The Politics of Everyday Survival: Domestic Labour, Care Work and Female Resistance in Banu Mushtaq's Heart Lamp

Ruchika
Research Scholar, University Department of English, Tilka Manjhi Bhagalpur University, Bhagalpur, Bihar.

Abstract:

Banu Mushtaq's Heart Lamp, translated from Kannada into English by Deepa Bhasthi, foregrounds the everyday lives of Muslim women whose experiences have largely remained absent from mainstream Indian literary discourse. Rather than portraying resistance through overt rebellion or organised political movements, Mushtaq locates female agency within domestic labour, caregiving, emotional resilience and ethical decision-making. This article argues that Heart Lamp redefines resistance as an everyday practice embedded in the ordinary routines of women's lives. Drawing upon Barbara Harlow's theory of Resistance Literature, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's concept of the subaltern, Silvia Federici's analysis of reproductive labour and James C. Scott's theory of everyday resistance, the study examines three representative stories "Stone Slabs for Shaista Mahal, " "Heart Lamp, " and "Black Cobras." Through these narratives, Mushtaq exposes the invisibility of women's domestic labour, critiques patriarchal interpretations of religion and family and reveals how care itself becomes a political act. Her female characters resist oppression not by abandoning their social roles but by transforming caregiving, moral courage, truthful speech and everyday survival into forms of resistance. The article demonstrates that Mushtaq's fiction expands conventional understandings of feminist resistance by showing that ordinary domestic spaces are also sites of political struggle. Ultimately, Heart Lamp presents women's everyday survival as a powerful assertion of dignity, justice and agency within unequal social structures.

Keywords: Banu Mushtaq, Heart Lamp, domestic labour, care work, everyday resistance, Muslim women, feminist literary criticism.

Introduction

Contemporary Indian women's writing has consistently challenged dominant literary traditions by foregrounding voices historically excluded from literary and political discourse. Writers such as Mahasweta Devi, Ismat Chughtai, Bama, Ambai and Banu Mushtaq demonstrate that gender oppression cannot be understood independently of religion, class, caste, language and economic inequality. Their works reveal that everyday domestic life is deeply political because structures of power are often reproduced within families, marriages and communities. Among these writers, Banu Mushtaq occupies a distinctive position for her sensitive portrayal of Muslim women's lives in Karnataka. Originally written in Kannada and translated into English

Published: 30 June 2026
DOI: https://doi.org/10.70558/SPIJSH.2026.v3.i6.45815

by Deepa Bhasthi, Heart Lamp extends these local experiences to a wider readership while preserving their cultural specificity.

Unlike narratives that celebrate extraordinary heroines or dramatic rebellion, Mushtaq's stories focus on ordinary women negotiating marriage, motherhood, widowhood, poverty, inheritance, caregiving and religious authority. Kitchens, courtyards, neighbourhoods and family homes become the principal settings through which unequal social relations are exposed. These domestic spaces are not merely private spheres but sites where women continually negotiate power, dignity and survival.

One of the greatest strengths of Heart Lamp lies in its refusal to reduce women either to helpless victims or idealised revolutionaries. Mushtaq's protagonists experience grief, fear, exhaustion and social discrimination, yet they continue to exercise ethical judgement within oppressive circumstances. Their agency is expressed through caregiving, moral courage, truthful speech and quiet acts of defiance. By locating resistance within everyday life rather than public political movements, Mushtaq broadens the meaning of feminist resistance.

The collection also offers a nuanced critique of the relationship between religion and patriarchy. Mushtaq does not portray Islam as inherently oppressive; instead, she exposes how patriarchal interpretations frequently distort religious principles to maintain male privilege. Women in these stories repeatedly invoke justice, compassion and ethical responsibility to challenge selective readings of religious authority. Consequently, Heart Lamp critiques patriarchal structures without dismissing faith itself.

Although recent scholarship has recognised Mushtaq as an important voice in contemporary Indian literature, much of the existing criticism has focused on Muslim identity, communal politics or gender discrimination in individual stories. Comparatively little attention has been devoted to the interconnected themes of domestic labour, care work and everyday resistance across the collection. This article addresses that gap by arguing that Heart Lamp reconceptualises domestic labour and caregiving as political practices through which women preserve dignity while quietly challenging patriarchal authority. Focusing on "Stone Slabs for Shaista Mahal, " "Heart Lamp, " and "Black Cobras, " the article demonstrates that Mushtaq transforms ordinary domestic experience into a powerful form of feminist resistance.

Review of Literature

Critical responses to Banu Mushtaq have primarily examined her representation of Muslim women's lives, communal politics and patriarchal oppression. Scholars have noted that her fiction questions discriminatory interpretations of religious law while foregrounding women's struggles for dignity and justice. The English translation of Heart Lamp has further expanded scholarly engagement with her work by introducing her narratives to an international audience.

Within Indian feminist literary criticism, domestic space has increasingly been recognised as a political site rather than a neutral private sphere. Feminist critics argue that household labour, caregiving and emotional work sustain families while remaining socially and economically invisible. Such perspectives are especially relevant to Mushtaq's fiction, where women perform the labour that holds families together but rarely receive recognition for their contributions.

Similarly, scholarship on everyday resistance has shifted attention away from spectacular acts of rebellion towards subtle forms of negotiation, endurance, moral courage and ethical refusal. These perspectives illuminate Mushtaq's representation of women whose resistance emerges through everyday practices rather than organised political action.

However, limited attention has been paid to the relationship between domestic labour, care work and everyday resistance across Heart Lamp as a unified collection. This article contributes to existing scholarship by demonstrating that caregiving itself becomes a political act through which women challenge patriarchal authority and preserve human dignity.

Theoretical Framework

This study employs an interdisciplinary framework combining Barbara Harlow's theory of Resistance Literature, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's concept of the subaltern, Silvia Federici's analysis of reproductive labour and James C. Scott's theory of everyday resistance.

Barbara Harlow argues that resistance literature challenges dominant structures of power by representing voices excluded from official histories. Although her work primarily addresses anti-colonial struggles, her understanding of literature as political intervention also illuminates patriarchal oppression. In Heart Lamp, resistance emerges not through revolution but through women's refusal to accept injustice as natural.

Spivak's concept of the subaltern provides another important perspective. She argues that marginalised women are often denied opportunities to represent themselves within dominant social structures. Mushtaq counters this silence by allowing women to narrate their own experiences of marriage, inheritance, caregiving, poverty and motherhood. Their voices reveal agency within conditions of social inequality.

Silvia Federici's analysis of reproductive labour demonstrates that cooking, cleaning, childcare, emotional care and domestic work sustain society while remaining economically invisible. Mushtaq repeatedly exposes this contradiction by showing that families depend upon women's labour even as that labour remains unacknowledged.

James C. Scott's theory of everyday resistance further explains the subtle forms of agency visible throughout the collection. Scott argues that subordinated groups frequently resist domination through negotiation, persistence, truthful speech and moral refusal rather than dramatic confrontation. Mushtaq's female characters embody precisely these forms of resistance. Their strength lies not in public revolution but in their ability to preserve dignity, justice and humanity within unequal social conditions.

The following discussion analyses three stories from Heart Lamp to demonstrate how domestic labour and care work become forms of everyday political resistance.

Domestic Labour, Memory and Everyday Resistance in "Stone Slabs for Shaista Mahal"

"Stone Slabs for Shaista Mahal" establishes the central political vision of Heart Lamp by exposing the invisibility of women's domestic labour within patriarchal marriage. Rather than presenting marriage as a relationship founded solely upon love and companionship, Banu Mushtaq reveals it as a social institution sustained by women's unpaid labour, emotional care

and continuous self-sacrifice. Through the experiences of Shaista, Zeenat, Iftikhar and the children left behind after Shaista's death, the story demonstrates that the household itself is a political space where gendered power is produced and maintained. Domestic work, caregiving and motherhood are shown not as natural feminine duties but as labour upon which the family depends while simultaneously refusing to acknowledge its value.

The story opens with Zeenat's reflections on marriage, immediately questioning the language through which patriarchal authority is normalised. Observing that wives are expected to obey and serve their husbands regardless of religious identity, she remarks:

"No matter which religion one belongs to, it is accepted that the wife is the husband's most obedient servant, his bonded labourer." (Mushtaq 7)

This observation introduces one of the collection's most important arguments: patriarchy is sustained not only through laws and customs but also through everyday language that normalises female obedience. Zeenat's words expose the ideological foundation of domestic life, revealing that women's subordination is often accepted as common sense. Read through Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak's concept of the subaltern, this moment demonstrates how patriarchal discourse attempts to define women's identities before they are able to define themselves. By openly questioning this assumption, Zeenat performs the story's first act of resistance.

Shaista's life further illustrates the invisibility of domestic labour. Throughout her marriage she cooks, cleans, raises children, comforts family members and maintains emotional harmony within the household. Yet none of these activities is recognised as productive labour. They are treated as natural responsibilities rather than work deserving acknowledgement or equality. Silvia Federici argues that reproductive labour sustains both the family and the larger economy while remaining economically invisible because it is performed primarily by women. Shaista embodies this contradiction. Her labour keeps the household functioning, but it is rewarded only through sentimental appreciation instead of genuine recognition.

Mushtaq deepens this critique through Iftikhar's behaviour following Shaista's death. During her lifetime he repeatedly dreams of constructing a magnificent "Shaista Mahal" in her memory, suggesting that his love will endure forever. However, this romantic image collapses almost immediately after her death. When Zeenat returns to visit the family, she discovers that Iftikhar has already remarried. Asked about his decision, he explains:

"I married her the day after Shaista's fortieth-day fatiha was over. She is from a poor family. I need someone to look after the children after all; that is why." (Mushtaq 21)

The statement exposes the economic logic hidden beneath patriarchal sentimentality. The new marriage is justified not through love but through the practical necessity of replacing the unpaid domestic labour previously performed by Shaista. What appears irreplaceable while a woman is alive becomes immediately replaceable after her death because the patriarchal household ultimately depends not upon the individual woman but upon the labour she performs. Mushtaq thereby dismantles romantic ideals of marriage by revealing its dependence upon invisible female work.

Barbara Harlow's theory of Resistance Literature helps explain the political significance of this critique. Harlow argues that literature resists dominant ideology by exposing the structures of power concealed within everyday life. In this story, Mushtaq reveals that the household is neither private nor apolitical. Instead, it is a site where gender inequality is reproduced through the unequal distribution of labour. By exposing the gap between romantic rhetoric and lived reality, the narrative challenges patriarchal assumptions that naturalise women's unpaid work.

The most explicit challenge to patriarchal hypocrisy comes through Zeenat's confrontation with Iftikhar. Refusing to remain silent, she tells him:

"Do not repeat the declarations of love you made to Shaista with her. It is OK if you do not get a Shaista Mahal built, or make arrangement for stone slabs to be put all around her grave... but if your eternal love reaches Shaista where she is and she were to wake up and come back, you will be in great trouble." (Mushtaq 21)

Her ironic response transforms personal grief into political criticism. Rather than accepting the cultural expectation that women remain silent about family matters, Zeenat exposes the contradiction between masculine declarations of devotion and masculine dependence upon women's labour. James C. Scott's concept of everyday resistance is particularly relevant here. Scott argues that resistance often appears through subtle acts such as questioning, irony and moral refusal rather than organised rebellion. Zeenat's words do not overthrow patriarchy, but they refuse to legitimise its hypocrisy. Her speech therefore becomes a powerful act of everyday resistance.

The story also explores the intergenerational burden of caregiving through Asifa, who assumes maternal responsibilities after Shaista's death. Watching the young girl care for her younger siblings, Zeenat reflects:

"She is not my daughter; she is my mother." (Mushtaq 22)

This remarkable reversal illustrates how patriarchal systems transfer domestic responsibilities from one female body to another. Childhood itself becomes secondary to caregiving. Asifa's emotional maturity reflects extraordinary resilience, but Mushtaq refuses to romanticise her sacrifice. Instead, she reveals how girls inherit responsibilities that should never belong exclusively to them. Care work becomes another form of invisible labour that sustains the family while denying young girls the freedom of childhood.

At the same time, Asifa's actions embody ethical strength. She preserves love, stability and hope within a family disrupted by loss. Through caregiving she demonstrates that domestic labour possesses moral and political significance. What patriarchy dismisses as ordinary household responsibility becomes, in Mushtaq's hands, a form of resistance that protects human dignity against systems of inequality.

The symbolism of the unbuilt "Shaista Mahal" reinforces this idea. The imagined palace represents patriarchal remembrance that celebrates women only after their labour has ended. Mushtaq contrasts this fantasy with the ordinary realities of cooking meals, comforting children, maintaining relationships and preserving family life. Shaista's true memorial is not a

monument of stone but the lives she sustained through everyday acts of care. Her legacy survives in ethical relationships rather than architectural grandeur.

Ultimately, "Stone Slabs for Shaista Mahal" demonstrates that the politics of Heart Lamp begins within the ordinary routines of domestic life. Cooking, caregiving, truthful speech and emotional endurance become forms of resistance because they expose the inequalities concealed beneath idealised images of marriage and family. Through Shaista's invisible labour, Zeenat's fearless criticism and Asifa's compassionate resilience, Mushtaq reveals that women's everyday survival is itself a political act. The story therefore establishes the conceptual foundation for the entire collection by redefining resistance as the continuous struggle to preserve dignity, justice and humanity within patriarchal society.

Care, Compassion and the Ethics of Resistance in "Heart Lamp"

While "Stone Slabs for Shaista Mahal" exposes the invisibility of women's domestic labour within marriage, the title story, "Heart Lamp, " expands Mushtaq's exploration of resistance by focusing on emotional care and ethical responsibility. The story demonstrates that resistance does not always emerge through confrontation or open defiance. Instead, it is often expressed through compassion, endurance and the determination to preserve one's dignity despite overwhelming social and personal suffering. The metaphor of the "heart lamp" symbolises an inner source of hope that continues to illuminate life even in moments of despair. Through this image, Mushtaq argues that survival itself can become a political act.

The female protagonist of the story, Mehrun, lives within circumstances shaped by poverty, gender discrimination and emotional isolation. Like many women throughout the collection, she bears the responsibility of sustaining her family while receiving little recognition for her labour. Her daily routine is dominated by cooking, cleaning, caring for children and managing household responsibilities. These repetitive acts may appear ordinary, yet they form the foundation upon which family life depends. Mushtaq deliberately centres these seemingly insignificant activities to reveal that domestic labour is neither passive nor apolitical. Instead, it represents the invisible work through which women preserve both life and community.

Mushtaq presents Mehrun's suffering as the consequence of patriarchal decisions that deprive women of education and personal agency. Reflecting on her parents' decision to marry her at an early age, Mehrun painfully recalls:

> "I fell at your feet, saying that I didn't want to get married... I begged you not to make me stop studying. None of you listened to me... Many of my classmates aren't even married and yet I have become an old woman. I have the burden of five children on me. Their father is roaming around and I don’t have a life. When a man is doing such a haram thing, are none of you able to ask him why is he doing this?" (Mushtaq 100)

This confession reveals that Mehrun's oppression begins long before her husband's neglect. By denying her education and forcing her into early marriage, patriarchal authority confines her to unpaid domestic and reproductive labour. Mushtaq thus exposes how women's aspirations are sacrificed in favour of socially sanctioned gender roles.

Even while experiencing emotional devastation, Mehrun continues to fulfil the domestic responsibilities expected of her. The narrator observes:

> "The conversation continued... and the food was ready because Mehrun had made it... Mehrun came out from the kitchen only once, only briefly." (Mushtaq 106)

This seemingly ordinary detail highlights the invisibility of women's domestic labour. Although Mehrun is emotionally distressed, the household continues to depend on her caregiving. Her unpaid labour remains unnoticed, reinforcing Silvia Federici's argument that reproductive work sustains society while remaining socially unrecognised.

Silvia Federici's theory of reproductive labour provides an important framework for understanding the protagonist's experience. Federici argues that domestic work is essential for the reproduction of society because it sustains human life, yet it remains economically invisible precisely because it is associated with women. Mushtaq illustrates this contradiction by showing that the protagonist's labour is indispensable to her family while simultaneously being treated as an unquestioned duty. The story therefore challenges the assumption that care work is simply an expression of feminine nature. Rather, it reveals caregiving as labour that deserves recognition and respect.

Unlike narratives that define resistance through dramatic acts of rebellion, "Heart Lamp" presents endurance as an ethical choice rather than passive acceptance. The protagonist repeatedly refuses to surrender to humiliation or bitterness. Instead, she continues to protect those around her despite her own emotional exhaustion. Her resilience should not be interpreted as submission. Rather, it reflects a conscious commitment to preserving humanity within circumstances designed to diminish it. This distinction is central to Mushtaq's feminist vision. Endurance becomes meaningful because it is accompanied by moral judgement and quiet refusal to internalise oppression.

Barbara Harlow's concept of Resistance Literature helps explain why such ordinary actions possess political significance. Harlow argues that literature emerging from conditions of oppression transforms everyday experience into a critique of dominant power. Mushtaq similarly demonstrates that the household is not separate from politics. Every meal prepared, every child protected and every act of compassion performed under conditions of inequality becomes a refusal to allow patriarchal structures to destroy human relationships. Care is therefore represented not as weakness but as a form of resistance.

James C. Scott's theory of everyday resistance further illuminates the protagonist's quiet strength. Scott argues that subordinated individuals frequently resist domination through persistence, negotiation, silence and moral refusal rather than open confrontation. The protagonist embodies precisely these strategies. She rarely challenges authority through public protest, yet she continually asserts her dignity through practical decisions, emotional resilience and unwavering commitment to justice. Her refusal to abandon compassion, even when confronted with suffering, undermines patriarchal expectations that women should silently accept exploitation without preserving their own sense of self.

The symbolism of the "heart lamp" reinforces this interpretation. A lamp provides light in darkness, enabling people to continue moving forward despite uncertainty. Similarly, the protagonist's inner strength illuminates possibilities for survival within oppressive social conditions. The title suggests that hope does not originate from external institutions but from the ethical resilience cultivated within ordinary women. This inner light enables them to continue caring for others without surrendering their own humanity.

Mushtaq also challenges conventional representations of feminine sacrifice. The protagonist certainly makes sacrifices for her family, but the narrative refuses to glorify suffering as an ideal female virtue. Instead, it emphasises the emotional cost of caregiving while simultaneously recognising its transformative power. Care is presented not as unquestioning obedience but as an ethical practice grounded in dignity, compassion and justice. By distinguishing between imposed sacrifice and freely chosen responsibility, Mushtaq restores agency to women's domestic roles.

Spivak's concept of the subaltern further enriches this reading. Women like the protagonist are often excluded from public spaces where political decisions are made. Nevertheless, Mushtaq allows them to narrate their own experiences, emotions and ethical reflections. Their voices challenge stereotypes that portray marginalised women solely as victims. Instead, the story reveals individuals capable of critical thought, moral judgement and quiet resistance.

Ultimately, "Heart Lamp" argues that caregiving itself possesses political significance. The protagonist's everyday labour sustains not only her family but also the ethical values of compassion, justice and hope. Mushtaq therefore redefines resistance by locating it within ordinary acts of care rather than extraordinary acts of rebellion. The "heart lamp" becomes a metaphor for women's enduring capacity to preserve humanity within systems that repeatedly seek to silence and devalue them.

Fear, Bodily Autonomy and Everyday Resistance in "Black Cobras"

If Stone Slabs for Shaista Mahal examines the invisibility of domestic labour and Heart Lamp foregrounds the politics of caregiving, Black Cobras extends Mushtaq's critique by exposing how patriarchy controls women's bodies, reproductive choices and public voices through religious authority. The story centres on Ashraf, whose repeated pregnancies, poverty and her husband's neglect reveal that female suffering is produced not by fate but by patriarchal interpretations of religion. Resistance therefore emerges not through open rebellion but through women's insistence on dignity, justice and bodily autonomy.

Mushtaq immediately establishes the unequal burden of reproductive labour through Amina's exhausted protest to the mutawalli. Having already given birth to seven children in ten years, she asks,

"My back is broken. These children, the home, samsara – do I have even a minute of free time? If I bear one child per year, what will I become? Don't you want me to live long enough to be a mother to these children at least?" (Mushtaq 43)

This desperate plea exposes the physical cost of endless motherhood while asserting a woman's right to control her own body. Instead of receiving compassion, she is silenced when the mutawalli replies,

"I am the mutawalli; if people get to know that I got the operation done for a woman in my own house, I will have to be answerable to them." (Mushtaq 43)

Here, patriarchal authority privileges public reputation over women's lives.

Ashraf's suffering becomes the emotional centre of the story. Watching her sick child, she reflects that

"Not for herself – hers was a dog's belly that could be filled somehow. She was ready to fight for their right to live." (Mushtaq 46)

Mushtaq transforms maternal care into a form of resistance. Even while facing hunger and illness, Ashraf refuses to abandon her children, demonstrating that caregiving itself becomes an ethical and political act.

The story further exposes the injustice of a society that blames women for circumstances beyond their control. Zulekha Begum directly questions patriarchal logic when she asks,

"The Prophet himself had only daughters... Have you read about how much he loved his daughters? They were living proof of the bond that can exist between father and daughter." (Mushtaq 48)

By invoking religious history, Mushtaq challenges selective interpretations of Islam that privilege sons and justify discrimination against women.

James C. Scott's theory of everyday resistance helps explain these moments of quiet defiance. Ashraf rarely confronts patriarchal authority publicly, yet she repeatedly refuses to surrender morally. She writes petitions, seeks justice, struggles to feed her children and continues protecting her family despite relentless hardship. Her resistance lies in perseverance rather than open revolt.

Barbara Harlow's concept of Resistance Literature is equally relevant because Mushtaq transforms domestic suffering into political critique. The household becomes a site where patriarchal power is exposed through everyday experiences of poverty, pregnancy, abandonment and emotional labour. Rather than presenting oppression as exceptional, Mushtaq demonstrates how injustice is woven into ordinary domestic life.

Silvia Federici's theory of reproductive labour further illuminates the story. Women's work remains indispensable even while their own health deteriorates. Ashraf continues caring for children despite starvation and illness, revealing the invisible labour that sustains both family and society. The narrative exposes how patriarchy demands endless caregiving while refusing women control over reproduction or economic security.

Perhaps the most powerful act of resistance occurs when Ashraf finally rejects the humiliation imposed upon her. Refusing to accept her husband's second marriage as inevitable, she declares,

"He – not one – let him get married a thousand times. I am not jealous. As long as he is happy, that's enough for me. I am not going to trouble him. But, Mutawalli Saheb, this child is dying. At least medicine for—" (Mushtaq 51)

Her words shift the conversation away from male desire toward a mother's urgent demand for justice and survival. Rather than pleading for her marriage, she demands recognition of her child's right to live.

Through Black Cobras, Mushtaq demonstrates that resistance often begins with ordinary women refusing to accept silence as their destiny. Read through the perspectives of Barbara Harlow, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Silvia Federici and James C. Scott, the story reveals that women's everyday struggles over motherhood, labour, dignity and bodily autonomy are deeply political. Ashraf and Amina may not lead revolutions, yet their determination to question injustice, protect their children and assert their humanity transforms everyday survival into a powerful form of resistance.

Conclusion

Banu Mushtaq's Heart Lamp offers a powerful redefinition of feminist resistance by locating it within the ordinary experiences of domestic life. Through Stone Slabs for Shaista Mahal, Heart Lamp and Black Cobras, she demonstrates that domestic labour, caregiving, emotional resilience and moral courage are not merely private responsibilities but deeply political practices. Her women rarely engage in public rebellion; instead, they negotiate oppressive structures through truthful speech, ethical judgement, compassion and everyday perseverance.

Read through the theoretical perspectives of Barbara Harlow, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Silvia Federici and James C. Scott, these stories reveal that resistance often emerges within spaces traditionally dismissed as apolitical. Kitchens, family homes and neighbourhoods become sites where women question patriarchal authority, challenge social injustice and preserve human dignity. Mushtaq's fiction therefore expands the meaning of resistance beyond organised political movements to include the subtle but transformative practices of everyday survival.

The collection also challenges simplistic representations of Muslim women by distinguishing between faith and patriarchal interpretations of religion. Rather than rejecting religious belief, Mushtaq exposes how injustice arises through selective interpretations that privilege male authority. Her women reclaim ethical principles of justice, compassion and dignity to challenge discrimination from within their own communities.

Ultimately, Heart Lamp demonstrates that the politics of survival is inseparable from the politics of care. Domestic labour, emotional support and caregiving sustain not only families but also the ethical foundations of society itself. By making this invisible labour visible, Mushtaq compels readers to recognise that the struggle for gender justice often begins in the ordinary routines of everyday life. Her fiction reminds us that some of the most enduring forms of resistance are performed quietly by women whose courage lies in their unwavering commitment to dignity, justice and hope.

References

1. Bhasthi, Deepa, translator. Heart Lamp. Translated from the Kannada of Banu Mushtaq, Penguin Random House India, 2025.
2. Federici, Silvia. Revolution at Point Zero: Housework, Reproduction, and Feminist Struggle. PM Press, 2012.
3. Harlow, Barbara. Resistance Literature. Routledge, 1987.
4. Scott, James C. Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance. Yale UP, 1985.
5. Spivak, Gayatri Chakravorty. "Can the Subaltern Speak?" Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture, edited by Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, University of Illinois Press, 1988, pp. 271–313.