

STEREOTYPED PORTRAYALS

**Images of Women in Cinema: In the context of
Tradition – Modernity**

*Dissertation submitted to Jawaharlal Nehru University In partial
fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of*

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "**STEREOTYPED PORTRAYALS, Images of Women in Cinema: In the context of Tradition-Modernity**" submitted by Ms. Sushree Panigrahi in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of **Master Of Philosophy** of this university, has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this or any other University. This is my original work.

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We recommend that this dissertation may be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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*Dedicated to,
my Daddy*

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CHAPTER-I

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation deals with the images of women in cinema, especially Hindi mainstream cinema. The images of women would be seen in the tradition modernity context. By images is meant the various roles women play on screen and how they are represented.

One of the reasons for taking up this topic was my own personal interest. Articles in newspapers and journals aroused my interest in this topic. Hindi films were chosen as they have a wider appeal. Also most of the research till now has been mostly on Hindi mainstream cinema, which further influenced my decision.

Film studies is a relatively new field, which started during the seventies. Since then many theories and perspectives have come up. Film studies are often seen as part of cultural studies. Sociology in India has usually tended not to look at films from an academic point of view. This may be because research in films is seen as too frivolous. But now there is an increasing interest as there is evidence that cinema influences people and is an important medium of expression. Similarly the role of television is also an important area of research. This is because visual images have a tremendous impact on people, their attitudes and lifestyles. All this is of immense importance for a sociologist.

Film is a dynamic, complex art form. Dynamic, because it is constantly changing and adapting itself to new developments. Sometimes it may go beyond the realms of reality and delve into an imagined world. The director, no doubt, puts in his own ideas,

feelings, perceptions into a film but he too functions within a certain societal framework. This framework consists of socio-economic conditions, traditions, values prevailing in the society. Thus the film, to a certain extent reflects the true state of the society.

Film industry is one of the largest industries of India, churning out nearly 800 films a year. While in the North, Hindi films dominate, in the South regional film are more popular. Many a times the story of a film may be borrowed from the North or South but changes are made to make it more acceptable to the people of the region. This is because people identify easily with what they see as their own culture, practices etc.

Indian films can be divided into two types mainstream and parallel cinema. Mainstream cinema may be defined as the commercial cinema whose main concern is profit and success at the box office. Common people, women, children and the aged see parallel cinema as catering to a select intellectual, elite group and claims to portray 'social reality' the problem faced. The purpose is to expose harsh realities of life while mainstream cinema diverts attention from day to day problems and entertain people through family drama, comedy and romance. However, mainstream cinema is not entirely removed from reality. It may portray problems of corruption, unemployment dowry, communal prejudices. This is clear when we look at the different themes in films. The seventies was a period of social unrest, wayward governance, inflation, and the break-up of joint family. So we find a spate of films depicting the problems of unemployment, poverty, the issue of joint family versus nuclear family. The eighties was the era of terrorism and disappointment with the state on issues of corruption and unemployment. There were

films which showed a leader emerging who fights against the state, brings people together, mobilizes them to fight against injustice. The nineties have brought with them the themes of romance, materialism, revival of traditional ideas along with modernity. Though technological advancements have improved the quality of films the thematic content remains more or less the same with slight variations.

A film often uses stereotypes to build up its characters. Thus what we see may be a bundle of prejudices and preconceived notions. It may be ideas about a particular community or even notions of 'masculinity' or 'femininity'. The film depicts through symbols, language, signs as to what is wrong and what is right, what is good or what is bad, who is the ideal man or woman and who is not. Films may take a moralistic stand where it tries to show that evil is ultimately vanquished and that truth triumphs.

At the same time films perpetuate wrong ideas and strengthen the stereotypes. They reflect the social reality of the times we live in film does not digress from the existing idea of culture, value, tradition. A radically different approach may mean rejection by the public. This in turn means economic loss. To prevent all this most of the times films function on the basis of predictability and changes within the limit of acceptability.

Today with globalization (one of the major consequences of modernity) barriers-physical and cultural are breaking down. Western media has invaded our lives. This has instilled fear of loss of our tradition and culture. Thus the films now harp on the greatness, richness of Indian tradition values, and at the same time in order to move with the times, put in new modern ideas. There is an attempt to show a peaceful co-existence of tradition

and modernity. This is one of the things that will be discussed in this work.

This dissertation attempts to correlate media and modernity, more specifically cinema and modernity. Communication, before the development of technology was on a one to one basis. The means of communication were limited and tedious in the case of long distance community. With the technological innovations associated with modernity, the very nature of communication changed. With this the very means and ways of communication changed.

The changes in communication media brought about changes in representation of nation and people. The nation-states, which emerged as a consequence of modernity, used the media to propagate national symbols, national culture etc., Thus began the two way relationship between nation-state and media. In India this meant that the media represented the Indian culture. There is a change in the localized identities have now become part of a national identity. The women is now located in the larger national context and it is at this level that her images are being stereotyped and cast in a traditional framework. It is to be understood that these images are only superficial representations of a perceived view of tradition. At a different level even this view of tradition can be questioned but that would be beyond the scope of this work. The emphasis was on *mera bharat, Bharatiya, Nari* etc., The sharp division between cultures with in the country started to breakdown. Though each retained it's uniqueness an awareness was spread about other cultures through the media. This also meant a debate in modernity, which bought about this change, and the existing tradition It is this debate which will be discussed in the context

of women in cinema. An attempt will be made to look at the cultural representations of Indian women within the framework of Indian tradition and modernity of the west.

OBJECTIVE OF THIS STUDY

There are three main objectives of this study. They are as follows:

1. To trace growth of modernity in the west and the rise of media. To similarly trace rise of modernity and growth of media in India.
2. To study the concepts and conceptual categories employed in the study of mass media and women.
3. To analyze the representation of women in visual media especially mainstream Hindi cinema with an emphasis on stereotypes created and sustained in this process.

SCOPE OF STUDY

The scope of study is limited to understanding and analyzing images of women depicted in mainstream Hindi cinema and this analysis will be within the framework of tradition and modernity the two most influential social process in the field of visual sociology.

The scope has been limited to mainstream cinema due to the limitation placed by space and time considerations.

SOURCE OF DATA:

The study will draw upon already published, secondary data. Since M. Phil dissertation have to limit themselves to secondary sources. However it has to be accepted that a study of a similar nature could have been done much of more effectively if primary

data were to be relied upon as primary sources would have opened up an extensive source of data on which it is not necessary that published work is available.

CHAPTERISATION

This is the scheme of chapterisation followed in this dissertation. The first chapter which is still under discussion is the introduction where an effort was made to give the background which would facilitate an easier understanding of the central objective of the dissertation. It is generally customary to give a definition of the concepts used in the first chapter itself but the sheer number of concepts and conceptual categories involved and their relationship with the concerns of the second chapter have made it necessary that they be placed in the second chapter.

The second chapter will further deal with the relationship between women and mass media. The chapter will also explore the position of women in society in general, and feminist perspectives in brief.

The third chapter deals with social and historical processes which lead to be rise of mass media. The process that are discussed are enlightenment, the rise of sociology, modernity, nation-states in the west.

The fourth chapter deals with the development of mass media in India. It also, discusses the Indian experience of modernity and tradition.

The fifth chapter discusses the images of women in Hindi mainstream cinema. In the framework of Indian-tradition and modernity.

The final chapter will be conclusion and the summary, which will contain the findings of the research.

CHAPTER-II

CONCEPTUAL CATEGORIES USED IN THE ANALYSIS OF MASS MEDIA AND WOMEN

Sociology as a discipline is characterized by the usage of precise concepts. In the case of sociology of media studies a similar body of concepts and categories has been developed. An understanding of these concepts is prerequisite for gaining a proper understanding of media sociology. This chapter contains a general introduction on various types of mass communication and function of mass communication. There is a section on women in general and further a similar discussion on Indian women will follow. A discussion on women and their roles prescribed to them by tradition and norms will facilitate understanding of their role in media.

This chapter will conclude with a discussion on women and media. The role of women on radio, TV and in Newspapers be it in a commercial or in the administrative process.

MASS COMMUNICATION:

D'Souza (1998,p.5) points out 5 types of communication

- (1) **Mass Communication-** This includes Television, Radio, Magazines, Film, musical recordings. This type of communication involves a large number of people and some type of machinery for duplication Mass media is used by people for information, entertainment, advertisement by

leaders, organisation. Leaders and organisation hope to influence people and in turn society as a whole.

- (2) **Public Communication:** In this category one person addresses an audience. The speaker intends to inform, motivate and entertain. The speaker can also impart information, facts to the audience. The audience is able to interact with the speaker due to the face to face nature of communication.
- (3) **Small Group Communication:** This type includes work groups, families, small committees. These group are goal oriented or enable people to achieve certain goal collectively. A group like the family satisfies personal needs of the person.
- (4) **Inter Personal Communication:** This is the most basic form of communication- one between two people. There is an element of shared thoughts and feelings.
- (5) **Intra Personal Communication:** This refers to the individuals ability to think, feel, use language for expressing ideas and understanding others.

Speech is seen as the most obvious form of communication code. It involves a set of symbols and signals that create meaning for people. The non-verbal meaning codes are equally important but adequate attention has not been paid to them.

The relationship between society and symbolic structures is an important part of social research. The linguistic study of a certain kind can lead to the understanding of a society and its processes. The concept of code is very important in

communication and cultural studies. Three different lines of research have contributed to this (Corner, 1996 p.200).

- (a) The concept of 'encoding' and 'decoding' was borrowed from information theory, whereby a message could become signal or vice-versa.
- (b) Secondly, there were the socio-linguistic for whom 'code' was a frame of consistency, (Basil Barnstein) and 'social structuring of meaning' codes were said to be determined by social relationship and that these 'codes' were actually codes of behaviour.
- (c) The third line of research was that of structuralist cultural analysis. Here the meaning of any code is located within certain wholes or the system.

The whole is often viewed as that concept, which bridge the gap between society and language. Codes are used extensively in the analysis of ~~media~~ media. The message passed on television is a combination of different codes. The way a certain thing is said even, what is said has social implication. Codes help in analysis in cultural studies. On interpreting any text be it a film or television programme the codes act as cues and can be used in tracing the ideological framework within which the text was produced. Other codes are those which help in the transmission of visual and verbal meaning. Several codes are required to understand the meaning of a text. Stuart Hall (2000, p.10) shows how a meaning can be obtained by a photograph by using codes. But this also meant that different people would interpret a text differently depending on the codes they were using.

Thompson (1990, p.217) in "Ideology and Culture" points out some basic characteristics of mass communication. Thompson writes that though 'mass' denotes that the message transmitted by the media reaches out to a large number of people, many-a-times it is not so. Certain books, newspapers, magazines cater to the needs of only a particular segment of the society. Thompson (1990, p.218) clarifies that the term mass denotes that "the products are available in principle to a plurality of recipients". He further states that the "mass" is not passive or homogeneous. Rather it plays an active role in interpreting the messages received.

Thompson defines mass communication as "the institutionalized production and generalized diffusion of symbolic goods via the transmission and storage of information/communication" (Thompson, 1990, p.219). Thus according to Thompson the four characteristics of mass communication are-

- (a) Institutionalized production and diffusion of symbolic goods. Mass communication involves large-scale production so that it is available to a large number of recipients. For example, thousands of copies of newspapers are made so that maximum member of people can read it. Further certain symbolic forms are fixed and this involves the process of encoding which helps translate symbolic forms into information. The symbolic form have become commodified and have a economic value. The symbolic value is in the sense of it's worthiness and how it is received by the individuals. The economics is price for which it is available in the market. This we keep experiencing in terms of books,

newspapers etc. The greater the symbolic value the greater the economic value.

- (b) The second important characteristic of mass communication is that the process of production and reception is not a continuous one. Instead there may be a long gap between production and reception. The production takes place in a particular context and its recipients are located in diverse places. Thus it may look like one way communication, as the feed back is not immediate. "The capacity of the recipient to influence the process of production transmission diffusion is strictly limited. Feedback may be obtained, if desired, and that may influence production. But such feedback takes time and is not immediate.
- (c) The third characteristic of mass communication is that it extends the availability of symbolic forms in time and in space". (Thompson, 1990, p.221). We have already seen that there is a gap between production and reception. But the symbolic forms produced are available to many through satellites, television. Also mass communication involves storage. Even in the past messages have been passed down on paper, stone etc., Today media messages are stored in tapes, films, paper which are available across space and time. These messages which are produced today can be viewed and used even year later.
- (d) The fourth characteristic of mass communication is that it is for a large number of people. "They are available in principles to anyone who has the technical

means, abilities and resources to acquire them. While the nature and scope of this public domain may be unlimited in principle, it is always limited in practice by the social historical conditions of production, transmission and reception". (Thompson, 1990, p.222). The audience depends on the type of medium. The audience vary "depending on the medium, produce, the channels of diffusion, the social and technical condition of reception" (Thompson, 1990, p.222). Availability to the public also means certain regulation and restriction by the state.

Thompson further feels that "technical media has a fundamental impact on the way people act and interact with one another. New technical media make possible new forms of social interaction, modify or undermine old forms of interaction, create new foci and new venues for action and interaction, and thereby serve to restructure existing social relation and institution and organization of which they are part" (Thompson, 225). He points out four dimension of the international impact of technical media.

- (1) Facilitate interaction across time and space. Individuals who are separated by great distance can interact with one another. Thompson gives the example of how telephone and letters bridge spaces. He writes that in mass communication certain symbolic forms travel across time and space. The interaction which takes place in such a case is a mediated quasi interaction. Thus personalities appearing on screen are more than mere homes and faces- People develop feelings for them and

try to know more about them. The specific spatial and temporal characteristics of electronically mediated quasi-interaction depends on-

- (a) Nature of technical medium
- (b) Institutional apparatus of diffusion
- (c) Context and condition of reception
- (d) Nature and content of symbolic forms transmitted.

Thus sharing the same physical space is no longer a prerequisite

(2) Acting for distant others: Thompson writes that new means of communication also means new ways of communication. Our style of communication is influenced and determined by our means of communication. This is why a letter is different from a face to face conversation. Thompson gives the example of how actors on television have to keep in mind that whatever they say will have an impact on the audience. This is why there is lot of rehearsal and decision making involving on what is to be said and shown. It is not spontaneous. Similarly public figures who present themselves before an audience project a much-cultivated image. This enables them to influence the thoughts of the audience.

(3) Acting in response to distant others.

Thompson writes that since mass communication reaches out to millions of people their response is also of great magnitude. Though of course the response is not immediate

and also not predictable. Each recipient can react in any way he wants and since there is no direct contact and the response depends on the location of the recipient. On the other hand some images may evoke a similar response across localities. "By creating the possibility for new kinds of responsive action of action that responds, sometimes connectedly, to individuals and events that spatially and temporally remote, the development of mass communication has introduced a new and fundamentally important element into social and political life" (Thompson, 1990, p.234).

(4) "The social organisation of receptive activity". The final point Thompson makes is that new forms of interaction are established where individuals are continuously receiving messages and interpreting it. The individuals are not only engaged in a quasi-interaction with the medium but also interact with another often exchanging notes on the message just received. Thompson points out that medium of mass communication occupies a certain place in the layout of the house which points at its importance. Often certain programs become favourites and work may be scheduled so that the programme is not missed. He writes that "selection of programmes" and "which programme can be watched by whom" in a house depend upon" the relations of power between parents and children and between men and women" (Thompson, 237)

Thus we see that the neither production nor interpreting / receiving media messages is easy, instead it is a complex process.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE ON WOMEN

The main purpose of this dissertation is to look at the images of women in media. It is hence necessary to look at the position of women in society especially in the Indian society. This will be related to the roles assigned to women in films. It is also necessary to look at the various processes, which have brought about changes. This section also includes various feminist perspectives and their influence on media.

“Gender role differentiation is associated with gender differences in behaviour, attitudes, disposition traits, If also leads to stereotyping formation of consensual beliefs about differences between the sexes”. (Margaret Mooney Maxim, 1988, 374)

Maxim further quotes Hiddian and Best (1982) “ In keeping with the similarities in the pattern of gender role across societies, there is a considerable degree of similarity in gender stereotypes”. Almost everywhere “instrumental traits are associated with males and expressive with females”. But there is a general agreement between the sexes that there are certain traits, which differentiate the two sexes. Marini asserts that “there is no consistent evidence that sexes differ in cognitive style, creativity, independence’s, general Self-esteem etc.,” Though there are certain evidences which show that males have an advantage where quantitative and spatial abilities are concerned and females in verbal abilities.

Biological differences are the most obvious ones and almost all other differences are linked to biological differences. But research has shown that differences are also cultural in origin. Blumerg and Chafetz look at the factors that affect ‘ women’s

relative economic power” and relate this to the degree of gender equality’. Blumberg identifies those factors which enhance “strategic indispensability and some factors which determines differentiation. The society determines as to how each sex should behave and what is expected of them and men and women incorporate this. School, parents, role models, mass media play a major role in conditioning desire and expectations.

Allocation of individuals to institutional positions on the basis of sex involves actions by others, channels individuals into position irrespective of desires and expectation.

In the women’s movements of 19th and 20th century, feminists argued for a degendered society. This they felt would mean that social existence would not be determined by sex and also an end to male dominance. This view assumes that gender characteristics are acquired. And alternate sexual politics and analysis of sexual inequality has tended towards an essentialist position, posing male-female differences as innate. Some feminists feel that the society should be taken over by women and womanly qualities. This would signify an end to male dominance. All those qualities which are seen as essentially feminine and seen as a result of biology, which in truth are connected to certain social roles like mothering, particular body image etc., would now be dominant. This view asserts that women are intrinsically better than men and their virtues are not available to men. It is further felt that these womanly virtues should be spread and replace manly attributes of aggression and competition. The womanly virtues can be acquired by men provided there is social recognition and development. There are

others who feel that women should acquire male' characteristics for more equal opportunities.

Industrialization led to changes in the gender equation. But the changes were not necessarily for the better. In the pre-industrial era the upper class women were not expected to work. They were busy with decorating themselves and the house, only the poor or lower class women worked and were looked down upon. Thus most women wanted to find a "good" husband for themselves so that they could lead a prosperous life.

Catherine Hall (2000, p.201) looks at the changing scenario where work and women were concerned. "The Victorians acknowledged the seamier aspects of capitalism in representing the world of work as ruthless, polluted, Dangerous, Women were seen as essentially pure but easily led astray, if they went to work they were considered to risk moral corruption and sexual seduction. Instead, they should devote themselves, to domestic duties, restoring husbands after their return from work, raising children and setting a moral example to them and making the home a comfortable place, either through their own housework or by managing a household of servants. "The women were expected to be involved in charitable work and nothing else. This division was clearly on the basis of biological differences, which in turn brought about personality differences.

One can get an idea about the western woman from several works of fiction and also writers of these novels. Talented writers like Charlotte Bronte and Emily Bronte were looked down upon. When Charlotte Bronte posted a few poems the reply she got from Southey's was " Literature" , Southey gave out "cannot be the business of woman's life and it ought not to be, the more

she is engaged in her proper duties, the less leisure, will she have for it, even as an accomplishment and a recreation.” (Prasad, 1996, p. 329)

Both the sisters had to face rejections inspite of their talent. Today they are seen as immensely gifted writers of that time. They had to write for their survival. Women in the Victorian age were not supposed to work for their living. Their main aim was to look for a husband and get married. The only women who did not get married were the ones who were not good looking. There were many works of fiction depicting women as restless beings trapped in an unsatisfactory, meaning less life and many even becoming insane.

The ideology of domesticity, which was based on what we have discussed so far (Hall, 203) led to many movements against women joining factories for work and certain limitations and restrictions were put on women workers. However many women had to work because of poverty. Women who did not find adequate jobs were forced into prostitution or worked as domestic servants. Managing a tiring job and a household was quite a burden for women. Even if jobs were given to women, they were exploited. They were seen as non-aggressive, docile and hence not likely to cause trouble. With machines and mechanization women were further pushed into the periphery. Men were seen as more adept in handling heavy machinery. Thus men got the best high paid jobs and women the cheap, unskilled labour jobs.

Inspite of a certain amount of economic independence the condition of women has not changed much. They are still under the control of men and subject to brutality and violence. They

had no rights to any property or earning of their own, even those they had possessed before marriage. They had no rights to divorce and men were empowered to keep children if a couple separated. A woman's status was totally determined by that of her husband.

Hall agrees with Heidi Hartmann who argues that "patriarchy did not disappear with industrial capitalism but merely changed form, becoming less centrally maintained by private relationships within the household, but instead being incorporated into the new capitalist relations of production". She also says that capitalism is based on patriarchy where women are used both inside and outside home and are a source of cheap labour. Low salaries meant that a woman could never be totally independent. But at the same time she was not totally dependent as her earnings gave her some strength.

It was around these issues that feminism and feminist theories developed. Feminism development in three different directions of thought. (a) Liberal feminism (b) Radical feminism, (c) Socialist feminism. Here we will discuss as to what each stream of feminism believed in. This shall be later related to their ideas about role of women in media.

Liberal Feminism

Liberal feminism looks at the stereotyping of women and the existing prejudices against women and how these lead to inequality in the society. Liberal feminists call for legislative action and also encourage women to break away from the

traditional roles and “develop masculine qualities to acquire power.

Radical Feminists

Radical feminists are quite different in their approach. The main problem according to them is patriarchy, which has to be dispensed off with and also men and women should sever ties. Women should live by themselves in their own communities. Radical feminists seek to expose what has so far been the private domain. They take up issues of violence against women at home and outside, incest, pornography, prostitution etc.,.

Social Feminists

They look at the economic conditions of women and the kind of work done by them at home and outside. According to them, but for the contribution of women at home, capitalism would not have flourished. They also try to address issues regarding women’s work outside home. Later on they tried to incorporate other aspects too like lesbianism, ethnicity etc, but were not very successful. As Zoonen puts it “ In socialist feminist discourse power remains located in socio-economic structures, be it mediated through the relatively autonomous level of ideology” (1998,37).

Both liberal and radical feminists see gender differences as basically biological and that men and women have different characteristics. “Femininity is supposed to be composed of emotionality, prudence, cooperation, communal sense, compliance etc. Masculinity supposedly it’s opposite” rationality,

efficiency, competition individualism, ruthlessness etc". (Zoonen, 1996; 38). While liberal feminists advocate that women should not shed their femininity, try to be more like men where work is concerned. Radical feminists believe that women are different and should remain so. For liberal feminists" masculinity is advocated as an ideal to live up to, at the expense of human values intrinsically associated with women". Radical feminists on the other hand demand that women should have their own spaces, institution, separate from those of men. According to Zoonen, it is of importance to find out how the notion of femininity and masculinity have been constructed and how relevant they are to the real life. For these feminists media is responsible for furthering ideas about stereotypes and patriarchal values about women and femininity. The media helps in containing prevalent ideas about women and their expected roles. Radical feminists feel that the media suppresses and distorts the role of the women so as to maintain the status-quo. Similarly socialist feminists feel that "media fulfills the structural needs of respectively democratic, patriarchal, capitalist society by transmitting it's distorted values about women" (Zoonen, 1996;p.40).

Thus the media should try to change itself and help the feminists in realizing their goals. However so far no such has change occurred and the changes, which have are so few that they do not have much impact on the society. The media believes that what it portrays in the real women- whether as the excessively 'liberated' women or the traditional ones. Added to this is the confusion on what should be actually portrayed and who should decide.

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FEMINIST THOUGHT-WESTERN & INDIAN, A BRIEF OVERVIEW

Feminism originated in the 19th century, partly as a result of the debate as to whether woman should be confined to homes or be included in the public spheres of life. The term feminism was coined by Alexander Dumas in 1872, in order to describe the movement for equality and right to work for women. Feminism thus dealt with the power relation between the sexes. While some see feminism as a reform movement, others see it as a revolutionary movement, which will lead to the creation of a new world order. Women changes, political participation etc., Women studies, look at "women as a specific category of analysis, united by common experiences or perhaps just by the fact of having so long been excluded from dominant culture". (Langhkin and Wong, 1999, 147) An effort will now be made to place Indian women in the context of western and Indian streams of thought feminism.

ROMANTICISM:

Some feminists, like the Romantics, glorify the emotions associated with femaleness. They unknowingly endorse the view that women are inferior intellectually in comparison to men. Women have the unique capability to give emotional support and care. They also promote the common belief that expressing emotion is therapeutic.

PHENOMENOLOGY

There are many similarities in the way feminists and phenomenologist's look at things. Both "resist superimposition of values into things. Both refer to the social construction of

knowledge, scrutinize the conditions for knowledge of the world". They share an interest in "experience of the body, the gaze, intuition, perspective, engagement". But not many feminists use phenomenology in their work.

ECUMENISM

Ecumenism is associated with intellectual trend in religion studies. Thus some Chinese feminists see a connection between feminism and Confucius. Feminists are fighting freedom, equality while confusions want peace and stability freedom being one of the rights. Terry Woo feels that certain elements of feminism and Confucius should do away with the tradition of patriarchy and authoritarianism and invoked emphasize on equality, learning reciprocity etc.,

MARXISM

Feminism has borrowed heavily from Marxism. Women are the oppressed while men the oppressors and feminists are engaged in consciousness raising. They feel the women all over the world have something in common. They concentrate on women's sights and powers. Like Marxists they hope to bring in a new world order. But few feminists use the word revolution, while Marxism is closely identified with revolution

FRANKFURT SCHOOL

It was in the 1960's that Herbert Marcuse of the Frankfurt school argued that socialist feminist would being about structural

changes through their fight for equality. But many feminists feel that Marcuse 'associated traditional qualities of women with biology, he romanticized and reified "gender difference into hypothetical categories in which no historical woman would possibly recognize, herself, nor find political solutions adequate to address her situation. (Marsha Hewitt, 1955, p. 263)

HERMENEUTICS

Many feminists are drawn to the idea of Ricoeur of putting together "fragments of identity into a narrative of integration and wholeness, that is, positive self images". This has been used to deconstruct literal meanings of scriptures so that changes can be brought about.

DECONSTRUCTION

Derrida is used by feminists to undermine and displace patriarchy. They feel that, since most of texts are written by men with their interests in mind, these texts have to be done away with. Feminists also attack the dualism that is embedded in western thought. Many have even created 'subaltern studies' in order to study the problems all such groups which are marginalized. Derrida has contributed to the feminist discussion of diversity.

Derrida has attacked euro-centrism, the result has been that it has helped in the destruction of any naïve belief in the category of "women" and encouraged a shift of focus to the multiple realities of women. Feminists have been attracted to post-modernism because of its focus on diversity and

marginality. This is similar to their own revolt against the imposition of male dominated systems of knowledge, and power. Taking the cues from post modernity feminists have strived to formulate a new description of the self and the world that are multiple interconnected and non oppositional. All this is a part of a major stream of feminists through which believes that women must name reality to themselves and proclaim their own voices.

POST- MODERN PSYCHOANALYSIS

Foucault's school of thought has encouraged many feminists to move away from the assumption that heterosexuality should be the norm. This has resulted in political alliance between many feminists (heterosexuals and lesbian) and gay-men. It is hoped that feminism will replace the normative male voice with divergent voices

POST-COLONIALISM

Edward Said's influence on feminism has been to foster extension of the attack in male hegemony to include colonial hegemony. The result has been that women in Asia and Africa-American women have created their own vocabulary and models. Terry Woo for instance prefers the term women of colour to feminist. Vasudha Narayanan prefers the term woman iest. She feels that from Indian perspective the western feminist orientation towards autonomy is not fully desirable. Feminism was founded in the west and carries a specifically western flavours which renders it inadequate in the context of non-western societies, while patriarchy and male domination are

universal features. Their forms and the cultural context are varied which necessitates the need for societies to evolve their own models of feminism. Western feminists judge early and medieval India by standards of 18th century America. For example in connection with the ideal of universal access to education. It is misrepresentations like these which have led to a growing awareness about the need for post colonial feminism.

Feminist critics have decomposed the representation of women in culture, the images, stereotypes and archetypes. Women are seen as beautiful, glamour while the women as the mother is a schemer who has will and power. The representation of women repeat themselves compulsively thus firmly entrenching themselves in the minds of the viewer. The theories of sexual differences show a "pervasiveness of the belief that nearly all sexual differences are the consequence of social condition and social conditioning". (Simpson, 1988, p. 10)

Feminists initial interest in films was due to the under representation and misrepresentation of women in the media. There was an emphasis on the need to challenge the pleasures offered by narrative cinema because of their role in maintaining patriarchal ideologies and social formations continued in a modified form. The ideological analysis of the late 1970's and early 1980's was influenced by post structuralism and psychoanalysis, had rejected mainstream cinema for its production of patriarchal and bourgeoisie spectatorship and simultaneous representation of femininity. Film theory suggests how narrative, visual and metro dramatics pleasures are organized. Gender representations is seen as the heart of cultural negotiation.

POSITION OF WOMEN IN INDIA

Glimpses of the position of women in Ancient India can be found from the Vedas. From what one can discern the position of women was not bad at during the vedic period. Women were respected and enjoyed freedom in public and private spheres of life religious, political and domestic. They were allowed to take part in religious activities like offering sacrifices to gods. Girls were educated and had the freedom to choose their husbands. There was no system of *sati* and widows could remarry. Women could also join the Buddhist monasteries, remain spinsters and teach philosophy. Many women belonging to the royal families often received military and administrative training. In many cases where the son was minor the queen would be in charge of the kingdom.

Earlier the *upanayana* ceremony was performed by both boys and girls (pg.8) but with child marriage, girls were no longer a part of this ceremony. The girl who was married off at a tender age had no say in her marriage as she was too young to think for herself. As a result parents often fixed up marriages which were complete failure. Further more customs of *Niyoga* and remarriage were forbidden from 500 A.D. Widows were treated in the most inhuman manner and led miserable lives. They had no public lives as their movements were restricted and appearances forbidden. Many widows preferred death to leading such a life. Thus many would commit *Sati*. The relative would often force a widow to commit *sati* as the widow was seen as a burden. They had to live on a frugal diet, which was a religious injunction. Marriage was a social and religious institution right from the Vedic age by 300. B.C. it was seen as mandatory that all women

should marry. *Manu Samhita* declares that the women is a subservient and dependent being and her rightful place is under the guardianship of her father following that her husband and of the death of her husband the son. The son is seemed as more important because he is the earning member apart from the fact, also it is he who will look after the parents, at least he is expected to.

“Womanhood has been equaled with certain models of mother and wife, of siren and homely women. She has to fit in to the image created by others. The patriarchal perception of the ideal woman have been internationalized by women so that is now women themselves who perpetuate these ideas. Therefore, patriarchal conception of woman’s , goal and status have come to be seen as the norm” (Ghosh, 1989; p. 11).

The sex roles have been traditionally defined. By tradition the women is seen as the passive, delicate homemaker. The male is seen as more aggressive, dominant, provides economically for the family. The two roles were segregated women were not allowed to participate in the religious, economic activities. They could no longer study the *vedas* (post *vedic* period). “It was during this period that on one hand women was being idealized and on the other hand she was given a degraded status” (J.P. Singh, 1996; p. 209). The wife had no right her husbands’ property unless and until the husband divided the property. on the whole *saté*, child marriage, polygamy reduced the status of women. “They were regarded as *nari Sudras* (Rao & Patil, 1996, p.211). Women who had enjoyed freedom in all spheres now found themselves caught in domesticity with no educational, social, legal or political rights. They were the *Abala* (the powerless) and fit only for

procreation, this made men look at women with contempt. Further, even child-widows could no longer marry and were disfigured, so that they did not attract anybody's attention.

Women could no longer inherit property, which made them even more dependent at every stage of their life. The lower castes began aping the life of the upper castes and prohibited widow remarriage. *Sati* became prevalent and the widows who did not commit *sati* led the life of an *ascetic*. The latter half 18th century one can say that the position of the Indian women was at its lowest.

Women were denied equal rights, inheritance, familial, social, educational, economic and political field. They were assigned a subordinated status. The marriage ideal, power-authority exercised by the joint family and caste systems, combined with illiteracy, age-old tradition, seclusion within the four walls of the house made it difficult for them to seek fuller personality development. They had scant personal identity and few rights (A. De Souza, 1975, pp 79-81).

The British were shocked to see the condition of the Indian women. They tried to make legislative changes to give legal rights to women. They found the Indian customs and traditions barbaric. They opened educational institutions for girls. In 1829 law was passed banning *sati* and anyone found committing this crime could be imprisoned, in 1856 The Hindu Remarriage Act was passed. However in spite of this majority of the widows remained unmarried as the society had reservations against widow remarriage. Similarly in 1929 The Child Marriage Restraint Act was passed which aimed at stopping children from getting married but also raised the minimum age of marriage to 14. In 1937- Hindu Women Right To Property Act was passed

which gave the right to widows to inherit property. Many people—Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Dayananda Saraswati, Keshal Chandra Sen, Pandita Rambai worked towards the emancipation of women.

At the same time women were not really free, just that people had different expectations from them. These expectations were derived from the British or rather western notion of womanhood. The British were helped by the new English educated Indian men. The target of this were women who were engaged in performing folk art. They belonged to the lower economic group. They performed not only in rural areas but also in urban areas for the women of rich households. The performers would sing and dance during festivals and also take part in rituals meant only for women. These songs, poems were humorous and had references to sex. These were seen as means of outlet for otherwise confined women— especially the women of the upper class. However the English educated men looked down upon this kind of entertainment as vulgar and discouraged it. Slowly these artists lost their importance. The English educated men and women were influenced by the Victorian sense of propriety, and that women should not refer to sex or sexual matters openly. These songs would show the women's dilemma the husband having mistresses, or deserted by husband. It brought out the situation in a humorous manner and cloaked in double meanings, which was frowned at by the men.

They could mock at men, laugh at them and expose their activities without any fear. Thus, giving vent to suppressed, feelings of anger, anguish, loneliness etc.

The British were uncomfortable with these forms of popular culture which they felt was lacking in decency and should not be performed at all. Soon many Bengali men also started voicing similar opinion about the vulgarity of the verses. The women performances were especially attacked. Soon with the loss of patronage the number decreased drastically. The new educated women started writing articles, novels, poems. Sumanta Banerjee (1989, p.127-168) points out that in the new writings. "The early dialect, the witty, homely Idioms that marked the sayings of their predecessors were replaced by chaste, Sanskrit derived compound Bengali words and expressions" (1989, 161). Further, "the portrayal of saintly, virtuous, and dutiful women, so often found in their poems and novels, must in part have been influenced by the text books they studied". These text books were often English written with English-Victorian perspective of womanhood.

Bhakti implies surrender and mutual love while *Shakti*-vigor and energy. Both *Bhakti* and *Shakti* are major components of female religiosity in many Hindu Traditions.

"The discrimination against women within India and within the Hindu tradition, is seen in many spheres of the social life. "The basis for these acts of malicious prejudices can arguably be seen in cultural norms, received ideologies, and text of religious law" (Narayanan, 1999, p. 31).

Hindu women have been both empowered and subjugated by religious tradition over the centuries. Women were restricted from doing certain things and had freedom to certain things. The British employed male Brahmins to translate important scriptures like *Manusamriti* so as to formulate legal codes. The

British did not realize that the people did not follow everything in the *Shastras*. However “pictures of the ideal, chaste women, obedient to her husband, which came through the andocentric literature of the stories and legends found in the Hindu, epics, the Ramayana and Mahabharata became part of the dominant ideology in the upper castes of society. These images, which till recently governed populist movies and mass media, include *Sita* who followed her husband to the forest and who in most of the epic, despite her husband’s questioning of her fidelity, epitomized the complaisant wife” (Narayanan, 1999,35).

Till twelfth century women used to perform in public, even queen. The dances which evolved around spiritual love and union with god was now seen as ‘vulgar’ and women were prohibited from dancing in public. Only courtesans were expected to sing and dance. They could even inherit property and adopt children. These courtesans, often wrote poetry and verses. These contained descriptions of sexual life real or imagined. When efforts were made to publish these works it’s contents were edited and portions censored. The prevailing Victorian morals dictated that women could not talk openly about sex. The British thoughts that these kinds of books would endanger the morality of Indian subjects. It was because of the British that women as singers and dancers lost their importance. Narayanan writes how women were prohibited from dancing and that it was later, due to efforts made by women like Rukmini Devi that women could take up dancing. She also cites the example of how ‘*dhrupad*’ (a particular style of music) is not supposed to be sung by women as it is sacred. Women were seen to be ‘impure’ and polluting and on these grounds many restrictions were put on them.

Women who took up the spiritual path were seen rebels in their time but years later they were venerated. Women were not encouraged to look up at these spiritualists as role models. This was mainly because these women rejected the path laid down by society- that of marriage, managing household etc. at the same time these women spiritualists considered the lord as their husband and desired a 'union', with them.

Thus in this chapter we first looked at the concepts of mass media, modernity (in brief) and women. Special attention was paid to the condition of women and the discrimination they had to face and are still facing. The plight of Indian women over the years was dealt in detail as it has a direct relation to the theme of the topic and is correlated in the fifth chapter.

WOMEN AND MASS MEDIA

We have already looked at the interplay between mass media and society. We have also described position of women. The 'social responsibility theory' demands that mass media should function as the real representatives of people and guard public interest (Mahesh Chandra Guru, March-1996, pp. 49-55) According to Gunnar Myrdal- mass media should bring an overall upward movement of the social system.

There is a need to look at the gender-mass media connection. Apart from the portrayal of women in media it is also important to look at the roles women play in the various mass media institutions we also need to look at the number of women involved in the decision making process. Who devices the programmes to be telecast on television or broadcast on the

radio? How many women journalists head the world of journalism? All these are important, questions that need to be answered. The involvement of women in the institution will reflect or the programmes which are aired.

The UNESCO report on 'Women and media' states that "the perspective of women reflected in messages disseminated by the massmedia expresses male concepts of women. The Commercial media produces media messages systems and symbol which create or structure prevailing images of social reality which in our set up show women as housewives, consumers and sex objects. Women in advertising are always young and attractive, they are frequently depicted as sexual objects as in home and they are seldom shown as intelligent people. The mass media's role is primarily to reinforce definitions set in a framework constructed for and by men (Ibid., p.49-55)

The UNESCO reflects the existing scenario where women and media are concerned. The mass problem is that the media is extremely biased hence this leads to stereotyping and typical portrayal of women.

The identity of women has been submerged by the limited variety of the roles she is expected to play on and of screen. The women in media are essentially traditionally submissive, mothers, efficient housekeepers etc. This is taken as the 'ideal' woman by the audience. Even today the essence is the same though a few changes have been made. It has been observed that the working woman is portrayed in negative light, she is selfish, does not take care of others and is forever scheming. On the other hand the traditional housewife is loving, forgiving,

sacrificing- a paragon of virtues. Be it films or the print media the status, position of women remains the same.

The television and Radio are based mostly on film based programs. It is observed that feature films based programmes occupied the largest chunk of telecast programme about 21.1% (Desai & Patel, 1975-85, p.76.) As far as media coverage is concerned there are a few sections in journals, plus the advertisement and cinema – which feature women. People rely on newspapers, periodicals for information and are seen reliable sources. Women's issues, mainly crime against women, was covered intensively by the print media. But the problem is that these news items are sensationalized. Issues like education of women, malnutrition are very rarely covered. The growing number of women journalists may lead to a change in news reporting and several issues which have been neglected far will get adequate attention.

In advertisements women are seen 'selling' cosmetics, jewellery, fabrics, domestic gadgets, even cars, television. Their bodies are compared to the performances looks of cars- 'slim', beautiful' etc. The female body is used to entice customers, or rather the audience.

Radio covers about 7% of the population in different parts of the country. Radio is popular in rural and urban areas. Most of the programmes are entertainment oriented. All India Radio has programmes for the rural people, children and women. But the time devoted to women based programmes is very less.

The programmes for women on radio have very little women related programs. These programs "have religious songs or songs about women who are waiting to get married. These programs

often air plays, which convey the women as a gossipmonger. Many programs tell how to become good mothers/ wives and how to improve one's looks" (Mahesh Chandra Guru, 1996 March, p.49-55) Programs aiming at women's development are very few in numbers.

Women representation on television is also of great importance. News and documentaries are depictions of realities while other programmes like mysteries; soap operas are rearrangement of realities (Ila Joshi, 1991, p.69)

These programs as T.V. are based on the values of the society. Klapper (1969) said that "TV reinforces and reflects preexisting attitudes and values. Television not only shows what we are but also what should be, what is desirable and undesirable. It paints an ideal picture of the society how it should be" (Ila Joshi, 1991, p.86). The advertisements on television release an explosion of needs, dreams, wishes and expectations (Ibid, p.87) The women in the advertisements are young and perform household's chores with efficiency and pleasure. She looked after herself also. Everything was done with a smile on her face.

These portrayals do more harm than good. The commercials are repeated many times on T.V. and these repetitions reinforce certain attitude in the mind of the audience, especially towards women. It was first in the USA and then later in Europe that a particular image of the women spread. The women were a wife, mother, elegant, beautiful, superwomen to which a mass of women was to respond.

"The audio-visual media is the most important in reinforcing attitudes and values; cultural norms television

involves the person as a whole. It is hypnotic involving the viewer emotionally, intellectually sublimely".(Nandini Prasad, 1991, p.58) "Cultural studies offer an analysis of how ideology is produced and functions within television products and practices and how audience use and interact with the television". (Mary Ellen Brown, 1990, p.14) There has been an evolution in the meanings of the terms- 'male' and 'female' what is of importance is how the terms are used. It is language, which constructs the meaning. The psychoanalysis tool points mainly at sexual differences.

Television produces certain meanings of 'women'. In the process of watching the soap operas women see the social and cultural rules by which they live. In India TV serials project women in the traditional role of a wife, mother, or a quarreling mother in law or as a haughty, opinionated women (Desai and Patel, 1975-85, p.74) Certain unifying qualities are attributed to women. They seem to have an inability to say or know what they want. They are preoccupied with romance and relationships. They seem to have an innate ability to care for and to nurture others. There are stereotypes about women audiences too.

The report of Namedia- "A vision for Indian Television"- observed that 'very strong views were pronounced and emphatic objections made in all seminars and national colloquies on the treatment of women in television programmes. It was held that'

The grossest injustice was done and a conscious and unconscious male chauvinism dominated. Stereotypes of women as a sex symbol, the object of men's just, subordinate to male will, social and domestic slave patient sufferer in the family interest, shining example of self abrogation and other such outmoded and reactionary roles supposedly sanctioned in tradition

were shown and glorified. Women as equal companion in a man's struggle in life was never stressed. The role of women in television programmes need to be appraised, male chauvinism eradicated and women as equals with an assured, dignified, honoured role in society must be promoted.

In this chapter we have discussed characteristic of mass media, position of Indian women. An overall view of relationship between women and media was also given to set the ground for further discussion on images of women as portrayed in Hindi cinema.

CHAPTER-III

ENLIGHTENMENT, MODERNITY & MASS MEDIA: THE WESTERN PERSPECTIVE

In order to understand what is modernity we need to trace its rise and its consequences. The birth of sociology as a subject and modernity as philosophy, are interlinked. Hence a study of the development of sociology also means a study of modernity. Then we shall move on to the rise of media along with modernity. As a result media becomes one of the main subjects of study for sociology.

The social philosophy of the 18th Century with all its shades of meaning both expressed and implied, inspired the work of the natural and social sciences, and contributed to the revolution with which modern social philosophy really began. Sociology on the other hand is the product of restoration, in its first systematic presentation that of Comte. It betrays the same contradiction in its inevitable striving for the inevitability of progress with a social order opposed to it (Heinz Maus, 1962, p.8)

Stuart Hall (2000, p.2) writes that "The explosion of intellectual energy in the 18th century Western Europe came to be known as Enlightenment. This movement gave definition to the idea of modernity and is often defined as the original matrix of the modern social sciences..... The idea of the social as a separate and distinct form of reality, which could be analyzed in entirely 'this worldly' material terms and laid out for rational investigation and explanation is a distinctly modern idea which only finally crystallized in the discourses of the enlightenment".

According to Peter Hamilton (2000, p.56) Enlightenment played an important part in the emergence of social sciences. "He says that enlightenment created the elements from which intellectual could begin to construct an image of society which reflected human interests". He further adds that it was the French Revolution, which created a rupture between the traditional and modern society. While the traditional society was based on Christianity and absolutism, Enlightenment brought with it egalitarian ideology, anti religious orthodoxy and anti-absolutism, sentiments. Though enlightenment could never develop a theory of it's own, some ideas born during this period influenced people's thinking about ' social world' and ' human relationships'. Enlightenment criticized traditional authority and stressed progress, science, reason and nature. Saint Simon Comte were 'products' of the enlightenment period. "They used the concept of society to describe the new combination of people, institution, social groups and manufacturing processes which was emerging from the wreckage of the traditional European World. Their objective was to change the society.

Heinz Maus (1962; 10) writes that

Saint Simon was the first to realize and point out the change being wrought in society by the development of industrialization, a development he firmly believed would proceed more and more quickly. During his lifetime Saint Simon saw various forms of government replace each other without fundamentally affecting basic social relationships, even the great French Revolution had been political. The advance of modern industrialization was uprooting the old traditional social forms.

The ideas of Saint Simon and Comte were more a reaction to enlightenment influenced by traditionalism and romanticism.

August Comte intended sociology to be a science and advocated the use of positive method. For Comte "man is pushed and pulled by twin forces of states and dynamics. The society is a system which obeys certain laws". (Hamilton, 2000, p.57). Two approaches to the study of society developed: -

- (i) Society is no more than an aggregate of individuals.
- (ii) Society is a super-individual entity with a life of its own. These ideas were discussed by later sociologists like Durkheim, Weber, Spencer.

The period 1890-1920 was the second phase of development of sociology, the foundation of which were laid by Durkheim, Weber, Simmel, Tonnies, etc. Social sciences were becoming more and more specialized and empirical. But the pioneers in the field of sociology were not really sociologists. They were economists, biologists, psychologists. Thus various schools of thought contributed to the development of sociology as a subject. The main schools of thought that developed were evolutionary, organismic, naturalistic/ positivistic analytical and functional.

Spencer's theory of evolution which most expressively illuminated the development of society from the scattered unrelated hordes of man's earliest history via the priest ridden, military state of previous human history down to contemporary industrial society whose international relations and cooperation were expected to lead to perpetual peace (Mauss, 1962, p.12).

Thus we see that enlightenment led to the development of modern sociology. This also meant that modern sociology was

largely concerned with development of modern world, the formation and the changes brought about by it. The emergence of forms of political authority, legitimacy, sovereignty, secular power, nation-state were of great interest to sociologists. Similarly in the economic sphere the division of labour, rise of capitalism and class relationships were studied by many eminent sociologists. Increasing importance was given to the analysis of culture, meaning, language and symbolic structures of social life in contemporary social theory. Further the transition from a traditional to modern society meant a shift from the religious to the secular.

Max Weber was one of the first social theorists to write on modernity. He "pursued three sets of questions- how western civilization came to modernity, why other civilizations progressed in other directions, consequences of attainment of modernity" (Lash, 1987, p. 2). Guenthor Roth writes that "for Max Weber the modern world was a product of long rationalization and intellectualization. As a scholar he looked mostly backward and formulated only a partial theory of modernity which emphasized impersonal authority and subjectivist culture, while the political writings necessarily treated constitutional aspects of modernity mainly in the context of the nation-state, the scholarly work deals more with rationalization and intellectualization throughout history than with nature of modernity" (Roth, 1987, p.375)

Guenthor further elaborates that "in contrast to law highly nationalized religion was for Weber not a constitutive part of modernity. In the economic realm Weber took off from older theories of social differentiation. In treating the evolution of household he described the bifurcation of the household into

enterprise and Oikos (Greek Arena). In the fullness of time both evolved into modernity. The development of enterprise culminated in the large scale and bureaucratized capitalist enterprise. The Oikos developed into patrimonialism and ultimately into the bureaucratic public administration of modern state”.

Jeffrey Alexander in his essay on Weber's views on modernity writes that “Weber saw no escape from the iron cage of modernity’ other than in the pursuit of rational charismatic politics. Weber argued that scientific rationality and ethical values would co-exist. He could not identify the conditions under which such co-existence might be achieved, Durkheim did just that in the first place. He produced a systematic argument for the continuing religious needs of human beings. He went on to analyze social processes by which such needs could be met by secular symbol system which transformed them at the same time. Modern social system, Durkheim believed can be organized “so that irrationality is continually challenged by social movements that embody rational emancipatory values, so that domination is confronted by differentiated structures that institutionalize individual autonomy”. (1987, p.203)

Ralph Schroeder (1987, p.207) points that the similarities in the thoughts of Weber and Nietzsche. He draws out two similarities

- (1) Their pessimism regarding the vacuum left in the modern world due to the decline of religious ideals.
- (2) Their advocacy of powerful leaders as a possible remedy against this decline.

There are links not only between their views also between their respective assessments of the modern condition in general. Nietzsche and Weber are well known for their descriptions of the transition from an age dominated by religion to the secular modern world. In fact they were both concerned- (I) Transition from primitive religion to universalistic religion.

(ii) From Protestantism to the secular modern world. Both transitions are important because Nietzsche and Weber share the view that the modern world is in some ways similar to the world of primitive religions and in other ways like the world of the universalistic religion.

Bryan Turner criticizes Weber's ideas he feels Weber's theory is unidimensional it does not "provide a perspective on the contradictory dynamic of modernizing process which is simultaneously one of incorporation and liberation. It fails to grasp emancipating positive element of contemporary culture. Turner spots a "parasitical streak within the anti-modernist critique which tends to see leisure pursuits, mass culture as forms of human subordination via a new hedonistic ethic". Thirdly "there is a consequence of an elitist element in the nostalgic social theory which elevates high culture to a position of absolute privilege, denigrating all forms of absolute popular culture" (Turner, 1987, p. 238)

Many theories assert a close relationship between a component of modern culture and continuity of capitalism. The nature of this component varies considerably but it is commonly assumed that some version of individualism, consumerism, private property, values of liberalism as portrayed in the mass media is a necessary feature for the continuity of capitalism.

MODERNITY:

We have so far seen the rise of sociology due to the philosophy of the enlightenment. It is this same philosophy which gave rise to modernity also. Hence we will take a closer look at the philosophy of modernity.

The contemporary world is strongly characterized by modernity and modernization expressed in technology, different patterns of economic development and limitations; as well as by political ideologies, modes of political protest and participation. (Eisenstadt, 1987, p. 1). Modernity is the reshaping of the world according to liberal principles. Modernization originated in the west and spread throughout the world. Modernity combined economic, political, ideological aspects and forces and hence it had a greater impact on the society. Modernity challenges the symbolic and institutional premises of the societies, which were, incorporated into it, calling for responses within them and for new patterns of interaction with an opening up of new opportunities and possibilities.

The societies which have undergone the phase of 'modernity' share certain common characteristics and at the same time are different. These differences are due to crystallization and hence also re-crystallization and transformation of the major symbolic premises and institutional formations of both the original 'western' as well as that of their own civilizations.

The responses of societies were influenced by modes of technology and by the economic structure of the societies.

Modernity was also shaped by the traditions of responses to change that have developed in the west.

In the 19th and 20th century the west was seen as 'unique'. This uniqueness was seen by the evolutionists as a result of the fact that European societies had evolutionary potentials of humanity. This they felt was not present in any other society. For Marx, the European society was the only society where capitalization developed and which spread all over the world. Similarly Weber too tried to explain the specificity and uniqueness of the European modernity. He sought to explain as to why it was in the West that the specific "radical" tendency to nationalization of the world developed. According to Weber the major manifestations could be found in the spheres of social life such as

- (a) Emergence of capitalist civilization
- (b) Bureaucratization of different forms of social life.
- (c) Secularization of worldview.

Weber felt that the roots of these processes were in the potentially rationalizing tendencies of the Protestant ethic.

The core characteristics of European modernity:

According to Eisenstadt – revolutionary orientations were at the root of most break through to modernity. This has led to a transformation of the nature and content of the centres of social and political order, of the rules of participation and access to them. "The sanctity and status-quo of the past as the major symbolic regulator of social, political, cultural change gave way to the acceptance of innovation and orientations to the future as a basic dimension of cultural orientations."(Ibid P.16)

The central premise of European modernity was the active formations of crucial aspects of social, cultural, natural order by conscious human activity and participation.

According to Giddens the modes of social organization which evolved in Europe in the 16th century are unique. He felt that these social organizations and also modernity evolved through an interaction among institutional dimensions like-capitalism, industrialism, surveillance and control of information by nation state, development of military power. The modern society is characterized by changes which take place at a rapid pace and are far reaching. In a traditional society, changes did take place, but at a much slower pace. The modern society also comprises of many institutions. The political system, mechanized and technological industrial production, urbanization are part of the modern system. In Giddens's scheme of analysis there are three dynamic aspects to modernity.

- (i) Separation of time and space
- (ii) The "disembedding mechanisms.
- (iii) Reflexive character of modernity

(LarsBokaspersen, 2000, 84)

i) Separation of time and space: Giddens writes that time has become standardized and globalized people can interact with each other across space and time zones without any difficulty. Communication has been made easy due to telephone, telefax, e-mails etc.,

The concepts of space is also undergoing transformation. Our space has expanded markedly with new technological advancements. " The precondition for the optimal operation of a

modern enterprise is its ability to co-ordinate many people's actions even though they are separated in time and space" (LarsBokaspersen, 2000; 85). Efficiency is created by several people acting in consonance, towards a specific goal but not necessarily at the same time or in the same place. The concept of space is also altered by the extremely detailed mapping of the globe. We are in the same geographical space, same cosmography, same conception and description of the world.

ii) Disembedding of social systems:

Earlier, the institutions and actions of society were embedded in the local community. However this has changed, social relations can no longer be limited to the local community, but are lifted out of the local interaction context by certain disembedding mechanisms. Giddens points out two types of such mechanisms-

- a) Symbolic Tokens
 - b) Expert Systems
- } This he calls the abstract systems.

Symbolic tokens are media of exchange, which circulate between individuals and institutions and are independent by nature. One example could be money. Money creates new patterns of interaction.

Expert systems help us lead our daily life and move social relations from one context to another. The transport system, economic system are such expert systems.

- iii) The third dynamic aspect of modernity is reflexivity of modern society. Giddens was influenced by Garfinkel in conceptualizing reflexivity. Giddens identifies two forms of reflexivity. The first form is when we are constantly reflecting on our actions and are able to alter it according to the situation. The second form, and the more important one, is our use of knowledge for bringing about social change and for social organization. This reflexivity is a result of the development of mass communication. People have access to information through the media. Actions are no longer based only on tradition as individuals can reflect on the basis of the information available to them.

These dimensions first appeared in Western Europe but modernity today, is a global phenomenon. Thus today lives are more interwoven than ever before- an event in one corner of the world can influence life in another part of the world. According to Giddens globalization took place in two phases. In the first, the institutional dimensions of modernity got globalized. In the second phase processes of communication develop and become a part and parcel of everyday life. This in turn helps in global extension of institutional dimensions of modernity. Today globalization is no longer a one way process, it is a more complex one.

Giddens also writes that modernity affects the personal life of an individual the external changes (extentionality) affect personal choice (intentionality). He says that the traditional society was characterized by face to face relationships, people adhered to rules laid down by religion, tradition. There is lot of

trust involved in the social relationship. According to Giddens – Kinship, local community, religion, tradition help in sustaining trust between people.

In a modern society, there is trust among members of a family or community. But there is an increased trust in abstract systems (discussed earlier). This trust is in our subconscious but we act on the basis of this trust without even realizing it. There is an increased dependence on these abstract systems.

Giddens further writes that while modernity reduces risks, it also increases them at the same time. So modernity has reduced risks of illness, death, starvation.

The risks from modernity are man made nuclear war, atomic bomb, pollution are examples of such risks. We are aware of such risks. The risks are not local phenomenon but have global consequences.

In view of such continued risks to our lives, Giddens says that, people adapt to the unpredictability and insecurity of life. People are constantly bombarded with information about such risks. So instead of trying to react people avoid such issues or suppress it. They seek ways to deal with these constant risks without upsetting their lives. Trust helps us in handling many such situations.

Modernity places before the individual many options to choose from, say in matters of eating, dressing, hobbies etc., The individual makes his choice according to one's economic status, education, gender. Giddens writes that due to modernity one's life style has become one's self-identity. The lifestyle of a person

influences the choices made in other spheres of life. Tradition does not play a major role in making these choices.

People are also constantly moving from one place to another for work, residence, education etc., Every where people have to constantly take decisions.

Our decisions are also influenced by the information we receive from the media, all the time. The media guides us in making many decisions.

Giddens further points that modernity has affected our social relationships. Earlier social relationships entered into marriage, friendship, were influenced by tradition. But this is no longer the case. Today people continuously reflect on the relationship they enter into and decide the rules for it. Marriage for instance, earlier was more of an economic contract. But today people choose partners based on emotions, compatibility etc., Friendships have become important. Lifestyle and self-identity influence our decision to enter into a relationship. We can also break a relationship friendship, marriage, if there is dissatisfaction.

Thus modernity brings about changes in the individual and institutions.

Giddens has resisted equating modernity with liberalism or capitalism. He instead draws from Marx and sees modernity as being multidimensional. According to Giddens there are four aspects to modernity-

(a) Capitalism – Which involves the production of commodities.

(b) Industrialism – The application of inanimate sources of power.

(c) Coordinated administrative power focused through surveillance.

(d) Military power.

These aspects include the development of economy along with political and administrative changes. He feels that the development of military power affected the shape and structure of capitalist development and was an alternative power system. Giddens also sees interconnectedness of states and societies, national-international as playing major role in shaping the modern era.

“It has become more difficult to exactly define modernity. It is especially difficult to assess how contemporary, modern societies move in the same direction, becoming more and more similar or to explain the crucial differences in their ideological premises and institutional contours and dynamics.”(Eisenstadt,1987 ,p.10)

MEDIA AND MODERNITY

Here we will try to link the rise of modernity and media. Modernism was seen as essentially rejecting tradition and embracing innovation and change. The modernist ideas of technological progress were also reflected in the cultural sphere. Richard Gott believes that modernism resulted in intellectual and political domination whereas as post-modernism is seen as freedom where all cultures can co-exist. Modernism saw the rapid growth of mass communication, especially the visual media of film, television and graphic design. Giddens sees globalization

as one of the most visible consequences of modernity. Globalization refers to the multiplicity of linkages and interconnections that transcend the nation-state. As a result goods, capital, people, knowledge, communication, culture, belief etc. flow across boundaries. An event in one country can have its effect on another far removed country due to the very fact of interconnectedness.

Events do not occur anymore in localized context instead they are placed in a global scenario. The development of globalization has fostered communication. Physical presence is no longer necessary for interaction. This has revolutionized the very concept of communication. Robertsons points out that a theory of globalization would have to necessarily include an analysis of the factors which have facilitated the shift towards a single world - the spread of capitalism, development of a global media system. It is believed that by compressing time and space globalization brings closer civilizations and cultures. This at once creates shared social spheres where ideas, values, knowledge meet and also reinforces social and cultural prejudices and boundaries.

There was an increase in the number of studies on modernization after the Second World War. In these works attempts were made to combine studies of micro-settings and of various social processes such as communication, urbanization, and value transformation with the broader macro-societal framework. These studies evaluated societies by various indices of modernity, development of modernization and tried to determine to what extent societies studied approximated to the model/models of modern industrial society.

Communication media has been by and large been ignored by social theorists. The media is viewed as “superficial and ephemeral” and is consequently seen as lacking in enough substance for serious theoretical work. The theories regarding the modern societies have been so far based on the classical social thought. The thinkers of this period did not take into much consideration the role of communication in the development of modern societies. The stress was on rationalization and secularization, the progressive forces of reason and enlightenment, which were seen as opposing the tradition of myths and superstition.

It has been argued that communication media not only transmits information, instead it creates new forms of interaction and action and new social relationships. “The rise of communication transforms the spatial life, creating new forms of action and interaction, new modes of exercising power, which are no longer linked to the sharing of a common locale”.(Thompson,1995,p.3)

Production, storage, circulation of information and symbolic content have been the central aspects of social life. Today these processes have undergone change as media institutions themselves have been transformed. This transformation has resulted in the commodification of symbolic forms and these are accessible to individuals across time and space. The symbols that are produced and circulated are meaningful to the individuals who receive them. Also such communication takes place in a particular social context. Individuals are constantly encoding and decoding messages during such communication. This is possible because of certain

assumptions and knowledge in the cultural context which creates an understanding. The technical innovations changed the patterns of communication. The innovations were in turn a result of the emergence of modern societies.

NATION-STATES AND MEDIA

Emergence of nation-states

The feudal economy was based on subsistence economy and therefore there was very little surplus. When the economy underwent a change the agrarian, small-scale production transformed into capital, trade and finally industrialism. It was around the 11th century that trade expanded. As a result towns grew in size and influence. By the 15th century capitalist enterprises had been established. There was an increase in the use of money. The new system initially coexisted with the traditional feudal system. By 1450- there was a distinct system of commodity production, accumulation of capital, which was used for means and material, workers were employed for wages and the goods were then sold.

As the nature of economy underwent a change, certain structural changes also started taking place new economic relations, urban settings, new social relations etc. The Industrial Revolution of the 18th century brought in further changes. New methods of productions like – power machinery, large-scale manufacturing, division of labour, were introduced.

Economic changes were followed by political changes. The development of economy also meant development of science,

technology, and human mastery over nature. Such development ultimately led to the establishment of industrial capitalism. Ideological and political changes followed economic changes. Efforts were made to create a modern civil society based on notions of equality, growing participation of citizens in political and social order, universal suffrage, national culture. Attempts were made to “establish a social and cultural order characterized by a high degree of coherence between the cultural and political identities of the territorial population”.(Ibid,p.228) The European nation states which were formed were based on several notions from the past. Fragmented units merged together and states were formed. The entire process of nation state building, which was started by English revolution (1640-88) and French Revolution (1789), was a long drawn one. In 1490 traditional Europe had 500 state- like entities. About five centuries later there were 25 states.

The Nation-states formed had a clearly defined territory, a centralized system of government and administration. The new economy brought in new forms of taxation. The money was used to maintain standing armies, which would be used to defend the sovereignty of the nation-state. The armies were to protect the nation-state from both external and internal threats. At the same, time the importance of foreign territories increased and the various nation-states wanted to increase their sphere of influence which led to colonization. Eisenstadt (1987,p.20) voices the opinion that “the spread of modernity beyond Europe has been more in the nature of encroachment of external forces on traditional countries and civilization”.

All modern states are nation-states. In sociological terms a modern nation-state is defined as a “cohesive, bounded, totality, an integrated social system. The society and nation state are thus seen as synonymous. Another definition of nation state put forth by Giddens (1990,p.48) is that nation state is a “political apparatus, distinct from ruler and ruled, with supreme jurisdiction over a demarcated territorial area, backed by a claim to a monopoly of coercive power, and enjoying a minimum level of support on loyalty from their citizens.

The characteristics of modern state:

1. Separation of Temporal and Spiritual Powers.:

Religion had always played an important role in determining political authority, in the past. However, with the emergence of modern ‘state’ there was a growing trend towards secularism. Religion became a personal, private matter.

2. Concept of Sovereignty:

This concept enveloped two aspects external and internal sovereignty. External sovereignty meant that the state alone would take decisions in matters pertaining to it. Internally too, the state, was the only political authority.

3. Direct Rule: In the development of the state the idea of direct rule became indispensable. People became citizens who are to abide by the laws of the government. The laws were applicable to all the citizens within the nation –state.

4. Separation between Private- Public Sphere:

This was another major step in the development of a nation-state. What had for long been considered 'private' became 'public' like the exchequer and treasuries. Public authorities became accountable to the people.

5. Increased importance of Law: The nature of laws underwent a change, laws were now identified with the nation state and were imposed even on the king.

6. Increasing number of State Agencies and Instruments of Government:

A number of government agencies and enterprises were established, at the same time private enterprises were encouraged.

7. These was a growing intervention of State in Social and Economic matters:

The state started regulating the markets and enforcing standards. This was fuelled by a desire to emerge stronger – economically and politically than the other states.

Thus the transformations which had started during late Middle Ages culminated in the modern era. The feudal economy was transformed into a capitalist one. The political units of medieval Europe were forged into system of nation – state.

NATIONALISM AND MEDIA

Simultaneously with the growth of capitalist economy, media industries started developing around the 15th century. The

printing press enjoyed a relationship with the political and religious authorities. The printing press was used by both the authorities to propagate their ideas. Yet at the same time, when the press was seen as going out of hand efforts were made to suppress it. However, many presses emerged due to commodity production and the authorities could not effectively control them. "The rise of press represented the emergence of new network of symbolic power which were outside the control of the state".(Thompson, 1995, p.52)

The printing press also printed various texts on subjects like botany, astronomy, geography and led to the printing of charts, maps, data etc. These texts were available to all, but the main consumers were the elite as they were the ones who could afford any kind of education. The elite included the clergy, scholars, political elites, and the rising commercial class. At festivals the literate would read out for those who could not. One major consequence of the growing popularity of the printing press was the rise of national press. As various nation-states developed, each wanted to have its own language. The use of vernacular languages was thus closely linked to the rise of nation-state and is believed to have helped in the unification of the newly formed nation-state. "National traditions of literature emerged and acquired a distinctive character".(Ibid, p.54) To facilitate the growth of vernacular languages many dictionaries and grammar books were also printed. According to Anderson, "by reading vernacular text people became aware that they belonged to a virtual community of fellow readers with whom they could not interact but with whom they were connected by the print media".(1995, P.59) He further feels that that the

virtual community of fellow readers would eventually become the imagined community of the nation.

With the emergence of the nation state a new set of symbols of national identity came into existence. As various independent units got merged into a single unit the ideas of national identity belonging to one nation came into being. The symbols created, helped to integrate the people and counter any effort of fragmentation by evoking a national sentiment. The term 'nationalism' was thus used to "devote the existence of symbols and beliefs, which create patterns of ethnic, religions, linguistic commonality and political ambition". (Giddens, 1990, P.50)

Ernest Gellner believes that if a person does not have a national identification he would feel very lost. This national representation is physical by nature and involves a certain amount of display. Hence the nation produces meanings, a system of cultural representation. This national representation could be in terms of language, religion, ethnicity etc. Language used for communication plays a major role in maintaining the national cultural institution. National culture becomes a prominent feature of industrialization and modernity. The national culture constructs identities with which one can identify. The history of a nation, literature, media, popular culture builds a certain narrative of the nation. It gives the feeling of having shared some common experiences which bind people together.

National identity is closely connected with history and hence locked in tradition. There is an effort made to 'resurrect' certain traditions, which will lead to establishment of certain norms or values which will establish a connection with the past.

This rootedness in history and the past implies that there are a lot of myths regarding the past of the nation and its people. This often leads to an attempt to show the past as perfect. In the midst of modernity there is a desire to reestablish the past. Each nation state does not consist of people of only a particular origin, it consists of people from various religions, races, and cultures. National identity attempts to bind the people with a common thread so as to hold the nation state together.

Globalization, which has been discussed earlier, as a consequence of modernity has caused to some extent erosion of national identities and is seen as promoting cultural homogeneity. Many see globalization, as a threat to the very notion of nation-state. The reason for this is the emergence of global communications and media network, global production and dissemination of knowledge, transnational religious, ethnic ties, migration of people across boundaries. Globalization raises the prospect of the end of the nation state as the primary container of modernity. However, at the same time certain cultures are putting up resistance to this trend and hence strengthening themselves in the process. New identities-“HYBRID IDENTITIES” are arising in this new context. It is felt by some theorists that as national culture starts to weaken there is a strengthening of other kind of cultural ties. Many others feel that global interdependence has led to a breakdown of all cultural ties and the emphasis has now shifted to multiplicity of styles, fragmentation of cultural codes and cultural pluralism.

The cultural flow across nations has created shared identities where there are numerous consumers for the same goods, audiences receiving messages and images even though

they are far removed from the actual place of production. All this is possible due to the role played by media in transporting beliefs, images, and knowledge across boundaries. Nations are now locked in a network of power “economic, political, coercive, symbolic” which extend beyond their boundaries. Various issues like pollution, armed conflict can be resolved only when nation states come together.

ROLE OF MEDIA

We have already seen how the printing press played a crucial role in creating national identity and culture. Apart from giving rise to vernacular languages the press also facilitated the dissemination of information. Earlier, people would have no inkling of what was happening beyond a certain limit. But the development of printing press introduced journals, periodicals and later newspapers. These helped the people to know about the happenings in and around the place. By the 17th century periodicals and journals had become a regular phenomena and were essentially political and commercial in character. The press was seen as a medium of expressing feelings and voicing opinions. Thus there was an increasing demand for de-linking the press from the control of the state.

The role of the press is much the same even today, though it has undergone many changes in nature and content. Today we have printed material for different professions, classes, for men and women, also those based on politics, entertainment etc. But the aim of press is similar – to pass information, knowledge, express, opinions on particular subjects. Especially in a

democratic society the role of media is very important "The cultivation of diversity and pluralism in the media is therefore an essential condition for the development of deliberative democracy".(Thompson,1995,p.245). It gives an opportunity for ordinary citizens to vent their emotions and give suggestions. All this would not have been possible without the press.

As technical innovations increased machinery became more sophisticated. The new kind of machinery helped to keep pace with the growing urban population and literate population. By the 19th century electrical energy was being used for the purpose of communication. Telegraph systems, telephones were the inventions which used electrical energy. It was after the First World War that electromagnetic waves were used for conveying messages, thus developing the Radio (1920s) and the Television (1940s). The wars played an important role in the development of communication. The military and political heads realized the benefits of using such technology in communication. Thus communication in various forms was encouraged. Subsequently the media took on a commercial role along with its political one.

This gave rise to 'distance-communication'. Till now communication was basically oral, and spatially constrained. But with technological developments communication was not just face to face or written. People in far-flung places could now converse with each other. This new type of interaction gave rise to new symbolic cues.

Visual media, like the television, has revolutionized the concept of communication. Instead of just reading about happenings they could watch them. The impact of visual media has been tremendous. People watching a film on television are

said to be involved in quasi-interaction where the several recipients of the messages communicated, interpret it in their own way and may even discuss it, pass on information.

SOCIOLOGY AND MASS-COMMUNICATION

The history of sociological enquiry into mass media and mass communications has been shaped by socio-political forces, the ebbs and flows of sociological theory and research, by an incredibly diverse community of non-sociologists. That community includes the field of communications, anthropology, cultural studies, political sciences, psychology, linguistics, information sciences, economics; law and more recently systems engineering and technology policy analysis.

Rokeach (1988, p.317) points out that Michael Schudson (1986) while scanning the major lines of inquiry concluded that much of this activity was rooted in the classical paradigm of sociological thoughts of Marx, Durkheim and Weber. Rokeach says

This mode of simplification rings true particularly when applying it to comprehend the bases of heated theoretical and methodological conflicts so characteristic of scholarly inquiry into media systems and mass communications. These conflicts have centered on paradigmatic differences concerning the

- (1) Nature and degree of mass media power relative to audience power,
- (2) Nature of media state relations,
- (3) Culture creating role of the media,
- (4) Usefulness of quantitative methods logics for revealing important media effects.

- (5) Extent to which media researchers should stand in opposition to media systems in capitalist societies (Rokeach, 1988, 318-320)

Rokeach traces the development of media sociology and points out the dominance of American media sociology from the Chicago to the Columbia schools- between 1920-1950. This period was marked by sociologists like Park Lynds, Ogburn, Mills. But the last three decades of media sociology have been increasingly dominated by European sociologists, linguists, and political scientists. The most prominent among these were British Marxists, French Semioticians who were again Weberians or Marxists and finally those who followed the Durkheimian modes of analysis.

Rokeach points out the importance of media sociology in both developed and developing countries. He writes that “ media theory, research are considered central to the many questions sociologists seek to answer about the conditions that facilitate or retard transition to new socio-economic orders, they answer the basic questions of integration, conflict adaptation, change, control. Mass media being information, communication, technologies as well as social system have evolved rapidly in the last century.

Let us just take a look a the functions of communication

1. Transmission of cultural heritage
2. Supply of information, instruction, entertainment
3. Conferring states and legitimacy
4. Surveillance of environment

5. Raising of issues / debates on contemporary significance
6. Building of public opinion and consensus
7. Enlarging cognitive horizons and awareness profiles.

Encouragement to innovative thinking (Yogesh Atal, 1985, Vol.12, No.1, p.25)

VISUAL SOCIOLOGY

One of the relatively new branches of sociology is visual sociology. Acceptance is very important for any subject to flourish. Similarly works done by expert sociologists will go a long way in increasing its' acceptance in academic circles. An attempt has been made by Timothy Curry to explain what is visual sociology. He says that "The common denominator I have been able to abstract from the variety of topics currently being pursued by sociologists is that visual sociologists are concerned with the appearance of things and most of them attempt to explain what lies behind these appearances in sociological principles". (1986, Vol. 34, No.3, p. 47)

Michael Hill talks about the relationship between sociology and visual arts. He elaborates that sociologists need to explore the reflexive relationships between social structure and also between " choice, perception, recognition and creation of visual imagery". Hill delineates 5 areas of inquiry: -

- 1) Definition of the field:** This included the social factors that influences vision, the ways we see things and assign meaning to. It will also look into the nature, role, institutional, organization of visual symbolism in the

construction of reality. One of the most important aspects of inquiry being the analysis of visual images in order to see to what extent society is reflected in these images.

- 2) **Social Images in Media:** This meant attention was to be given to photography, television, cinema their content and the images, institution which control media, reflection of change in the media.
- 3) **Visual Dimension of Social Interactions:** In focus here would be the non-verbal communication like clothes, body images.
- 4) **Sociology of Visual Art:** This is meant to cater to those who want to study art as an institution, characteristics and symbolization in visual art, social meaning of symbols.
- 5) **Visual Technology and Social Organisation:** The final area of inquiry would be the consequences of developments in visual technology for institutions like family, education, politics etc. The uses of visual technology in the study of society, education etc.

This is not the final outline or description of visual sociology. But it is one of the most important and logical descriptions. There are several approaches to visual sociology. There is a division between humanists and behaviorists. The approaches to visual sociology range from image oriented visual sociologists to equipment oriented visual sociologists. The former are interested in the social function of images in society, the effect of imagery on people and it's use. The latter are interested in using film and equipment as tools in teaching and research. An example of equipment oriented visual

sociologists would be sociologist Richard Fauman who used a video camera to record an event and use it for research. This method is also used for studying collective behaviour. (Wohlstein And Mc Phail 1974, p.78)

The image oriented visual sociologists are interested in media analysis. According to Anthony Syncott images have a symbolic value and a sociological dimension in terms of class, gender, status. Images are interpreted by different people differently. Each person is influenced by this or her experience, lifestyle, education and so on. Methods have been developed by semiotics in order to analyze images as texts and for decoding the hidden codes in mass media.

Attention should be paid to media and to research in this field as media influence the 'process of socialization and shapes ideology and thinking'. (Desai & Patel, 1995, p.74) Media is expected to impart information and motivate attitudinal change. Media not only reflects social reality but also affects it by reporting only certain things and interprets it. (Jha, 1992, p. 23) Thus media reinforces certain values, attitudes, behaviour, it follows that media plays an important role in social change.

Schraemm says that unless there is enough information designed to encourage attitudes, social patterns and customs any kind of development process will suffer. (D' Souza, 1998, p. 23) He further observes that any social, cultural and personal attitudes have been followed by a change in the society or helped it.

Efforts have also been made to bring media research and cultural studies closer. Andrew Tudor (1995, Vol. 12) talks about

those aspects of media research which try to link mass communication, individual behaviour and social life. He divides the research into two categories:-

(i) Efforts research and (2) text analysis. He tries to show how these two categories what he calls the ideal types have influenced further research in media and mass communication studies.

TECHNIQUES USED IN MASS MEDIA RESEARCH

Effects Research: One of the milestones in this research tradition is that of Paynefund studies of the early 1930's. This research was basically social-psychological in nature and focussed on "*our movie-trade-children*". The experiment conducted was scientific in nature using statistics, surveys, laboratories etc.

In the seventies came the uses and gratification approach, which intended to do away with the negative aspects of the former approach. Klapper, Bhimer tried to show that people were not passively taking in the media but were also using it to satisfy their needs. This was influenced by functionalism. The later researchers tried to show that the audience was not a passive, homogeneous audience.

Effects researchers carried on what is called the social sciences scientific enquiry using empirical evidence to deduct certain laws of human behavior. This made it very restricted and some of the questions like how the media meanings were constructed remained unanswered. Their findings resembled loosely knit generalizations. The researchers did not look at heterogeneity of culture and social practice. It was concerned

mainly with the effects of mass communication on attitudes and value. Even the actors who use the media do it within a normative pattern.

TEXT APPROACH

This was formed as a reaction to the approach discussed above. It was in the late 1950's and early 1960's that interest in popular cultural text grew. So far popular culture had been neglected in research but researchers were eager to explore this aspect. Film critics analyzed films directed by Hitchcock etc. the school to study popular culture was provided by structuralism and semiology- the science of signs. This used the concepts of codes. By 1980's text analysis included feminism and psychoanalysis.

Another important development in text analysis was the idea of an active audience. The need was realized for a "*special interpretative methodology*". Text analysis needed theories, which would help in interpretation of text. The initial emphasis was on the ideology, text and sociology. Later on the focus shifted to the individual, subject and reader. This shift was mainly due to influences of phenomenology, which did not believe in restrictions placed on the social agents by culture and ideology.

We have so far discussed rise of sociology, modernity and media, we also linked up sociology and study of media and the various techniques involved in such research. In the next chapter, we will be looking at the Indian experience of modernity in the context of its tradition and then we will link it to the development of media in India.

CHAPTER-IV

INDIAN TRADITION & MODERNITY

In this chapter we will be discussing the various aspects of Indian tradition. Following this we will look at the Indian experience of modernity. The chapter will conclude with a brief discussion on mass media development in India and an introduction to women and cinema.

Before going on to a discussion on Indian tradition let us take a look at modernization, modernity and modernism and what they mean.

1. Modernization:

Modernization denotes the complex constellation of socio-economic phenomenon, which originated in the context of western development. These have manifested themselves in different forms in different places across the world-scientific and technological innovation, industrialization of production, rapid urbanization, development of nation-state etc.

2. Modernism:

This refers to a specific form of artistic production-artistic schools and style. These arose in the late 19th century Europe and America.

3. Modernity:

Modernity is an overarching term to denote a historical era. It is a general philosophical distinction between traditional societies and modern societies. While the former are structured around

divine authority, the latter is secular and individual oriented. Modernity has a normative and descriptive dimension.

“The modern has become synonymous with repudiating of the past and a commitment to change the values of the future” (Felski, 1995, 10).

It is the philosophical, ideological orientation of modernity that provides the drive for the process of modernization. Modernity and modernization by their very nature reshape and replace tradition and traditionalism. However in the face of modernity there might arise the process of traditionalisation as a response to modernization. This happens through the reassertion of the elements of tradition in the spheres of Religion, Culture and Social Life. A perfect glorious past, which is present in the collective cultural memory of a society, becomes the basis for the process of traditionalisation. The reassertion of tradition is seen as a panacea to all the evils of a society including those brought about as a result of modernization. In the context of the Indian society the ideological elements of traditionalisation can be traced from the efforts of social reformers like Dayananda Saraswati to the present day communalist political parties like the BJP and the its sister organizations namely the *sangh parivar*.

Indian Tradition is an extremely complex phenomenon consisting of a multiplicity of traditions. The sheer geographical extent of the country, the numerous socio-cultural processes that have gone into the making of our history have given rise to an extremely complex pattern. S.C. Dube (1965; p.421-423) offers a six fold classification of traditions in India each of which is to be studied in rural as well as urban context.

These are:

1. The Classical Tradition.
2. The Emergent National Tradition.
3. The Local Tradition.
4. The Regional Tradition.
5. The Western Tradition
6. The Local Sub-cultural Traditions of Social groups.

This offers a better analytical tool than the ones based on the dichotomies of Great-Little Tradition or Sanskritization-Westernisation.

“ Tradition by which we mean value- Themes encompassing the entire social system of Indian Society prior to the beginning of modernization was organized on the principles of hierarchy, holism, continuity and transcendence”. (Y. Singh; 1986; p.190).

Contrary to common perception Indian tradition was never a static homogenous entity. It was perhaps the intensity of change and the direction of change that was different. However these were changes that did not imply modernization. They were simply changes from one traditional structure to another. The reason for this was that the sources of such changes could not go beyond the limits set by tradition. Thus we see that be it an ontogenetic source of change like Buddhism or a heterorganic society one like Islam India continued to be traditional. As the interaction was either within a traditional society or between two traditional societies.

The advent of modernity in India started with the contact with the western world. The resulting history of imperialism and

colonialism has left us with a complex, problem-ridden process. The collective cultural memory still retains the duality of the painful colonial rule and the admiration for the west and the westerners. At the time the contact between the western world and India was taking place the western world itself was going through a process of transformation. Indian tradition is ordered around the community where as modernity is centered around the individual.

The process of modernization in India was powered by the consolidation of the British power in India and the growth of an intellectual tradition which glorified the western mode of thinking, way of life, etc., " There was however, one important feature of Indian modernization during the British period. The growth of this process was selective and segmental. It was not integrated with the micro-structure of Indian society, such as family caste and village community." (Ibid, p.203). The independence movement in its various phases gave an impetus to both traditionalisation and modernization. If Gandhi is considered as the father of the nation, Pt. Nehru became our first Prime Minister. However the paradoxical relationship of tradition- modernity was witnessed during the partition of the country. While Nation, Nationalism, Nation-state, all concepts which owe their origins to modernity drove us to attain independence, the hold of tradition through religion resulted in the partitioning of the country on the communal lines.

The post independence period has seen a conscious effort towards removing "the discontinuity in the modernization in the micro-macro structures and between the great and little traditions" (Ibid, p.204). This has been affected through large-scale institutional changes in polity, Economy, legal structures

etc., The Universalistic nature of modernity and modernization generates tensions within the structure. "The future course of modernization in India will depend much on the manner in which these tensions are resolved as modernization gathers momentum" (Ibid, p.204).

There can be no single trajectory for any philosophy and the same is true for modernity. The myopic view of modernity which blinded itself to its faults and could not see the 'other' is being overcome. "The critique of modernity is now available to people at large and is no more the monopoly of the intelligentsia". (Javed Alam, 1999, p.38). The result is an increase in popular struggles and decisions are no longer an imposition from above, we see examples of this in the struggles of the farmers' against Multi National Corporations, Non Governmental Organizations against the Government etc. These will decide the shape and outcome of modernity. Perhaps the time has come for the great anti-modernist, Gandhi, to realize his theory, posthumously. For the future of modernity is more in tune with the Gandhian vision of the world than anyone else.

WOMEN AND CINEMA

Cinema can be a very powerful medium of change but limited it is used propagate so called traditional values and culture and actions at maintaining status quo rather than being about change.

In cinema too the women are seen as sexy, glamorous, empty headed and there is 'bashing' of any woman who does not fit the traditional mould. Parallel cinema or the 'new wave' cinema try to address serious issues regarding women but they

do not appeal to the public and as seen as movies for the 'elite' and the intellectuals.

Third world feminists like Gayatri Spivak, Chandra Mohanty, Maqmia Lozreg criticize western feminist who focus extensively on sexual difference and who believe in an idealized "sister hood" of woman. The western feminists further consider the Third world women as ill defined, separated. Nearly all sexual difference are the consequence of social conditioning. Feminist critics have decomposed the representation of women into culture, the images, stereotype, archetypes, where the meanings are: feminism and cultural spaces. The images of women as beautiful, glamorous and the mother as schemer and with will and power is repeated compulsively.

In the western movies we will see a tendency of showing the colonized land as a female who has to be saved from disorder. Such films also project how the western and non western woman need to be saved from African, Asian, Arab and American man. In such narratives a western woman is in subordination to a western man and in a relation domination towards non-western men and women. In the absence of the white man the white woman becomes activity centre of the films.

The colossal to man can become the instrument of the white man. There is sexual hierarchy where white men and women occupy the centre of the narrative and where the white woman is the desired object. The third world women are seen either as "virgin land" or as sexually hungry subaltern. "While the white female has to be lured, made captive and virtually raped in order to awaken the repressed desire the Arab/black US Latin women are driven by a raging libido" (Shohat, 1999, p.62)

A movie screened in 1982 called "*Sahara*" has a heroine (Brooke Shields) disguising herself as a man in order to take part in a car race. But tribesmen capture her. A 'Sheikh' who is dominating and a male chauvinist rescues her. But in the end she goes back to the Sheikh. It was shown that the woman who could have got independence still prefers the ancient ways of gender hierarchies. It is believed that women prefer powerful and masterful men.

Looking at various themes, which appear in popular cinema, has approached issues of 'gender' in cinema. The concept of cross-dressing and what it means and the social attitudes towards gender definition and sex roles. Several movies have been directed based on the theme of cross-dressing. For the female who dresses up as a male, it is a matter of gaining access to states or experience which is otherwise denied to them. For the men on the other hand who cross-dress it functions as a way of reinforcing stereotypes. It was also seen that during a period of social and political change, the use of cross-dressing may signify male hostility towards changes in the status of women.

It was during between 1975 to 1985 that theoretical paradigm for film studies were developed so there developed the semiotic, psycho analytic, ideological, post-structuralist and the post modernist. Attempts were made to look at the social ideologies shown in films, role of the unconscious in the film narrative, how much the viewer identified with the narrative and the characters. (Kaplan, 1994, p.21). There is an attempt to control the images and ideas in film about gender roles, family and marriage. Any kind of deviation from what is seen as normal in met with opposition from the censors or any other group, mostly religious. The initial feminist scholars looked at the

misrepresentations of women in films. Then the attention shifted to the meaning of images, how these images are produced and why certain images are repeated especially negative images.

There is an attempt to confine women at home or at best within certain boundaries. There is also an attempt to protect women – by males and also older women. There is a “normative restriction “which says as to who or what a nice girl is same one who is chaste, gentle, gracious, ingenious, good clean, kind, virtuous non-controversial and above suspicion and reproach” (Fox, 1977, p.805). Women cannot move about freely without an escort. There is a constant eye on a woman’s behaviour or movement. Women do internalize most of these norms and consciously and unconsciously follow the harms.

The honour of the woman is the honour of the family and even the nation. Girls are married off at a young age so as to prevent anything from happening, which will jeopardize the honor the family. The restrictions are relaxed for older women, as they are no longer sexually attractive to man.

she is expected to continuously adhere to a system rules which seem to exist specially for girls. Any kind of derivation from the prescribed or rather approved set of rules incites displeasure from people. A girl is expected to be feminine “and this job is often entrusted to finishing Schools”. In these schools girls are taught skills from cooking to attending parties and socializing. The order a girl becomes the more the expectations increase.

Women are viewed as untrustworthy, reckless and as the need for protection. She is also a temptress who can lead others to the wrong path and this is to be prevented. Similarly many places are out of bound for girls women. It could be different in different ranging from the market place to the bar women who go

out at night are not nice women who break the ruler are continuously under the threat of facing the consequences. Women are supposed to confine themselves to 'safe' and steady their family life. A woman who gives less attention to her family is not a good woman. Women are generally seen in roles where they can employ their skills of maintaining the workplace, dealing, artfully with clients or attending phone calls.

These are the broad outlines what is expected of women we will see that these are the very qualities are repeatedly endorsed in cinema. These are the lines on which the character of the heroine and the vamp are built. Even cinema addressing problems facing the women basically challenge these existing notions about femininity; role of a woman and her limits.

MASS MEDIA DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

Mass media has been fast developing since independence. It has reached out to people in the form & newspapers, radio, television, cinema. As a result media has had its effects on Indian life, in the economic, social, cultural, intellectual, religious spheres. It was after independence that print and broadcast media developed.

Liberal feminists looking at the media analyze "sex role stereotypes, perceptions of sex-appropriate Behaviour, appearance, skills, interests, self-perceptions: (Tuchman, 1978:5). Women appear as, "Wife, mother, daughter, girl friend, as working in traditionally female jobs (secretary, nurse, receptionist. Moreover they are young and beautiful but not very well educated". (Zoonen, 1996, 34). Zoonen further writes that "media perpetuate sex role stereotype because they reflect

dominant social values and also because male media producers are influenced by these stereotypes". Liberal feminists feel that media has a great contribution to make in changing sex-stereotypes. They want media to portray women "in non-traditional roles and by using non sexual language" (Zoonen, 1996). Zoonan also points out the negative outcome to such portrayals. Today women are shown as managing both house and work brilliantly and also managing to look after themselves. But this is not possible and has led to false and high expectations from women.

According to these feminists media is greatly responsible for creating an anti-women environment. So the solution is that women should own and create the means of communication. Thus newspapers, magazines, television films etc should communicate such ideas.

The problem as Zoonan points out is that, it is not possible that women who work together do not have feeling of competition and hierarchy. This has led to a lot of international conflict. They have also failed to attract believers and in fact feminism based ideas went on the decline as the ideas propagated did not seem feasible.

"The socialist feminist communication model of the seventies clings to radical models in which media are perceived to be ideological instruments presenting the capitalist and patriarchal society as the natural order. However, socialist feminism is distinguished by a much greater concern for the way in which ideologies of femininity are constructed in the media and to whose avail?" (1998,37). Socialist feminists were also interested in bringing about changes in the organization of media labour.

By 1976, India had 13,320 newspapers in 65 languages, out of this 10,947 had started only after independence. (D'Souza, 1998, p.47) There were weeklies, journals in regional languages which numbered -12,445. The total circulation of newspaper at that time was 34 million copies.

"At the time of independence there were only 6 radio broadcasting stations. By 1997 there were 155 radio stations including many relay stations." (Ibid, p.58) These stations were broadcasting in many regional and foreign languages too. In spite of its many advantages radio lost its popularity. Initially it reached out to both the literate and illiterate. It broadcasted programs aimed at entertainment, education and information.

Today the Frequency Modulated Channels have revived the interest in radio again. The partial opening up of some radio stations to private broadcasters has brought many changes with the broadcasting work. But the government does not want them to broadcast news. As a result the private radio broadcasters concentrate wholly on entertainment (Sujata Madhok, October-2001, p.18) NGO's are trying to buy airtime so that they can broadcast some educational programme.

"The television arrived in India in 1959. The U.S.A. loaned satellite-enabled India to initiate the SITE (Satellite Instructional T.V. Experiment) programs. About 3000 villages in six Indian states were bought under the focus of the T.V. for about four hours everyday." (Y,D'Souza, 1998, p.27) Today with the coming in the cable television, television has become revolutionized. Cable television meant increased member of western channels and programs. Many programs were dubbed in Hindi, other regional languages. Soap operas or serials as they are known have become very popular. The content of the serials range from

the family scene to that of the college campus. Thus offering something to everybody. However the serials are more popular among woman viewers. There is a change even among the newsreaders. While those on Doordarshan follow dress codes, women newsreaders on other channels wear western clothes (Sujata Madhok, Oct-2001, p.19)

Now coming to Cinema. In 1978 about 619 films were being made in about 15 Indian regional languages. These were about 8000 Cinema half in country's various states. Today about 200 films are made in Hindi alone and regional films especially Tamil, Telegu, Malayalam, Marathi, have a standing of their own.

Apart from social and political organization mass media has become are of the most powerful instruments of social change.

Rise of Indian Cinema

It is important to briefly look at the beginning of cinema in India and also the development of Hindi film industry. B.D. Garga (1999, p.108) gives a detailed account of the advent and development of Indian cinema.

The initial efforts by Daguerre, Etienne – Jules, Muybridge led to the recording of human and animals in motion which when projected created the illusion of movement. This gave way to various inventions like stroboscope, zoetrope, Edison's – Lume Trope and finally Lumie're's brothers' cinematograph which paved the way for modern cinema. It was in Paris on December 28 1895 that Lumie're's brothers, Louis and Auguste, held the first public show. The show included short duration films showing – train arriving at the station, workers leaving the factories. It was six months later that a show was held in India.

It was on July 7, 1896 that Lumiere's assistant Marius Sestier presented the first cinematograph show in Bombay Imperial Hotel. A regular exhibition was held at Novelty there after from July 14. It became so popular that by the end 1898 that Indian and foreign exhibitors were holding screenings in tents and also in regular theaters. Cinema had by now also made its appearance in Calcutta. An advertisement in the Amrita Bazaar Patrika suggests that the first screening took place on October 2nd 1898 at Star theatre. Most of the film activity was then centered around Bombay and Calcutta. It was by 1900 that Madras was introduced to cinema but it took a lot of time for it to generate activity.

Many exhibitors, producers emerged at this stage. People from diverse backgrounds took interest in this new field. It was a novel idea, which attracted much attention. So people wanted to make most of this new opportunity.

One such person was Jamsethji Framji Madan, a rich Parsi. He started a cinema of theatres not only in India but also in Burma and Ceylon. He set up regular bioscopy shows in tents at Calcutta. Another famous personality was Hiralal Sen who was probably the first to make an advertisement for C.K. Sen's "Jaba Kusum Hair Oil".

By 1910 the major cities boasted of regular theatres while the smaller towns and villages had to be satisfied with 'bioscopies'. Of course, there were many places, which were introduced to this form of entertainment. The popularity of films was such that the government had to pass the cinematograph Bill in 1917. This was mainly for the safety of the audience from fire and also to monitor the type of films being shown.

It was at about this time that Daundiraj Govind Phalke screened *Harishchandra* in 1913. This film can be called the first 'hit' as it was screened for nearly a month. The story of *Raja Harishchandra* was a well-known one for Indians and they could totally identify with the story. Phalke was merely following the tradition set by dance and drama. He made other films based on similar themes - *Satyavan Savitri* (1914), *Lanka Dahan* (1917). All his movies were successful.

With the advent of sound, things changed. The audience was looking for something different and Phalke could no longer cater to this taste. But Phalke's contribution to Indian cinema was immense, it was he who established it as an indigenous product.

Due to World War-I, film business suffered a setback. After the War ended 'serials' from The United States Of America were imported which were shown on a regular basis. Soon Indian producers started showing serials based on mythology in a similar manner. Hollywood, by now, was the leading film centre and most of the films imported by India came from the United States. The reason behind the supremacy of the United States was its accessibility to celluloid materials, which in other European countries was used for warfare. One of the main importers of these films and other materials was Madan Theatres.

Madan Theatre used the imported materials to make films which were technically superior to indigenous film. They too made mythological and historical movies- *Nala Damayanti* (1921), *Ratnavali* (1922) etc. very often they would show girls wearing flimsy clothes. It was as early as this that we find films based on "wayward husband, virtuous wife and exotic vamp"

films based on these lines were *Patni Bhakti* (1922), *Patni Pratap* (1923) Interestingly these roles were played by an Anglo Indian actress Patience Cooper. Stories were also drawn from Arabian and Persian Folktales. They also made a film called "*Savitri*" (1924) which was shot in Rome and had two Italian artists playing the lead role. The movie was a success. Soon there was a shift towards Indian stories- those written by Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyaya, and Rabindranath Tagore.

Most of the producers stuck to mythological themes as they were a surer bet. AM. Irani was another famous producer who made films like *Veer Abhimanyu* (1922), *Krishna Arjuna Yoddha* (1923) *Chandra Gupta* (1923), An interesting film made during this period was the "*Wild Cat of Bombay*" (1927), which was the story of a female *Robinhood*.

The audience now wanted a change from mythological stories. So far the film had been based on the Victorian attitudes and values. Producers were now willing to take on the challenge of different themes. Thus the 'new' films were, *Wronged Wife* (1930), *The Enchanters* (1930) *A Woman's Vengeance* (1930), C.J. Shah made a film called *Gun Sundari* (1927), which questioned the 'traditional, submissive role of the Hindu wife' there were other films based on a similar theme - *Lakshmi* (1928) *Vishwa Mohini* (1928), *Raj Lakshmi* (1930).

The heroines of these films were "Nautch Girls" or Anglo-Indians. They had to change their names for acceptance among the audience. So Ruby became Sulochana, Renee Smith became Seeta Devi. Many like Ermilene and Zebunissa were famous for their roles as exotic, mysterious, cigarette smoking vamps.

By the 1930's, India had become one of the major producers of motion pictures and raw film imports had increased drastically. About 100 films were being produced in a year. One of the most important film of the silent era was Naval Gandhi's 'Sacrifice' which was against animal sacrifice in the temple of Kali. Various other themes at this time were Sanskrit classics like *Vasant Sena* (1931), *Bicharak* based on Tagore's story, the last one was about a widow forced into prostitution which was banned because of its 'low moral tone'

THE TALKIES:

In 1926, the Warner brothers presented the film *Don Juan* with a musical score and sound effects. This was followed by the *Jazz Singer* which included speech and songs. The first all out talkie was "*The lights of New York*", In India, Madan theatres made the first attempt at synchronized sound film production.

By 1930, theatres were being wired for sound it was on March 14, 1931 that Irani released the first Indian Talkie- *Alam Ara* 'it was of fairy tale variety, about a princess separated from her father by a cruel step mother, how she is reunited with her father. Following the success of *Alam- Ara*, other talkies were released which were technically superior and had many more songs and dances.

Talkies also meant that the Anglo-Indian heroines would no longer do. The actors and actresses needed to be fluent in Urdu or Hindi and also had to be good singers. The initial talkies were made in Hindustani ,a mixture of Urdu and Hindi films dominated ,and regional films followed later. Subsequently, foreign films received a set back as most people did not

understand English. The Indian films consisted mainly of song, dance, drama, action, conflict and a happy ending.

It was Nitin Bose who introduced play back singing in his film – *Dhoop Chaon* (1935). Meanwhile V. Shantaram wanted to make films on the Indian women who were either seen as goddesses or as submissive wives, forever suffering. *Amar Jyoti* (1936), was a film based on how a wronged wife takes revenge. It was ‘*Duniya Na Mane*’ which broke the rules. It showed how a young woman trapped into marrying an old man, refuses to consummate the marriage. The old man finally commits suicide out of a sense of guilt.

Many movies based on social issues were also being produced by the Bombay Talkies – *Acchut Kanya* (1936), *Jeevan Prabhat* (1937) etc., 1935 a film was made based on a Gujarati Novel. It was about a couple where the wife is a doctor and the husband a lawyer, both are unable to give time to each other. It ends with the wife giving up the job. This led to a lot of protests from feminists. But, the film was a success as it appealed to the traditional mind set.

A heroine, famous for her stunts was Nadia. Her real name was Mary Evans. Her film ‘*Hunterwali*’ showed her as a brave woman who fights oppression and easily uses the whip. She would be seen on top of a running train, jumping on to a horse. She did not use a double and did all her stunts herself. After riding the wave of popularity for some time, Nadia too faded away.

The World War II was going on and this had its effects on the film industry. By then, India ranked third in the world where film production was concerned, about 200 films a year. Again

there were controls on exports. This restricted the length of the films. The British carried out war propaganda through films. Thus started the trend of documentary filmmaking. This was used during Quit India Movement when most leaders were in Jail and public resentment of this was high.

With the end of world war- II, production increased as the restrictions decreased. It was after independence that political issues started surfacing in cinema. Movies were made on freedom movement and the various incidents which had taken place. Surprisingly, many of these films had to face the censors disapproval because of the high content of violence. Cinema also reflected on the underprivileged children, like Satyan Bose's - *Parivartan* (1949), Dharmaadhikari's - *Nanhe Munhe* (1951), on the environment- *Neecha Nagar* by Chetan Anand (1948).

Bengal had lost its importance where film production was concerned as most of the population had migrated to either Bangladesh or Bombay. In contrast south now emerged as a major player. At the same time strong anti- Hindi sentiments were surfacing. Meanwhile in Hindi Cinema the urban had become an issue. The city was at once "synonymous with jobs, wealth, excitement and also with exploitation, crime, sleaze and slums".

After independence, the development of new industries, factories, created employment for people. This also meant that there were many more who could spend on entertainment. By 1960- Indian was producing 318 films a year.

In 1954- there was an anti-cinema campaign as many felt that the cinema was a threat to the moral health of the country and major factor in incitement to crime and general unsettlement

of society. There was an effort to restrict certain kinds of films. Thus came in censorship, prohibiting 'closeness' on screen, exposure, undermining of state machinery.

Many films were produced which reflected on issues like marriage, personal honour and sacrifice. The influence of south was seen on the role of the woman, where she was seen as an all-suffering soul. Movies made to this effect were *Bhabhi-ki-Chudiyani* (1961), *Main Chup Rahoongi* (1962), *Dil-ek-Mandir* (1963). One such film was *Mother India* (1957), which depicted the life of a mother. The mother here was symbolic of the nation.

Sohrab Modi made the first Technicolor film- *Jhansi-ki-Rani* (1953). He spent 9 million on it. *Mughal -e-Azam* (1960) was made on a budget of 15 million. The public rejected love scenes, kissing, nudity and labeled them Un-Indian. By the 1960's films had increased in quantity and technical quality but not where the content was concerned.

The heroes who had ruled so far were Raj Kapoor, Dev Anand, Dilip Kumar and a change was needed. In came Rajesh Khanna the gentle romantic hero. The movies made were centred around 'love', but the 70's belonged to Amitabh Bachchan. He brought with him the image of the angry young man. "Mr cool" of icy intelligence, assertive, physicalness, vigorous, virile, definite, deliberate violence. He touched a chord in the national psyche".(Monojit lahiri 1983,p.34). The hero in Bachchan's movies attacks the state and its machinery. It is seen as a corrupt system, which attacks the weak and protects the strong and is basically unjust. It also brought out problems of poverty, class, smuggling and prostitution.

The revenge saga began with *Zanjeer* released in 1973, written by Salim- Javed. The hero would kill to avenge the murder of his parents. Thus came in melodrama, sex, violence, along with the new hero Evil, whether in form of a father or a brother, had to be killed by the hero. *Sholay* (1975) was another trend setter, made at the cost of 30 million. It ran for nearly 5 years in Bombay. It was different without being too different. The hero Amitabh, falls in love with a widow but dies before he can marry her. Gulzar's *Aandhi* (1975) ran into trouble for its close resemblance to the life of the then Prime Minister India Gandhi. The story was about a young ambitious woman who leaves her family to fulfill her ambition. But the movie was made in such a way that the blame was put on the husband for being uncooperative.

A surprise package at this time was *Jai Santoshi Maa* (1975). It was all about a woman's suffering and her unshakeable faith in the goddess- Santoshi Maa.

In 1978- *Satyam Shiram Sundaram*, tried to show how beauty is not significant and that one should look beyond it. In spite of exposure by its heroine- Zeenat Aman, the film did not click. Apart from a few off beat films, the majority of films centred around safe, time tested stories.

In 1980's, rape, revenge, anti-establishment were the main themes. *Prem Rog* (1985) showed the treatment meted out to a young widow, how she is raped by her brother-in-law, in the end she is accepted by the hero. *Ram-teri-Ganga Maili* (1985) showed the nexus between the rich, the politicians and prostitution. It is remembered for the exposure by the heroine rather than its story line. *Insaaf Ka Tarazu* (1980) dealt with the issue of rape only. A beauty Queen Zeenat Aman is raped. The lawyer tires to

prove that a woman in that kind of profession will have low morals and thus cannot be raped. Further that a true Indian woman would never speak of her loss of dignity in public. *Pratighat* (1987) showed how an ordinary housewife and lecturer is humiliated in public. She joins hand with another victim and hacks the villain to death.

On the other hand movies were being made about the ideal Hindu wife. *Maang Bharo Sajna* (1980)- justified bigamy. *Pati Parmeshwar* (1988) depicted an educated girl marriage to the wrong guy and how she suffers. The film was banned for "depicting women in ignoble servility to man and glorifying it". R.K. Nayyar, the producer, believed that he was upholding Indian tradition.

Actions films dominated the scene in 1980s- 1990s but romantic film were equally successful . *Ek Duje Ke Liya* (1981), *Qayamat Se Qaymat Tak* (1989), *Maine Pyar Kiya* (1990), *Hum Aap Ke Hain Kaun* (1994).

Off Beat / Low Budget Films

There were many directors who were making 'meaningful' cinema raising various issues in the society. M.S Sathyu's famous *Garam Hawa* was based on partition. '*Chakra*' (1980) was about a widow who longs for a home but inspite of all efforts her son is dragged into the underworld *Ankur* (1974), '*Nishant*' (1975) depicted the still existing feudal structures and exploitation in the rural areas. '*Aakroash*' showed how a tribal's wife is killed by the local bigwigs and the blame is put on the husband. The husband kills his sister to prevents her from sharing the same fate as his wife.

"*Albert Pinto ko Gussa Kyo Aata hai*" was based on minority issues. For once Christians were not portrayed in the usual stereo typed fashion. Similarly, '*Salim Langre Par mat ro*' depicted the Muslim minority. Salim an uneducated youth indulges in theft and extortion. He is urged by Aslam, who is a low paid proof-reader, to mend his ways. As Salim decides to change, he is killed by his gang.

"*Damul*' explored issues of poverty, caste violence, sexual exploitation. '*New Delhi Times*' (1986) showed how even the press was being manipulated by the politicians. '*Rihaee*' showed a village where the young men have gone to work in the city. In comes a young man and one of the woman becomes pregnant and what happens after that. Kalpana Lajmi in *Ekpal* (1986) treads a different path. A woman has an extra-marital affair becomes pregnant was she is accepted by her husband.

We have looked at the development of cinema from the 'Silent Era' to the 'Talkies', from 'Black and white' to 'colour'. we have also seen how several films are made based on the same kind of story line which gives it a predictability which is generally in tune with the popularly held notions of tradition.

In the next chapter we will be going into greater detail about the images of women in Indian cinema in Hindi cinema in particular. We will look at the various roles of women in the tradition modernity context.

CHAPTER-V

IMAGES OF WOMEN IN HINDI CINEMA

We have so far traced the rise of nation states, modernity and mass media. Effort has also been made to relate mass media and gender issues. In this chapter we will make an attempt to further co-relate modernity, tradition and mass media. We will see how interoperation of modernity, tradition effects the portrayal of women in mass media, especially cinema.

Marshall Mc. Luhan foresaw the emergence of a global village—as world community of interaction resolution and communication – as a consequence of industrial revolution which affected the countries of third world and introduced a process of homogenization through westernization of life and deliberate destruction of sensual elements of traditional cultures. This rapid accelerated pace of social change as heralded in an era of what is called modernization measured by indicators such as literacy, urbanization, use of mass media, empathy and political participation. (Yogesh Atal, 1985, p.5).

It has been further written that while various cultures are coming closer technology has reintroduced “diversity and heterogeneity”. Thus “heterogeneity, diversity, multiplicity” are a part of our lives today.

Communication has become the force, which binds the heterogeneous together, it integrates various subsystems. In the third world, communication is yet to reach out to all – poverty communication can be divided into ‘traditional’, ‘modern’ and all three co-exist in the Third world.

We have already looked at the relationship between modernization and mass media. The breakdown of barriers, free-flow of information, globalization, for many meant loss of ones own culture. There is a fear modernization, which is essentially a 'western phenomenon will lead to' westernization of all countries, especially the Third world. We should remember, as Yogesh Atal, puts it that the information flow is not linear. Just as the Third world is being influenced by the west, similarly the west is being influenced by the East. Hence fascination, for say, Indian clothes, food, handicraft is also a part of this information dissemination.

Yogesh Atal says that instead of total westernization, there has been a "resurgence of tradition, revival of religion and a concern for cultural identity". (No.1, 1985 p.23). Globalization began in India, with economic reforms and policies of liberalization formulated in the 1990s. India, started following the 'open' free market economy whereby more choices in goods were available to people. The emphasis was on development, modernization and increasing the economic power of people. Thus began the consumerist culture in India.

The target was the urban middle class, which was seen as representing "national cultural standard". (Fernandes, Vol. 22, 2000, p. 184). Goods which were so far only available to the upper class were accessible to all. The goods were marketed through advertisements, which sought to show a continuity between "national tradition" and "global capitalism". Goods which were so far only available to the upper class were accessible to all. The goods were marketed through advertisements which sought to show a continuity between "national tradition" and "Global capitalism".

An example given by Leela Fernandes is that of an air-conditioner advertisement. In the advertisement initially a 'Sadhu' is seen as resting on a bed of nails and then later, on a proper bed with the air conditioner switched on. The images in the advertisement, she says, suggests that tradition should be protected and yet at the same time one should accept western standards of progress and development. Multi-national companies stressed on their Indianess while many Indian companies showed their international connection. Various examples are given by Fernandez to show how nation, development and women are depicted in the various advertisements. Thus cars are advertised as being part of nuclear family and large cars as being able to accommodate joint families.

The New Indian woman is very much a part of these images. She "must attend to her national identity as well as her modernity".

"Gender, in this context (of globalization) serves as a socio-symbolic site which attempts to manage the destabilizing contradictions which globalization produces in the Indian nation". (Fernandes, Vol.20, 2000, p.40). Elucidating on this she writes that the possibility of a total breakdown of national boundaries in a physical and cultural sense is prevented by maintaining the purity of the woman and thereby maintaining purity of culture. This meant attacks on visual images of women-wearing skimpy clothes, portraying anti-Indian tradition, values etc.

Cinema as a medium of communication is also affected by these trends. When a director makes a film he/she tries to convey something to the audience who are the consumers. The

director may use symbols to convey his ideas and themes to the audience. The audience is not homogeneous and hence each individual reacts to the film differently. Films are more influential not only because of their visual appeal, but also because literacy is not a pre-requisite for watching a film. Though a film may have limited appeal due to its language and also because of its type—commercial or new wave cinema. The latter is seen as the cinema of the elite, who are seen as more equipped to understand and appreciate the subtle nuances and symbolism.

Cinema plays a positive social role: that it fulfills psychological need, that it expresses concern about real issues – puberty, crime, violence communal prejudices, institution of marriage. Popular cinema acts as a channel for transmission of ideas and information (Krishen, 1980, p. 7).

Krishnen explains that the importance of cinema lies in the fact that they exert a lot of influence on the audience. Therefore there is a constant preoccupation with what is to be shown on screen and what should not be shown. The film draws from the values of the symbols used in the society. In doing so the audience finds it easier to understand and identify with the film, its characters and events. "Through the study of popular film we are led to explore and define the cultural framework of meaning in which these films operate". (Ibid, p.8).

When the people accept a particular film they are accepting all that the film represents and in a way approve of it. Many times what comes to be accepted becomes a stereotype. This leads to predictability. A regular watcher of Hindi films can vouch for their predictability – more often than not a happy

ending, a love story, misunderstanding and tensions thrown in the middle, a macho hero and a feminine heroine – are the staple diet on which the film goes feed on. The maintenance of status quo is very importance in any film. Hence families come together, hero – heroine get married, evil is vanquished.

“Popular Cinema operates at the level of contemporary myths. As myths, their meanings must somehow appeal to or reinforce the perception of the audience. In turn it should be possible to relate the audience response to a particular myths to the social reality that shapes and combines their belief and attitude”. (Basu, *et.al.*, 1980, p.10). They assert that it is understood then that a successful films has been able to cater to the expectations rather than try and bring changes; “represent social types that are structured in such a way that they represent a conceptual idea of social order”. The society is seen as an aggregate of individuals who are weak, passive and come together only when a leader emerges. At the same time certain groups may be show in an idealized manner – the family as a village. It is often what the group should be like rather than what it is.

Similarly an idealized image of women of women is portrayed on screen; aggressive enough to fight for husband and child, homely enough to listen to her in laws and husband, sacrifice everything for the family. The other type of women are the ones with evil designs – the bad mother - in - law. As Ashish Nandy puts it “the attempt is to place such women outside the acceptance limits of bi-cultural living (i.e. outside the optional mixture of tradition and modernity)” (Ibid,p.14)He further elaborates on the role of the ‘vamp’.

The attitude towards the vamp is one of contempt; but also one in which is reflected the Indian male's and perhaps the Indian peasant's culture – the traditional fear of femininity –nurtural and treacherous, active and aggressive, powerful and smothering the feared aspects of womanhood are projected through typical characteristics on the screen – who are all bad and arouse hostility”. (Aashish Nandy; 1980 , P.37).

Nandy writes that one cannot escape the influence of the west, it is seen in the dress, lifestyle, way of taking, ideas about relationships etc. But at the same time 'western ideas are shown to have negative effect, thus the west has influenced the idea of the villains and the vamp – who smoke, wear western clothes etc. The heroine may be educated, outgoing, western in her outlook but she nurtures the desire to be a good, traditional housewife or there will a some one to remind how of her rightful duties as a Indian woman. In Indian films even the prostitute may be depicted in a similar manner – purity of mind if not of bodies, dying for the hero if they do not marry him. She too has the traits of an Indian woman.

Cultural analysis necessarily focuses on representation as the process by which the female subject is constructed in response to a variety of ideological imperatives.

This is the reason why the image of a woman has to be fit into a framework and anything outside it has to be condemned. The image of a woman in a film has to therefore fit in the mental image the society (audience) has of what a woman should be. Any change in representation has to be explained in a way, which makes it more acceptable. Most of what we see on screen is a clash between tradition and modernity. Modernity is often shown

as “elite, bourgeoisie, alienated, westernised”. (Rajeshwari Sunder Rajan; 1993, p.67)

These stereotypes are present in most popular films. It has a distinct Indian approach, as it is the entertainment of the masses. There are a number of genres associated with Indian popular cinema:

1. **Mythological:** Fantastic narration of ancient stories, events from distant part, interactions with demons, gods.
2. **Devotional:** Diverse form of union with divinity.
3. **Romantic Film:** Erotic passion, confrontation with social conventions. All this is conveyed through code symbols.
4. **Stunt Films:** The focus is on action and physicality.
5. **Historical Films:** These may be based on true or imagined historical events and are full of fancy settings.
6. **Social Films:** There may deal with social problems and issues –like caste, communalism etc.
7. **Family Melodrama:** Explore tensions and upheaval within the family. (Dissanyake & Gokulsung; 1999,p.23-26]

Dissanyake and Gokulsung feel that films play the “central role in the construction of Indian consciousness. Also it has a “dominant, pervasive role in creating in public mind the notion of heroism, duty, courage, modernity, consumption, glamour”. According to them there is a close relationship between Indian popular cinema and modernity; “whatever the genre may be all Indian popular films display culturally grounded engagement with modernity”. Thus in Indian popular cinema across regional

barriers are found the same themes of love, fate, respect for tradition, social injustice.

We will discuss in greater detail about the images of women in general and also in certain popular films. The language of the films will be Hindi. Various films, old and new, have been analysed by experts in the field to show the relation between cinema and society the messages and influence of cinema. Hindi films have been chosen because of their appeal all over India. Though of course, movies from south, with sub-titles, are also becoming popular.

DIFFERENT ROLES OF WOMEN IN INDIAN CINEMA

The country or nation in films is always referred to as the motherland- *Bharat Mata* and she is again likened to a goddess who should be revered and protected, just like a mother. The enemy earlier was nameless and faceless but certain hints were there for the audience to grasp and understand, thus the type of names, could suggest a Muslim nation or slanted eyes would refer to our neighbour China.

The woman is expected to adhere to certain norms of behaviour. She has to be the ideal wife who is loyal to her husband. Dissanyake and Gokursung (1999,p.76) feel that ideas about a woman have been heavily borrowed from the *Manusmriti*.

The woman must not strive to separate herself from father, husband or son. She should be cheerful, efficient, in the management of household affairs, fastidious in cleaning utensils, careful with expenses. After the death of the husband she must make every effort to honour his memory. All these have clear articulation in Indian Cinema.

The vamp on the other hand is a modern, western woman who flouts tradition. She represents all that is bad about the west. The courtesan does not fall in this category as she looks after the emotional and physical needs of the man, is very caring and talented in classical singing and dancing.

At the same time the woman is an object of desire in a film. The audience must see her as desirable Richards (1995,p.3) identified strategies used to display female form and desire. The first was the tribal dress. The tribal dress exposed the legs, midriff, arms and most of the times the back. Secondly, wet saris. The heroine dancing in the rain or as fantasized by the hero in dreams is an erotic figure. The wet sari clinging to the heroine's body present a picture of sexual desire. Finally retreating behind the bush.

The female body as spectacle is a public representation and putting before the public an erotic imagery that does not violate the code that prohibits the representation of the private. (Richards, 1995, p.4).

It is only in the new cinema that the different aspects and roles of a woman are explored. It is in these films that the various pulls and pressures of tradition and modernity are seen.

The 'mother' in Indian cinema is also a much-stereotyped figure. If the villain is a westernised figure then the mother is his anti-thesis. Rosie Thomas (1995,p.57-82) gives a detailed explanation about the role of the mother. The mother, she writes, is traditional, wears white sari, if she is a widow and spends most of her time in the *puja* room. She is concerned about protecting the family and following the traditions. The wife is instrumental in maintaining the 'izzat' (honour) of the family. She is self-sacrificing and has unconditional love for her family

members. But she also stands for justice, principles and may punish her son if he is guilty of any heinous crime. She is shown as accepting her husband with all his faults and doing her duty, silently accepting her faith. Very rarely is the mother shown in sexual terms, even with her husband.

Mother is frequently identified with and likened to figures of the Hindu Pantheon- most notably *Sita* who circulates in popular commonsense currency as the prototype of traditional Indian womanhood. (Rosie Thomas; 1995,p.59).

The mother may be 'evil' as a mother-in-law or as the stepmother. But everything is set right at the end when she repents for her actions and asks for forgiveness. She is then reformed into an ideal woman. The filmmaker has to see to it that evil if not reformed is vanquished.

Rosie Thomas is correct when she writes that "film imagery is both fed by and feeds other representation and that film within in wider context". A film thus circulates ideas about women, morality, nationalism etc. Similarly, the good is associated with tradition, in other words what is deemed Indian. Modernity is on the other hand associated with evil, disharmony and is essentially seen as non- Indian. It is indeed surprising that "Indian Cinema which is a product of cultural modernity and has accelerated the process of modernity, punishes a women process of modernity, punishes a women who identifies with modernity". (Dissanyake And Gokulsung:1999, p.88).So in many a film a modern woman may be the one who believes in nuclear family, is educated and may not want to wear traditional clothes. She would be in direct opposition to a traditional, family living but illiterate, woman and is the root cause of discord.

Aruna Vasudev (1993, p.99-105) echoes the same idea. She says that there is a sharp dichotomy between the women as a wife, a mother, mistress or a lover. The films show the heroines as young girls waiting to get married. The "modern woman who dresses provocatively wears western clothes, speaks English and may smoke is defeated by the traditional, sari clad and barely literate woman." She also mentions that in the 1950's a petition was sent to the government to counter effect of films which showed educated women in poor light.

Maithili Rao (1995,p.241-246) gives examples of many films to show how the traditional and the modern are shown in Hindi films. She writes that there are two archetypes of popular cinema mother India- the upholder of Dharma and the emotional centre of the hero's life. The other is the *Pakeezah* the pure, innocent. The educated heroine who wants to run the family is ridiculed.

Maithili Rao writes about several films to illustrate her point. She cites the example of '*Ghar Ghar Ki Baat*' where the independent working woman is rejected and in the end the heroine says that a woman's happiness is centered around the home and its work. In the 1980's, when we see that films revolved around the rape, revenge formula, the heroine found a male mentor or a surrogate father. In "*Sherni*" -Sridevi wears jeans, boots brass studded leather outfit and when need wore the Indian '*Ghagra*'. Rao writes that

The unfamiliar image has to be periodically stripped of its alien accoutrements to reassure us of her docile Indianness and its promise of sexual transmission to the patriarchal order. (Ibid, p.249).

In *Pratighat*, which has been mentioned earlier, the heroine before taking revenge, aborts the child so that she is not

held back or burdened by anything. In 'Beta' the mother-in-law is evil, even though she is a mother also. This is because she is a step-mother. The father has been labelled insane. The heroine Madhuri Dixit is at the same time- stern and soft, modern and traditional. She challenges the injustices meted out by the mother-in-law instead of suffering passively. But her fight was not for gaining control but for restoring the patriarchal order in the house. The heroine is a chaste wife and a vamp rolled into one-she can wear skimpy clothes and seduce her husband or lover at the same time is the perfect material for a virtuous good hearted wife.

The film '*Khalnayak*' with the controversial song '*Choli-ke-peeche*' has the heroine *Ganga* (Madhuri Dixit) as a cop. She is short-tempered, uses foul language with the inmates of the jail. At the same time she wants to help her fiancé Ram, nab the villain. She puts herself at stake for him. She is then accused of being 'impure' as she had been travelling and 'living' with the villain. But the villain who was actual the hero's brother, proclaims her as 'pure as *Ganga* itself. The heroine is thus a mixture of the purity of *Ganga* and the virtuous wife that Sita was. As Maithili Rao puts it

The crassest of popular cinema, invokes the incantatory magic of ritualised iconography, infiltrating potent of myth, seduction of song, sanction of societal approval. (Rao, 1995,p.241)

Rao gives example of two more movies. '*Khalnayika*' and '*Aaina*' In *Khalnayika*- a gynaecologist tries to molest the heroine (Jaya Prada) The movie thus reinforces the fear in the society about male doctors, the doctors when charged commits suicide and his wife resolves to take revenge. She is the true 'wife' who

cannot accept then that her husband can do any wrong. She comes as a governess to the heroine's children. The heroine is now shown as a motherly figure while the husband is still attractive to the opposite sex. The governess wears a sari when looking after the children. The moment she is out to seduce the hero she dresses in western, revealing clothes, and when she makes the final move of killing the mother / wife she wears shirt, coat, tie. Her "devious femininity is now transformed into an androgynous killer". (Rao,1995,p.252).The third woman character is Varsha, who is a working woman-a journalist, is shown as a chain smoker, a flirt. She is also a threat to other wives as she is single and with a modern lifestyle and outlook. The film reinforces ideas about a career woman who is single.

'*Aaina*' in the other hand is a romantic story. It is about two sisters- Roma and Reema. Roma is glamorous confident, ambitious and selfish. The younger sister is shy, sacrificing, wears glasses, has long hair. The hero (Jackie Sheroff) falls in love with the glamorous Roma. But she is ambitious and runs away on her wedding day to become an actress. As a face saver the hero marries the younger sister who had always loved him, though he is not aware of it. He had admired her for her patient and forgiving nature- all the qualities that he is looking for in a suitable wife. Soon she is transformed into a beautiful woman-when she removes her spectacles and leaves her hair loose. But right when the marriage is about to be consummated Roma arrives and stakes her claim. While Reema "flaunts her *mangal sutra* and the sanctity of *saat pheras*, Roma struts her seductive wiles and sexual wares". In the end the good Reema triumphs over the evil Roma. Reema fights for her husband and wins. The

ambitious, modern Roma is thus punished for having dared to put her ambitions before her marriage.

When a film appears to challenge the existing notions of tradition the audience finds it difficult to accept the images presented to it and may react either by rejecting it as not being a part of the tradition or try to adjust to the new ideas. One such film, which evoked extreme and mixed reactions, was '*Fire*.' The film which was directed by Deepa Mehta .

Contests the notions of traditions and compliance to it. Traditions provides the contours to the film through the characters of Biji (Mother-in-Law) and the elder brother Ashok- Biji symbolizes cultural tradition and it's ubiquitous moral force. On the other hand the relationship between the sisters-in-law is viewed as modernity as it deviates from tradition (Puri, 1990,p.205-209).

The story of '*Fire*' revolves around a middle class family. The family consists of elder brother Ashok (Kulbhushan Kharbanda) his wife Radha (Shabana Azmi), younger brother Jatin (Javed Jaffrey) and his wife Sita (Nandita Das), mother-in-law and the servant. The family owns an eating joint. The relationship between the couples is strained due to different causes. Ashok is under the influence of a 'holy man' who has asked him to purge himself from sexual desire. The modern, younger brother is having an affair with an Indian Chinese woman.

Radha has accepted her husband's attitude and is a good wife and daughter-in-law. When Sita enters the household she questions Radha's compliance- it is to be noted that the director had to change 'Sita' to Neeta' following uproar. As we have seen Sita is the ideal woman in the Hindu mindset; and to show her as lesbian was not acceptable.

Sita / Neeta is shown as the element of modernity questioning the entire structure and the way it was functioning.

Tradition as lived within the hetero sexual, conjugal family unit is the standard to which all of the main characters must comply. (Puri, 1990, p.206).

Sita / Neeta who is neglected by her husband instead of accepting it seeks alternatives. Sensing her dissatisfaction the servant Mundu fantasises about her. The servant is also shown as watching pornographic movies after the family members have left for work. The only witness to this is Biji, who is paralytic and cannot speak. Thus she watches silently her 'Ramayana' and 'Mahabharat' being replaced by pornography and Mundu's sexual activity. The presence of an elder mother like figure does not deter him from his sexual activities, a clear violation of Indian tradition.

It is the modern Neeta who takes the initiative in building a relationship with Radha. Soon the sisters-in-law are drawn into a sexual relationship. The mother-in-law guesses it and spits on Radha's face. It is Ashok who discovers them in a compromising situation. He reacts violently and ironically starts feeling aroused himself. All his efforts for so years were in vain. The two women decide to leave the house and a fire breaks out.

The movie was banned in many cities as the Shiv Sena, Bajrang Dal, created trouble whenever it was released. They argued that it encouraged woman to leave their families. The Shiv Sena found the movie "antithetical to Indian cultural values, that is a western contamination threatening to destroy Indian culture and Indian family" (Kapur, 2000 p.56). The Shiv-Sena further felt that the film made a mockery of the ritual of

Karwachauth, which the sisters-in-law keep for each other rather than for their husbands. Another organisation 'Patit Pavan Sangathan', made statements to the effect that the film should be banned to prevent people from getting influenced by western concept of Lesbianism.

On the other hand the lesbian and gays were trying to prove the lesbianism was not a western concept, and that it has always existed in Indian culture, though under wraps. Ratna Kapur in her article shows how all the groups for and against, were trying to delve into the past and traditions to establish their arguments. There was a third party of feminists and others who stood for freedom of speech and expression and did not want 'Indian culture' to be usurped by certain elements in the society. Thus 'fire' generated a conflict between notion of modernity and tradition both in the film and among the audience.

Another film, which was caught in the midst of controversy, was '*Bandit Queen*', based on the life story of *Phoolan Devi*, a dacoit- turned-politician *Phoolan Devi* who was alive when the film was made and released objected to the representation made in the film. The film made news for it's realistic depiction of rape scenes and nudity which had so far been absent from Hindi films. The question also arose that since the film was being screened in all international festivals, what kind of image was being projected of Indian traditional society, as the setting was rural.

The film casts cultural tradition as the force that explains the caste and gender oppression. *Phoolan Devi* endures and marks this oppression as peculiarly Indian and different from the west. Meanwhile the film continually juxtaposes this tradition with more familiar images that link Indian society with a failed attempt to reproduce universalistic

narratives of democracy and modernity. (Fernandes, 1999, p.126).

The film attempts realistic portrayal of rural life in a village in Uttar Pradesh. It depicts the life of an individual woven with caste and gender hierarchies. This stratification is a part of Indian tradition.

Phoolan Devi is married off at a young age, 11 years. Contrary to the tradition of sending the daughter after the age of 13, Phoolan was sent off to her husband's houses immediately after her marriage. Her husband rapes her and her mother-in-law does not do anything to help her. Others see her as 'available' in the village after she leaves her husband. She is raped by upper caste Thakurs and paraded naked in front of the whole village.

The picture of modernity is that of a failed modernity. Phoolan Devi is punished for violating the norms of caste and gender in the society. The police, state, exploit her instead of helping her. The same policemen who have been appointed to save her rape her. She further encounters the modern when she goes to the city for the treatment of her lover, Vikram. The doctor asks for a bribe to treat her lover.

Phoolan Devi as a dacoit is dressed up like a man, complete with weapons, there is an attempt to negate her womanhood and desexualize herself she is continuously pitched against the modern nation state as she is either confronting them or running away from them. Even as she surrenders, Leela Fernandes writes, "Politicians and government officials link their plans to allow *Phoolan Devi* to surrender alive to the fact that lower castes vote".(Fernandes,1999,p.142).

Phoolan Devi is comes across as a woman wronged by 'tradition' and 'modernity'. The tradition of child marriage, caste oppression and gender disparity is the cause of her trauma in the initial years when she is physically and mentally violated by upper caste men. Later on she is harassed by the modern nation state and it's representation police, doctor, politicians. Everyone tries to use her for showing off their power or gaining power through her.

An analysis has also been done of films, which try to bring forth new roles of women and modernity. One such film was *Zakhmi Aurat* (1988). The heroine of this film, (Dimple Kapadia), Kiran, is a police officer and also the daughter of a police commissioner. The heroine is an ideal modern woman. The new woman, professionally qualified, tough enough to fight goons and feminine enough to sing songs with her beau and look beautiful. Everything is perfect till the heroine makes some enemies, while doing her duty. She is gang raped in her house where she lives alone. A single woman staying alone has always made the society uneasy and there is a constant threat to such women who dare to stay alone.

The heroine feels violated and ashamed and prepares herself for a lonely future. But her fiancé Suraj gives her courage and hope. When she fails to get justice at the court it is her fiancé who asks her to fight for justice. He hands her a revolver and the 'Gita'. "He hands her the tools for her revenge, her feminist resistance has been sanctioned by male ideals (Cassale, 2000,p.239).

The story continues as a revenge plot with the help of many more victims, revenge is sought by castrating the culprits. Thus the cop hunts down the culprits, the doctor victim

castrates them and others drop back the 'patient'. The movie ends with the arrest of the group of women. The heroine gets her sanction not only from her 'fiancé' but also the mother-in-law.

By acknowledging her as daughter in-law she provides a sanction which in the Hindu tradition transcend even the support of her husband. Certainly for a modern girl like Kiran, who has a serious relationship with her future husband even before his mother had a chance to meet and approve his choice, this public sanctioning in court becomes an important symbolic gesture of that would appeal to a conservative audience. [Cassale, 2000,p.241].

The heroine had a life mapped out where she is part of the modern nation state and also the traditional family unit. But her dreams are shattered. Transgressing the role, which has been traditionally laid out for her, leads to her punishment. The support of the fiancé is the legitimization of the path the heroine takes- that of revenge. The stamp of male support and approval makes the actions of the heroine more acceptable. 'Modernity' as the justice system fails but helps her as she takes advantage of being a part of the modern nation state movies of the 1940s often dwelt on the issues of modernity and western influence. On such film was *Andaz* (1942), directed by Mehboob Khan. The story, in short, goes like this. Neena (Nargis) is the only daughter of a wealthy father. She the only daughter of a wealthy father. She is pampered and hence spoilt to a certain extent. Dilip (Dilip Kumar) is a friend of hers who falls in love with her. Neena on the other hand is engaged to Rajen (Raj Kapoor) who has gone abroad for his studies. On Neena's father's death, Dilip declares his love for her only to discover the truth. Neena, meanwhile is married to Rajen but fears that Dilip's love for her might be

exposed and revealed. Rajen has his reservations regarding Neena's friendship with Dilip. Neena in a desperate bid to save her married life begs Dilip to leave only to discover that, she had spoken to Rajen in the cover of darkness. Dilip then tries to rape Neena, upon which she kills him. Rajen puts the blame on his wife and her western ways. Neena contemplates as to how her father had advised her against her style of living. Meanwhile Rajen has proof that his wife is 'pure'. But it's too late, she has been sentenced to life-imprisonment. Neena's last appeal is that her daughter should be saved from a similar fate by keeping her away from western, modern influences.

Ravi Vasudevan in his analysis of *Andaz* (1995,p.100), says that here modernity refers not only to "dress sexual license or amorality" but also the "scenes of fantasy and transgression involving the woman".

Neena, the heroine is introduced as an outgoing person-given to riding, socializing etc. The father keeps warning her of the danger of her, ways, that the people might misunderstand her. "The film represents these dangers to the social and moral fabric as a threat to the every existence of the woman" (Vasudevan 1995,p.84). On her father's death Dilip fills in his place, while the father has chosen Rajen as the successor. Dilip is a partner in the company with Neena.

The comic in this film is a character who calls himself professor D.D. Trivedi or DDT. He upholds the traditional view and ridicules the modern by wearing ill-fitting western clothes. He indirectly gives certain solutions to the problems in the film when he tries to give Dilip a 'disappearing pill' or arrange his marriage elsewhere. Vasudevan writes in his article that "the comic has a double edged quality, ridiculing in his persona, not

merely the modern and the western, but more significantly the mock- traditional as well".[ibid,p.90]

The reviewers of the film as that time tried to see how why Neena's actions were misunderstood. Many questioned whether Mehboob Khan wanted to show that friendship between a man and thus should not be encouraged. Many placed the blame on Neena for not being clear with Dilip about her feelings. But Neena has been also shown as a woman who is faithful to her husband and is essentially misunderstood. It was also felt that the depiction of the life style of Neena was that of a upper class, essentially western and hence modern-golf, horse riding, swimming, tennis etc.

'In the cultural sociology of the popular cinema, the influence of the colonial or western moves generates a pampered, alienated, elite existence and vice-versa" (Vasudevan, 1995, p. 105). The cultural message in this film was that there should be a re-conceptualization of the images men and women. As Vasudevan remarks " The woman must reconstitute herself as the traditional , submissive wife who has eyes only for her husband, and the man must recover a properly repressive outlook, abandoning the liberality and indulgence that father and husband have hitherto displayed towards Neena. Though after marriage Neena is the image of the traditional bride and "it is Neena's acceptance of traditional role of faithful wife and devoted mother that the narrative idealies as its ultimate objective and source of Indians" (Vasudevan, 1995,p.106). Rajen on the other hand continues to visit clubs and parties.

Vasudevan refers to Andaz as a problem of social representation and to show now it's containment of modernity centered on the neutralization of certain social functions of the

woman, a common role for a woman was that of teacher, because it overlapped with the image of the woman as the nurturer of the society at large. Neena's final message was that her daughter must be protected from the contamination of foreign norms which led to a confusion of identity. Thus the fault lies with the woman for having attempted to do something different or behave differently, for which she is duly punished.

The movies of today are no different today other than that "the male star is now at once a consumer agent, producer and a projection, a singing (lip-syncing), dancing sex symbol with an excess of charisma a fashion victim and a huckster" (Ciecko, 2001,p.120).

Anne Ciecko takes the example of a super hit film 'Kuch Kuch Hota Hai' to show how 'movie confessions are updated and manipulated to ultimately reinforce conventional gender construction".

The hero Rahul (Shahrukh Khan) is a widower and lives with his mother and 8-year-old daughter Anjali. This daughter has been named after his best friend at college a tomboy friend (Kajol plays the role of the friend). The story is in flashback, which shows the friendship between Rahul and Anjali. Anjali has no interest in dressing up and plays basketball with guys and wins. In comes Tina from London. She proves by singing a bhajan during her ragging that she is "a really good Indian". She goes on to Win Rahuls heart. Meanwhile Anjali realizes her love for Rahul but it's too late and she leaves the college heartbroken.

Ane Ciecko writes,

When reintroduced the feisty female undergoes a domesticating makeover, as she is transformed from tomboy college girl or mini-skirted flirt into a self sacrificing, Sita-esque ideal of domestic goddess-goddess. She is again tested to prove her worthiness as prospective wife, Mother, Daughter-in-law (Ciecko, 2001, p.123).

Whatever doubt Rahul might have had about having loved Anjali is removed when he sees her dressed up in a Sari, totally different from her previous image. The film has a happy ending with Anjali's finance' giving away Anjali to Rahul. Ciecko writes that the "exchange of woman as property recognizes that Anjali's heart and everything else belongs to Rahul".

The first half of the film has a western feel- trend crazy urban college, "upwardly Mobil male yuppie characters and the "fast paced, hyper consumerism of Bollywood narrative" (Anne Ciecko, 2001, p.126)

She asserts that "films have been recognized in India and abroad as products of a viable industry with profound border crossing and cultural currency. Bollywood films have also become associated with global fusion mass-market trends often feminized commodification of Indian culture" (Ibid, p.127).

She cites the example of another film "Pyar Kiya to Darna Kya" in a song the hero asks the heroine to wrap the Chuni. She says that though it looks like style, it is actually implying modesty and regulation of female desire, while the hero flaunts his torso.

Anne Ciecko borrows Andreas Huyssens theorization of mass culture as the feminized other; which she feels has a "special resonance for masala movie which by definition is

hybrid. But which is always infused with that structures of feeling called melodrama which in western context coincides with modernity and capitalism and connects with the affective excess linked to cultural construction of femininity” (Ciecko, 2001, p.131).

Bollywood films have moved beyond “geopolitical, national, religions, racial/ ethnic borderlands of south Asia, thus expanding global audiences for the film which include non Indians and non Asian. (Ciecko, 2001, p.132).

Ciecko, further quotes Stuart hall (1991) who defined a new form of globalization in the form of a global mass cultural dominated by the modern means of cultural production. The new globalization is dominated by TV, Films, images and moves easily across linguistic frontiers. In case of Bollywood film what is marketed is thus Indianess which the films apparently, represent Patricia Uberoi says – “focused particularly on the relation of the sexes, relations within the family, relations between social classes, popular cinema constructs an ideal moral universe that is intrinsically if not explicitly connected with ideas about tradition and nation” (Uberoi, 1998, p.165).

Patricia Uberoi analyses two movies ‘Dilwale Dulhania Le Jayenge’ and ‘Pardes’ – both very popular film of the 1990s. She looks at the family and marriage dimension in relation to the modernization of Indian society and most importantly the views of the Indian regarding the same issues- the we must remember that so far the Indian returned from abroad was a stereotype. He or she was shown as someone who has forgotten Indian tradition and has accepted western modern ways especially dress, attitude and ideas. These films, DDLJ and Pardes- tread a different path as they showed that how certain people, belonging to the younger generation have retained Indianess- the tradition

and values inspite of being surrounded by western modernity. Thus the tension of an arranged marriage with a suitable girl or boy of Indian origin and with the right amount of Indianess.

The story of DDLJ goes like thus both the hero- Raj (Shahrukh Khan) and heroine Simran (Kajol) are NRI's settled in London with their respective families. Simrans' father is a typical stern, traditional, Indian father while Raj's father 'looks' more western and is also shown as being more friendly and approachable. Simran is engaged to a person in India, who she has never seen. She persuades her father to let her go in a Europe tour with her friends. During the trip she meets Raj and they fall in love. As Simran confides to her mother about this, her father overhears. Angry with what he seen as betrayal they leave for India immediately. Raj, meanwhile, persuaded by him father reaches Punjab to win his girl. Though both the girl and girl's mother are keen on elopement, the hero wants to take the girl only with the father's permission. He tries to win over the other family members but is 'discovered by Simran's father. After some tensions and violence the move ends happily with Simran's father accepting the hero. Simran's father is shown as someone keen on maintaining Indianess at home. His daughters have been exposed to the western culture. They lisen and dance to western music and switch it off when they hear their father come. Similarly Simran gets up in the morning to do '*puja*' so as to please her father. Thereafter throughout her Europe tour she wears revealing gowns, swimsuits and other western outfit. She is not the shy and coy Indian girl rather a feisty, outspoken modern Indian girl. But she also conscious of the need to remain 'pure'. Thus after a fit of drunkenness, Simran's main concern the next morning is whether she has done something. Raj tells

her that he knows that for an Indian girl honour (Izzat) means everything (Uberio, 1998, p.171).

The mother is shown as someone who is scared of her husband. She reveals how she realized at an early age that she would have to sacrifice more than her male siblings. She tells her daughter of how she had dreamt of making her daughter strong and independent but it seems they have to bow down to male dominance. But again when she sees the love between Simran and Raj, she encourages them to elope so that Simran would not have to lead a life of sacrifice and despair. But Raj wants to do the right thing, the Indian thing of getting parents approval. He may drink beer with his father (looked down in Indian Society) but is very much traditional about family and marriage. Patricia Uberoi commenting on the mother says that there is a hint that the mother may have scarified someone she loved and "secondly the condemnation of the injustice of tradition is paradoxically the very ground in which the mother asks Simran to give up her own aspiration and sacrifice personal happiness" (Uberoi, 1998, p.32).

The women in the film are thus aware of the situation they are in, where their desire are subordinated and there is a hidden anger. But there in also a hopelessness as 'tradition' is not easy to defy or change.

Based on similar lines is another film 'Pardes' which has also been analyzed by Patricia Uberoi in the same article (Ibid,1998, p.172). 'Pardes' also revolves around the idea of Indianess, Indian tradition which has to be kept alive in a western setting. Kishori Lal (Amrish lal) wants a typical Indian daughter- in-law. This he finds in his friends daughter's Ganga. Lal's friend Suraj Dev, is settled in a village in north India and is

thus Indian in every sense. A false picture of the prospective bridegroom (Rajiv) is presented by Arjun (Shahrukh Khan). Arjun is the foster son of Kishori Lal he does not reveal that Rajiv is totally westernized in outlook and attitude- he smokes, drinks, parties, has numerous girl friends, leads a 'liberal' lifestyle. Suraj Dev's house is sanitized for Rajiv's visits. Ganga likes Rajiv, attractive to the image he presents. She get engaged and in persuaded try out living in USA. She leaves with her aunt. There Ganga discovers the true life style of Rajiv. The family member are also shown as westernized and therefore cold and calculating, without Indian warmth. Ganga feels alienated and seeks Arjun's help. Arjun meanwhile is drawn towards Ganga. Matters come to a head when Rajiv tries to rape Ganga when she does not agree to make love to him. He talks about Indian hypocrisy and double standards Ganga manager to escape with the help of Arjun. The film ends after a tight scene between Arjun and Rajiv. Kishori Lal after seeing the Signs of rape on Ganga realizes that he has not been able to a true Indian out of Rajiv, which Arjun is the movie and as a happy note.

Patricia Uberoi remarks that while Arjun is seen as a combination of east and west tradition and modernity consigned, the women feel that this cannot be sustained for long and that at some point or the other there will a leaning more towards the land in which one is settle din. In both DDLJ and Pardes efforts are made to "discipline the younger generation by marriage with Indian partners, there is voyeuristic pre-occupation with feminine virtue in general and virginity in particular and the role of women critiquing patriarchal authority" (Ibid., 1998, p. 180).

According to Patricia Uberoi both the films shown certain aspects of Indian kinship System. There is an "idealization and

naturalization of the patrilineal joint family: secondly the family is shown as a patriarchal institution. The father arranges the marriage of his children, especially the daughter, where love in such marriages plays a secondary role. If need be the father can force his wishes on his children. Thirdly, the emphasis, in Indian marriages, is on the two families, which will be united after the marriage. So often the emphasis is on the family of the groom or bride rather than the young couple in question. In both the films the daughters understand the role of the father in giving away the bride and can only hope that their desires get fulfilled.

Uberoi comments that *Pardes* shows that westernization can be delayed but not stopped. Here we should remember what we had discussed at the beginning of the chapter – how everything non-Indian, hence bad, is associated with westernization and modernity. This is the trend even in these movies. The beneficial, progressive aspects of modernity have to be explored in popular cinema and stereotypical moulds have to be broken.

Cinema is more than a mere reflection of our society and ourselves. It is an active agent of social transformation. The inherent fear of modernity, which we have inherited from our colonial past, is still seen in the stereotypes in our movies. However, the images are changing as the west is increasingly viewed as a *Goldmine*, both by the audiences and the moviemakers who have access to NRI (Non-Resident Indians) audiences. However still caught in the web of a patriarchal society is the Indian woman eager to progress and the Indian male eager to oppress.

CHAPTER-VI

SUMMARY & CONCLUSION

The following is a brief summary of the dissertation.

This dissertation attempted to link, women in media with modernity and tradition. After a brief introduction to the topic in chapter 1, we moved on to chapter two where we discussed the various types and characteristics of mass media. We also looked at the functions of mass media. Since we are looking at women in media it was necessary to look at the various feminist perspectives and the streams of thought that influenced them. There we are also looked the broad categories of liberal, radical and socialist feminists and their stand on the role of women in India. After this discussion we shifted to women. We took an overall view of the status of women and then shifted, to Indian women and their changing status in society.

The third chapter traced the rise of modernity and media. For this purpose it was necessary to look at development of sociology as a subject with its concerns of the modern world- new forms of labour, urbanization, modernisation etc., thus media, which is a product of modernity, also became the one of the concerns of study for sociologists. Then we discussed the various aspects of modernity in greater detail. This was necessary so that we could relate it to our framework in the fifth chapter. The discussion on modernity included the ideas of Stuart Hall, Anthony Giddens, S.N. Eisenstadt and a few others.

The fourth chapter dealt with Indian tradition and modernity. This is in direct correlation to the main theme of

the dissertation. We looked at the various aspects of Indian tradition and the rise of modernity in India, the notions and consequences of modernity.

In the fifth chapter we dealt with the images roles and representation of women in Indian cinema. We looked at Hindi films specifically and saw how tradition and modernity defined roles of women. We saw the negative connotations associated with modernity, which got passed on to women who identified with modernity.

The entire purpose of this dissertation has been to examine the representation of women in media especially Hindi films. The purpose of cinema is to entertain people, but at the same time, as a medium of mass communication, it has certain responsibilities. There have been an increasing number of studies that have shown that people get influenced by the visual images presented on screen, be it television or the cinema screen. Many emulate what is shown, the way a robbery or murder is committed or even the clothes, lavish lifestyles shown in the movies. For instance, after the release and success of *Hum Aapke Hain Kaun* marriages began to be styled on the lines shown in the movie. In the south, where the marriage customs are different the people tried to incorporate some of the customs shown in movie like hiding the shoes of the groom, this is a custom that is totally alien to the South Indians. People are aware that it is largely a fantasy with a little bit of reality thrown in, but probably the sheer experience of watching something on a large screen gives it a greater sense of reality.

As it has been mentioned in the introduction, some times films reflect the happenings in the society. It is for this reason that after the sensational *Mathura* rape case there were a host of films showing the plight of rape victims and also

raising questions on who is to be blamed. Similarly increasing corruption at all levels has given an impetus to films showing rampant corruption at all levels and the trials and tribulations of the common man. The fantasy part here shows that a saviour (the hero) emerges out of this chaos to set things right. The past decade has been the age of violence and romance. Technologically advanced arms, remote controlled bomb, and all this find place in the movies. This finds representation in most the movies where villains and heroes both are shown to be using the latest weapons. The line between the real and the imagined is often a thin one. A recent example of this could be the kidnapping of the Kannada actor Rajkumar by Vearapan. Incidentally a movie had been released loosely based on the forest brigand Vearappan called *Jungle* at that time, the obvious question was whether the movie had inspired Vearappan to take such an action.

The depiction of women on screen is also more realistic as the deviation from the expectation of people is minimum. They see on screen what they see around them. Thus a sacrificing mother, a wife who is slogging away, is very close to home. It is again probably because of this reason that any kind of deviation is not without protest. It is only if the woman is fighting for justice, that she is accepted in an aggressive role. This is because of the tradition set by Hindu religion about the Goddesses Durga, Kali who fought to eliminate evil. However, the woman cannot be shown as a lone fighter, unlike the hero. The woman needs a man to help her out, as despite all her strength she is vulnerable. A bold woman, taking her own decisions is not welcomed by most people both men and women. As it has been mentioned in the fifth chapter, women have been following the path laid out for them for centuries. Even today they cannot think beyond this. Ridicule, obstacles

and negative reactions meet women who go beyond this. Such women may be branded as anti-family, unemotional, hardhearted all that which is against the central notion of a woman. The woman whatever her qualifications, has to be soft hearted, emotional, sacrificing. That is why a modern woman who due to her life experiences may be practical, tough is seen as threat to the society.

This dissertation aimed to bring out the expectations from a woman whether she is a mother, wife, a girl friend, or a vamp, in the tradition- modernity framework. The mother and the vamp are at the two ends of the spectrum where at one end the mother represents the upholder of tradition, the vamp on the other represents all that is wrong with the west and it's philosophy of modernity. Tradition brings people together while modernity makes them shallow, materialistic. The wife and the girlfriend are somewhere in the middle of the spectrum balancing out the other two. In the earlier movies- the heroine too was extremely traditional and would represent tradition. Today the scenario is slightly different. The girl friend is shown as a fine combination of tradition and the modern. She is bold, outgoing, sports a western style of dressing. At the same time she is deeply attached to her family, she will do anything for their honour (*izzat*) and dreams of a happy married life. Invariably a career woman is shown as being manipulative and shrewish.

It would be worth mentioning a film called *Judaai* here. In this movie there are two heroines. One is a traditional housewife and the other a United States returned girl. The housewife's life is centered around her husband and children but she hankers for wealth and status. The modern woman (Played by Urmila), always dresses in western clothes (due to her stay in the west), falls in love with the hero who is married

to the traditional woman (played by Sridevi). Urmila catching on Sridevi's weakness for money puts a proposition before her. She wants to buy Sridevi's husband (played by Anil Kapoor). Greed takes over Sridevi and she exchanges her "happy married life for a lifestyle of the rich. What follows next is on expected lines. The modern woman is actually traditional, and hence Indian at heart she starts wearing sarees, looks after the children of the hero and also his parents. Sridevi leaving aside her traditional attire starts wearing western clothes. She is shown in the most ridiculous manner- a woman besotted with money and glamour. Soon she loses everything a woman values, the love and affection of her family members and she is left alone. She realises her mistakes and becomes her traditional self (an improved version) in the end. The modern woman returns back to the United States, pregnant with the hero's child. Probably she was shown as leaving for the United States as the west is more receptive about single mothers. Surprisingly, the movie did no end with both wives staying together has been the case in many movies. This could be because the other woman is shown to be westernised modern woman who can deal with the "crisis" of not having husband.

The only visible change in depicting the woman is in the treatment of husband-wife relationship. The wife is no longer expected to suffer at the hands of the husband and may retaliate. This is acceptable only if she has so far been the idealised good wife. It is only then can she win the sympathy of the audience. In case she has been otherwise, she deserves the treatment meted out to her.

The woman thus functions within the narrow confines of tradition. The man on the other hand is shaped by the circumstances he is in. He has a larger role to play and hence cannot be placed in a framework. Though of course he should

have, the necessary masculine qualities of toughness, being unemotional most of the time and is the protector and saviour of women and the nation. He saves both from 'ruin'. He may defy the societal norms- marry any girl without permission etc. he faces opposition but he doesn't care. More often than not, the blame falls on the woman-if any, for the actions of the hero.

Most of the time the only contact, the heroine has with modernity is when she is a victim. She is victim of the apparatus of the nation state. She may suffer at the hands of the police, the judicial system, and the bureaucracy. All these are a part and result of modernity. The heroine may take revenge within the parameters of modernity going against law, becoming a part of the apparatus. Tradition, may justify the action while modernity gives her the means to do it.

Derné and Jadwin (2000, p. 253-266) have pointed out how the Indian audience, especially the men react to the western values shown on screen. The men audience feel that the 'excessive' freedom demanded by women was a result of the modern system of education. The kind of education women were receiving was redefining their attitude towards the family, relationships. This was becoming problematic, as men were not able to adjust to these changes. There is a tendency to look at the "good old days" as being perfect when everybody performed his or her duties as per the norms lay down by tradition. There is a constant fear about the loss of Indian tradition. Emulation of western ideals, clothes are associated with loss of one's culture. At the same time a younger generation is becoming more and more westernised in terms of their dressing, behaviour and outlook. Even the recent, immensely popular, "*Dil Chahata Hai*" is based on a very urban, westernised group of friends. They go on holidays as

they please, their parents exert little authority over them. Instead they freely communicate their emotions about love and marriage with their parent, which is not permitted in the Indian tradition. The film, not very surprisingly, did not fare well in the rural areas, but it was a hit in the urban centres like, Bombay, Pune, Bangalore, and Delhi. This was probably because the people in these areas could identify with the westernised style of music, lavish life style, a mix of English Hind in conversations. The role of tradition was minimum, except for parents trying to arrange their children's marriage. But the choice was left totally to the girl and the boy. The girl and boy were shown as engaging in a frank conversation about their expectations from marriage. This is totally against the traditional notions of an Indian arranged marriage.

Derné and Jadwin (2000, p. 256-266) have written that the audience preferred heroines who retained their Indian ness and looked down with contempt at heroines who exposed too much or were excessively modern. As discussed earlier, both men and women, stuck to the codes of behaviour laid down by tradition with minimum interference from modernity.

While films create woman as the spectacle of male desire filmgoers often make distinctions between the women whom they define as legitimate objects of the gaze and those whom they believe to be protected from it. This suggests that the gaze's direction is shaped not just by gender identity but by national identity as well (Derné and Jadwin, 2000, p. 266).

We can conclude that the image of the woman in the tradition modernity context is more traditional. The identification of women to modernity is very restricted and

limited and the images of women are drawn from tradition and modernity is only within the limits set by tradition. Whenever there is a deviation from the set pattern there appears to be an equally strong reassertion of accepted stereotypes. Modernity in movies is within the bounds of tradition. Conformity rather than change seems to be the dominant pattern in the portrayal of women in Hindi cinema.

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