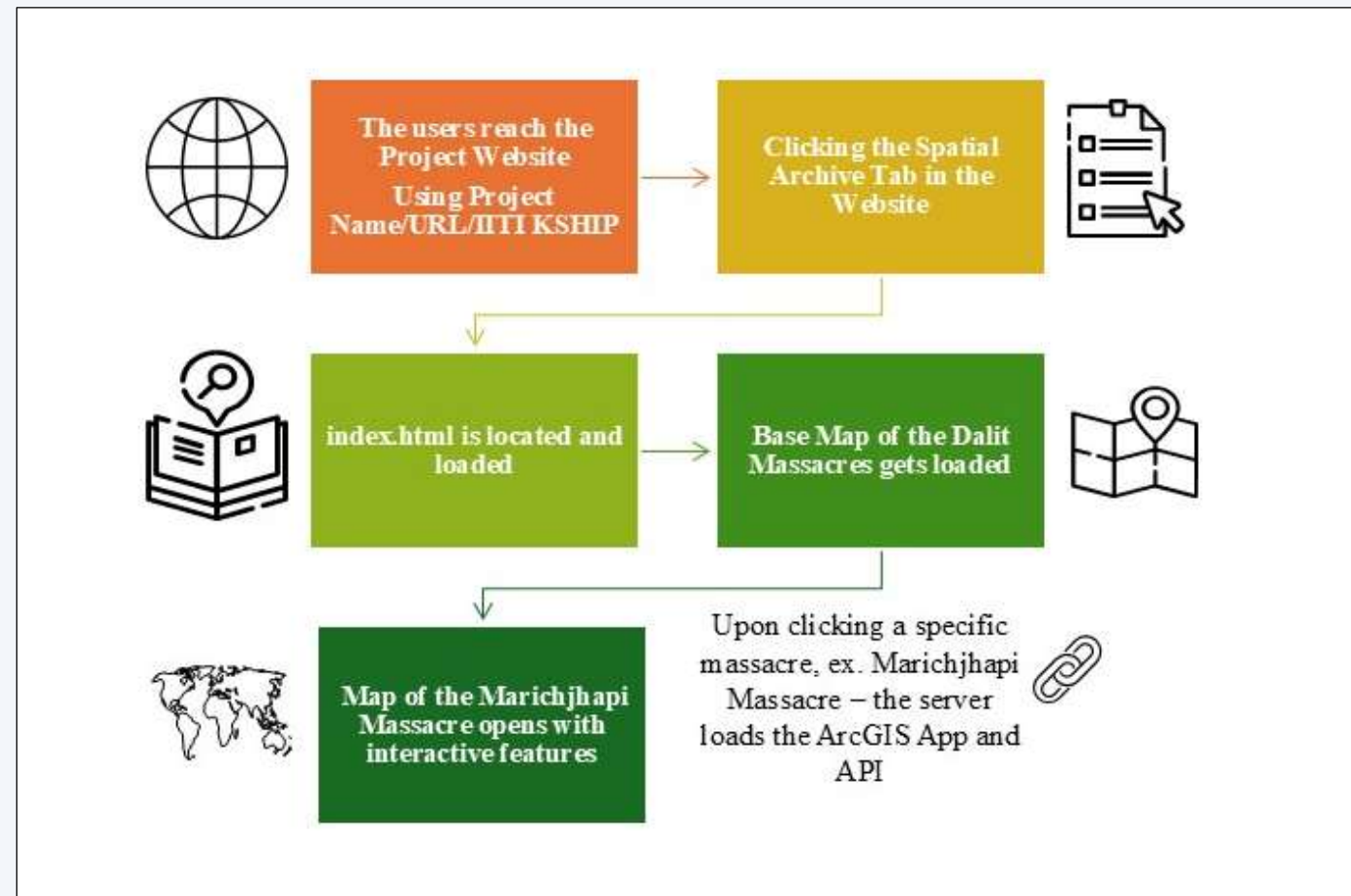
3. Embedding the maps on a WordPress Website



4. Creation and publishing the Spatial Archive - *Cartographies of Courage: Fictional Threads, Real Lives* – use social media

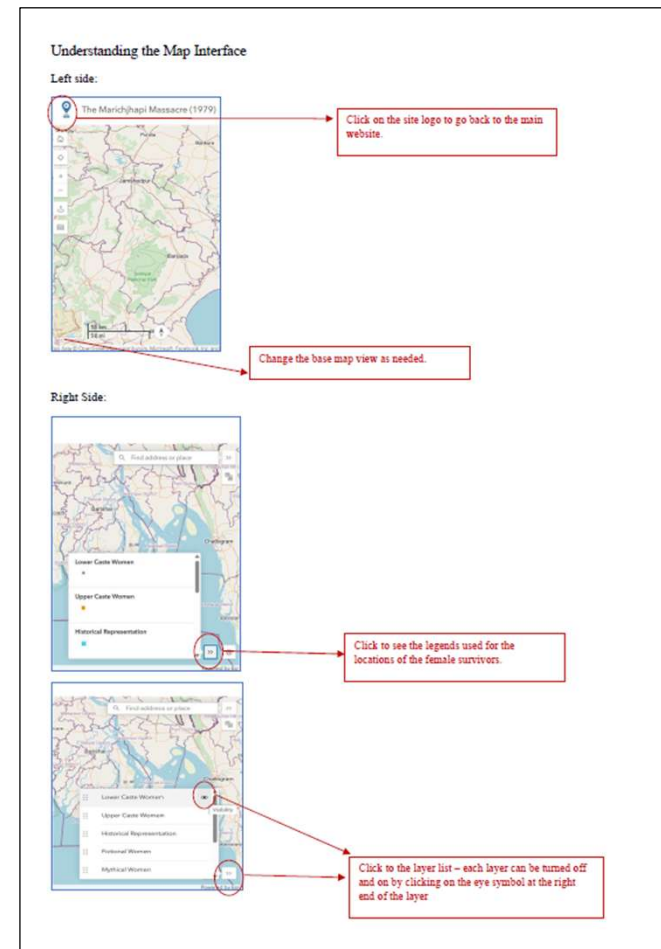


Workflow of the Archive



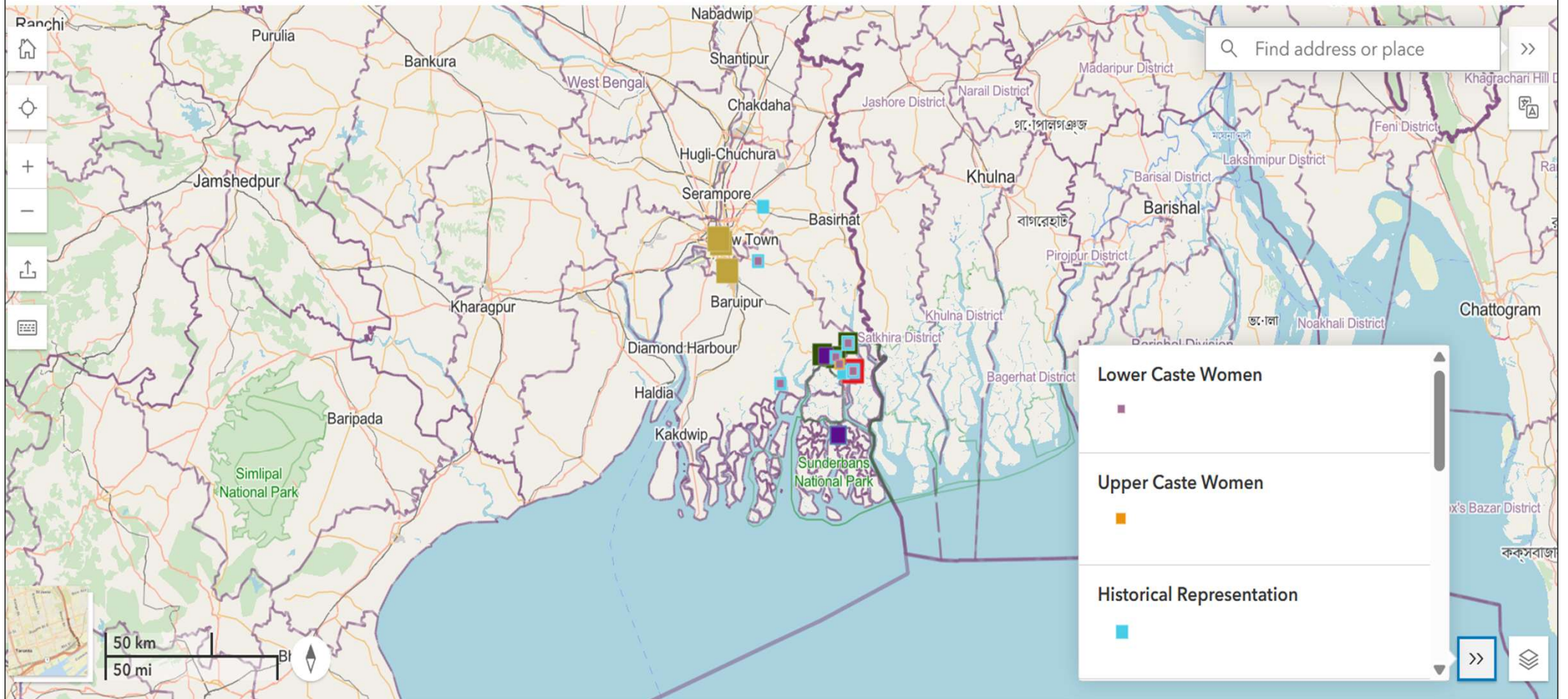


User Guide for Navigating the Archive is available in the website:





The Marichjhapi Massacre (1979)



Map data © OpenStreetMap contributors, Microsoft, Facebook, Inc. and its affiliates, Esri Community Maps contributors, Map layer by Esri

Powered by Esri

Possibilities

Aspect	Description
Prototype	First database and spatial archive on Dalit female survivors – inspire further feminist GIS projects.
Marginalised History and Education	Reclaim, preserve and foreground marginalised histories that are overlooked in mainstream textbooks and narratives - Dalit issues, human rights violations, and the importance of social justice
Policy Making	Documentation can serve as a catalyst to inspire policy making for social, economic and cultural changes
Open-source	Accessibilty and create awareness about Dalit massacres
Solidarity and Advocacy	National and international
Spatial Elements	Contextualise, identify and eliminate caste and gender-based spatial segregation. Results can be extrapolated to other massacres in India





Challenges

Aspect	Description
Trauma and Ethical Concerns	Sensitive information – documentation limitations – trigger warnings.
Accessibility and Trust	Collecting survivor accounts turned out to be difficult – translators and insider with trauma-informed training – resistance.
Technological Constraints	Both for the subjects and for the creation of the archive. Manual and multiple reading for bias.
Sustainability	Long-term maintenance and fundng.
Collecting Materials	Multiple, multilingual and scattered. Data quality and accuracy.

- Collaboration, crowd-sourcing, diverse formats, and legal associations can help with overcoming the challenges in future.

Overall Study. . .

Mixed Methodology

Visualize and investigate the relations among space, caste, and gender in Dalit massacres in India.

Space, Caste and Gender

Caste identity determines the spatial location of the female survivors which renders them susceptible to gender and caste-based violence during the massacres.

Space as Intersectional Category

Understand the socio-cultural identity and experiences of Dalit women.

Spatial Archive

challenges and possibilities in developing an open-access interactive spatial archive of the female survivors.



Thank you!

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