



## *A Woman*

*A woman is rinsing clothes,  
Rinsing them  
Through centuries,  
Spreading them to dry  
Between earth and heaven.  
On a line of heat.*

*Deprived of the sky  
Of air and of light,  
A woman is kneading  
Mounds of flour.*

*A woman is threshing the fields  
With the flail of the four winds,*

*A woman is fording  
The river of time,  
Wearing out her feet  
On the midday stones,  
Through age after age.*

*Clasping the world to her breast,  
A woman is letting flow  
Rivers of milk.*

*A bundle of grass on her head,  
A woman is pacing the earth,  
Since time immemorial.*

*A woman is lying in the dark  
Beside a snoring man—  
A woman unclothed, sleepless,  
Through centuries.*

*A woman's body  
Wanders amidst milling crowds.  
Her hands  
Search for her face,  
Her feet  
Search for their place.*

—Chandrakant Devtale

*(translated by Manushi from the Hindi  
original in Stree Sangharsh)*