Villains, Victims, and Heroines:
Constructing Female Security in the Context of the Shiv Sena Mahila Aghadi in Mumbai, India

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THE PUZZLE

How do outside actors construct female security, identity, and empowerment in the context of the Shiv Sena Mahila Aghadi in Mumbai, India?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Explaining vigilantism

THE LEGAL GROUP

- Inadequacy and/or illegitimacy of state institutions: police forces and legal systems

THE COMMUNITY GROUP

- Historical practice of community policing
- In-group communal understandings of morality

THE IDENTITY GROUP

- Psychological security
- Self-identity as tied to place

METHODOLOGY

- Postmodernist discourse analysis analyzing texts produced by outside actors
- Texts
  - Social Media: Twitter and Facebook
  - News articles from major English media outlets based in India
- Boundaries
  - Time: 2011 on, grouped by 2013-2014 and 2016-2017 based on elections and actors' changing rhetoric

DISCOURSES ANALYZED

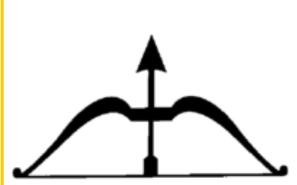### GROUP 1

- General public of Maharashtra
- Twitter and Facebook
- Villain Discourse

GROUP 2

ShivSena

- Various political party leaders
- Especially Shiv Sena leadership
- Twitter and news Articles
- Victim Discourse

GROUP 3

- Shiv Sena leadership
- Mahila women
- Twitter and news articles
- Heroine Discourse

KEY OBSERVATIONS

Across all three discourses, women were politicized to further various actors' objectives.

VILLAIN DISCOURSE

- Women as villains by association with the Sena

VICTIM DISCOURSE

- Women as valuable and the Shiv Sena as protectors of women

HEROINE DISCOURSE

- Limited empowerment in sisterhood and solidarity

IMPLICATIONS & FUTURE RESEARCH

Implications

- How actors respond to women claiming agency
- A reconsideration of female empowerment and the politicization of women

Avenues of future exploration

- How do these women understand their own roles and actions?

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