

**DESCENT IDEOLOGIES IN MASS MEDIA: A CASE
STUDY OF SELECTED CONTEMPORARY HINDI FILMS**

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DECLARATION

Certified that the Dissertation entitled "DESCENT IDEOLOGIES IN MASS MEDIA: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED CONTEMPORARY HINDI FILMS", submitted by MS. MAITHILI GANJOO in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the award of the degree of MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY, has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this University or any other University and is her own work.

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

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**TO
MAMA AND DADDY**

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

ACRONYMS

	INTRODUCTION	1 - 8
Chapter I	DESCENT IDEOLOGIES	9 - 47
Chapter II	MEANING OF POPULAR FILMS	48 - 77
Chapter III	IDENTITY, ILLEGITIMACY AND SOCIAL PATERNITY	78 - 121
	CONCLUSION	122 - 128
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	129 - 135

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ACRONYMS

B W F	Brother's Wife's Father
F F B	Father's Father's Brother
K P	Kashmiri Pandit
K V	Kontaikati Velalar
M B	Mother's Brother
W B W F	Wife's Brother's Wife's Father
W F W F	Wife's Father's Wife's Father
W Z H F	Wife's Sister's Husband's Father
S W F	Son's Wife's Father

INTRODUCTION

Descent means transmission of membership to an individual, in a group, such that the members of that group are related to each other through a common descendant, either a male or a female or both.

Descent becomes important in one's life not only on marriage but in everyday life too. It becomes a source of identity for a person in interacting with the other people, be it within the smallest social unit of a family or the widest realm such as caste. Descent, in short, is functional in placing a person within a social group.

This makes "Descent" interesting to Anthropologists. Scholars of kinship, studied descent by looking at the networks of relationships which bind individuals to each other in a "web of kinship" following general rules and regulations. Among these Functionalists, it was mainly Meyer Fortes who while studying the unilinear descent groups distinguished between the politico-jural domain of "Descent" and the affective domain of "Filiation" (bond between parents and child due to the biological interrelation between them). While the child gets identity through filiation (from both parents), he/she is introduced to the external world through the rule of descent - i.e., either through patrilinearity or matrilinearity.

Within the Indian context, caste becomes extremely important as it is complementary to descent. Membership in a group is guided by caste principles, which follow specific rules for marriages. While all societies have rule of exogamy-incest taboo to start with; only some societies like India, have formal or informal endogamy, such as hypergamy, hypogamy, isogamy, etc..

Structuralists in studying kinship in India differentiated between the North and South. (saying that the South Indian kinship system is based on principles of alliance and not descent-L.Dumont).

However, within the descent ideologies a new wave developed-that of cultural anthropologists. They looked at kinship as a system of symbols and meanings; deconstructing the North-South dichotomy of the structuralists, and attempting an all-India definition of kinship. For them, descent becomes more than mere relationships; it is to look for a "Concept of Person" within his/her social relations through the meanings of the central symbols as understood and given by the society itself.

Cultural anthropologists have been interested in South Asian indigenous concepts of Descent, in various regions. They view the regional variations as normal and attempt towards formulating a Pan-Indian descent ideology

by conceding an interrelation between the Sanskritic tradition and the regional vernacular tradition.

PRESENT WORK

In this study, I have looked at yet another realm of social reality-contemporary Hindi cinema to see how the "Concept of Person" as understood by the cultural anthropologists is presented here. In doing so I am aware of the problem facing me-that of relating hindi films to the cultural understanding of kinship. The cultural school prefers regional culture "as lived" to be an authentic way of bringing out an All India notion of descent; whereas I am looking at a contemporary mass medium which deals with a more or less Pan-Indian Culture (perhaps more Northern than Eastern or Southern). This is therefore an essentially a new construction of the notion of descent within the framework of non-Sanskritic, non-classical, popular Hindi film tradition.

However, Descent and kinship are as prominent themes in Hindi films as they are in the society. Almost every popular film has strong references to family and the relations there in. Questions on issues related to descent, filiation and other such Anthropological concepts are raised and answers are sought within these films. In this work, I have tried to see what exactly do these films have to say on the subject of descent. This

would also give an insight into whether popular films actually portray what the anthropologists seem to be finding in their studies of various South Asian communities? If they do not, then how can we as social scientists explain the wide acceptance of one thing on the celluloid - which is popular and acceptable to the audience - while the same audience practices another thing in real life? Is it that the anthropologists while looking at regional traditions tend to become classical and miss out on the contemporary ideas of personhood (as shown in Hindi films)? Hindi films after all are meaningful, since they have mass appeal. As a form of popular culture viewed by millions, they have a social acceptance and are both an influence on the audience as well as manipulated according to their taste!

Such a study, I believe can give valuable insight to the whole issue of descent ideologies since it too attempts to have an All-Indian understanding of the issue through a vernacular, contemporary, mass medium of Hindi films.

However the aim of this study is not to solve these paradoxes, if any; but it will through descriptive analysis try to bring out such points and merely speculate on them, fending further empirical research in this new area.

SCHEME OF STUDY

Chapter I, of this work, titled "Descent ideologies" deals with the theoretical understanding of Kinship. It focuses attention on the historical understanding of the subject and especially its study in India by cultural Anthropologists. By analysing material on Kashmir, Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, Punjab etc, a general Pan-Indian idea of these idea are also exemplified as in the Shastras, finding basis in the "seed - earth" metaphor of biological reproduction. We also see, how in the social context, construction of "personhood" takes place which explains among other things, the ambivalence towards a women in Indian society.

Chapter II, "Meaning of popular Films", is a prelude to the next chapter, which basically, as the name of the chapter indicates, is to place Hindi films within their context. Social sceintists, mainly Psycho-analysts and Social Anthropologists have offered valuable insights into these films. On the basis of these studies, and also the analysis of the trends and themes since the beginning of Hindi films, one can see how popular films look at the society. I have also shown here, how through the dramatic narratives as well as role relations and question of parentage, the story moves towards a known and acceptable

climax. Some interesting questions have been raised in this chapter which are relevant to the study.

Chapter III analyses selected six contemporary Hindi films, released in the decade 1980-90. These films point towards the main questions which become problematic while understanding the "Concept of Person" in Hindi films. The films are a) Mahaan (1984) b) Chaalbaaz (1989) both in which the protagonists seek self-identity within the society due to their separation from their biological ties. c) Laawaris (1981), d) Daddy (1990) e) Masoom (1981); dealing with the problem of illegitimacy, which represents an impediment to the protagonists' self identification with natural parents; and f) Silsila (1982) which questions the social paternity prescribed in the society as superior and more important than biological ties. I have taken up these films basically because each deals with the basic question of "self identity" and "personhood", in an exclusive fashion offering various justification for the same structural understanding of the issue. While Daddy seeks self identity through descent, Masoom, makes it a problem of affectivity or filiation. Silsila, resolves the problems within framework of marriage. As against these films, Laawaris searches for selfhood by making it an issue of social exploitation. Mahaan, on the other hand searches identity having lost it through fate. These films suggest

a new understanding of the "nature-nurture" question by bringing out the importance of biological ties in a person's life and justification for its presence on the "frontstage" rather than the "backstage", where it usually is.

The six films that I have taken here have been "popular" ones in this decade, though they have not necessarily been box office hits. (In fact only one of the six films was). Due to the constraint of time and space I have had to limit the number of films, I have analysed. Compared to the number of films made every year, the sample is very small. But I have tried to incorporate reference films and other comparable films of the period, in the various points I have made.

My choice was also guided by the constraint that this decade (1980-1990) saw a rise of Art films within the film industry and of Television Serials from without. This period was also marked by technical superiority leading to reification and classification of films in terms of songs, direction and photography etc. In fact all the films which were strong on songs, became popular and "hits". With each film having nine songs or more, like Pied Piper, their cassettes released long before the films, led the masses to the cinema halls. However, there

was not a popular story theme which set in as a popular trend.

I have done a narrative analysis of these films to see within their multilayered dimensions how various concepts such as descent, filiation, substance-code and role relationships between parents-children, siblings, and friends etc become symbolic and meaningful to the audience. This is how a "person" is socially constructed within a film.

Finally, in my conclusion I have stated the various findings in the light of the analysis of these films and in comparison with the Anthropological academic work. In addition to the findings, this text has also raised some questions which could be helpful to the Anthropological discourse in future as they point out towards the popular and contemporary understanding of descent ideology.

CHAPTER I
DESCENT IDEOLOGIES

INTRODUCTION

Kinship is one of the universals in human societies playing an important role both in formation of social groups as well as regulation of their behaviour. In its comonest definition, Kinship is simply the relation between "Kin" ie. persons related by real, putative or fictative consanguinity and following family exogamy (R.Fox 1966; 33).

Kinship also is what humans do with the basic facts of life - mating, gestation, parenthood, socialisation, and death. Copulation produces a relation between mates and is the foundation of parenthood. Birth produces children and the lasting mother-child bond. Death produces a gap in this group which demands a replacement, provided by birth and parenthood. Although these facts of life are shared by other mammals too, man differs in that he can choose between alternatives that are offered to him in the way of group formation, succession, mating arrangements etc. and he does this by manipulating these relationships to his advantage.

To understand kinship, then we begin with a familiar biological fact : men and women have sexual intercourse and as a result women bear children. Also, given the nature of human memory and language, blood ties are held in mind and recognised by special terms of relationship:

mother, father, child, mother's brother etc. These relationships based on blood ties are called consanguinous Kinship, and the relatives of this kind are called consanguinous kin. By law or well established custom, the rule of descent automatically defines some rights of inheritance : rights established by birth- either elder brother or youngest or all sons or all sons and daughters will inherit the property of the deceased. Inheritance and succession therefore derive from the notion of kinship. It is then not only the study of what man does but also of the consequences of the adoption of one alternative rather than another. Kinship is socially constructed out of the basic facts of life and establishes for every individual a network of social positions in which he or she participates with specific obligations and rights.

The principle or a set of principles by which one's consanguinal relatives are determined is known as the rule of descent. There are three basic rules of descent : patrilineal, matrilineal or bi-lineal, whereby an individual becomes a member of any consanguinal kin group to which either his father, or his mother or both belong. Strictly speaking probably no society is perfectly bi-lateral. No modern society is perfectly unilineal either, if that term implies total neglect of one side in favour of the other. Anthropologist have studied the network of

relationships that bind individuals with each other in the web of kinship and the general rules and regulations followed.

SECTION I

HISTORY OF KINSHIP STUDIES

The study of kinship studies began with the lawyers and students of jurisprudence over the issues of inheritance and succession. Each society has its own provisions to transfer inheritance and succession and it was the difference in family law which made them question it. Initial explanations stressed evolutionism and focussed on terminological explanations.

It was with A.R. Radcliffe-Brown that a new school of thought emerged in Kinship studies. Turning his back on evolutionism but retaining interest in terminology, he insisted on studying the kinship system as a field of rights and obligations and saw it as a part of a total social structure. It was his followers, mainly Evans-Pritchard and Meyer Fortes who created the African Descent Model. Evans Pritchard, for instance, particularly focused on Kinship groups based on descent in the male line from a known ancestor. He showed how they functioned as political groups in Nuer society and so turned attention to the recruitment perpetuation and functioning of such groups, in Africa. That this was a

valid way of looking at descent was underlined by the work of Meyer Fortes whose "Dynamics of Clanship among the Tallensi" (1945) showed how the descent groups of these people in North Ghana were the framework of their social and political structure. Then followed a spate of books describing the functions of descent groups in many societies, particularly in Africa. Earlier Radcliffe-Brown, while viewing the joking relationship with MB, had rejected the evolutionary explanation of it as being traces of matrilinearity. Instead he differentiated between the "indulgent" and "authoritarian" relationship present in all types of societies.

From his study on Tallensis, Fortes suggested that a conceptual distinction should be made between concepts of i). Descent and filiation and ii). Complimentary filiation.

i) "Descent and filiation"

He found that the domain of Kinship among Tallensis extended well beyond the domestic family into the political system and is characterised by "rule of amity" or "prescriptive altruism". It is this aspect of kinship relations that he outlined as internal and external. Filiation denotes the relationship created by the fact of being the legitimate child of ones parents. Within the familial domain then filiation is the "nodal mechanism

and critical relationship of inter generational continuity and social reproduction". In this sense it is the meeting of synchronic order and the diachronic extension which is at the core of social structure. When natural reproduction fails, society ensures continuity through such devices as adoption, levirate, sororate and the institution of child bearers. The internal order of the kin group is maintained by filiation. Within the internal aspect, filiation is also a crucial factor in defining the internal relations of the sibling group. Persons are siblings in the domestic domain by virtue of common filiation. Also where secondary marriages are allowed, children are hierarchised according to bilateral or unilateral filiation.

Descent, may be defined as denoting a genealogical connection, recognised between a person and any of his ancestor. Descent is a structural principle operant in the external politico-jural domain.

While filial relations are between the parents and the child, relations of descent are mediated through parents between Ego and his ancestor. The distinction between the concept of descent and filiation is apparent in the difference between the relations with the grandparents based on the criterion of successive filiation (marked by joking relationship) and the

relation with the same grandparents when the operative criterion is that of parental-jural authority-common descent when one cannot joke with the parents of one's parents. At the same time descent has the important function of transmission of kin group membership as well as limiting of membership. That is why Fortes insists that it is the principle of descent which operates in the formation of kin group.

ii) "Complementary Filiation"

In consequence of the notion of the unilineal descent group, Fortes suggested the need for a concept of "Complementary filiation". In societies organised on the principles of unilineal descent, an individual usually has important relationships with relatives other than those in his or her own descent group (with relatives of the parent from whom he or she does not gain descent group membership). Thus in a patrilineal society, a child shares with his mothers relatives and in a matrilineal kinship with his fathers relatives a relationship which Fortes referred to as Complementary filiation.

The relevance of Fortes' two concepts of "Descent and Filiation" and of "Complementary Filiation" will be seen in Section II of this chapter. However coming back to the original discussion on the historicity of Kinship theories, around 1949, there was a change in focus which

reflected a change in interests with the publication of two books: a) Murdock's "Social Structure" and b) Levi Strauss' "Les Structures Elementaries de la Parente". The latter book focused attention on the Kinship system as means of organising marriage relations between groups. Before this, marriage was discussed in the context of recruitment to kinship groups; legitimate marriage being necessary for legitimate offspring to replenish the group.

L. Strauss argued that Kinship groups were simply units in the system of alliance made or expressed by marriage. The real difference between kinship systems lay in the different ways women moved around the system in marriages. He believed it was the "relationship between brothers in law which is the axis around which kinship structure is built" (1958) and thus adds wife's brother to the family unit. The principle of reciprocity as is manifested in various forms of exchange in social life is central to Levi-Strauss' view of social institutions. Kinship in human society is established and perpetuated through a specific form of marriage, and marriage as a form of exchange involves the circulation of women. He is therefore particularly concerned with what he calls elementary structures or those characterised by marriages with a particular category of kin usually a cross cousin. In this respect he saw matrilineal cross-cousin marriage

systems as resulting in a dual structure of wife giving and wife taking groups, reflected in many other aspects of the society.

Needham (Structure and Sentiments; 1962) and Leach (Rethinking Anthropology; 1961) showed considerable influence from Levi Strauss, as in the South Asian context did L. Dumont. Dumont's "Hierarchy and Marriage Alliance in S. Indian kinship" (1957) emphasised the importance of treating certain categories of relatives as affinal rather than consanguinal. This group came to be known as the "Alliance Theorists". (International Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, Vol. 7-8; 390-399).

While the Alliance theorists saw heirs as important in that they can be used in marriage, African Descent theorists saw marriage as useful in providing heirs. And so the debates and counter debates.

A major breakthrough in the kinship studies came with D. M. Schneider's American Kinship (1968). This was the first attempt to deal with kinship as a system of symbols and meanings and not simply as a network of functionally interrelated familial roles. Kinship then has to be seen as a cultural system, that is as a system of symbols. He uses the symbol as something which stands for something else, where there is no necessary or

intrinsic relationship between the symbol and that which it symbolizes.

Schneider was the most radical of the current attempts to come to grips with kinship as something other than the most exact, measurable, concrete and quantifiable field in anthropology. Schneider's work in fact is well suited to cross cultural application. In a number of well argued contributions Schneider challenged the assumption that "something called kinship" exists in every society as a way of classifying people and groups through consanguinity, affinity, descent, filiation and the like (Schneider; 1968, 70, 72). Kinship in these terms is the creation of the investigator, not the property of native social system. Schneider believes that there is no kinship in the genealogical sense in any society and that kinship studies of such kinds are exercises in anthropological fallacy.

Schneider has been an important influence among anthropologists interested in cross-cultural studies. This has generated a lot of interest among them to review the indigenous South Asian idea of "descent". Among others, R.Indin and R.Nicholas (1977), and O.Fruzzette and A.Ostor (1976, 83) have studied Bengali kinship through structural and cultural approaches. Similarly S. Barnett (1976) and V.Daniels (1984) have reviewed Tamil

kinship and T.N. Madan the Kinship system of Kashmiri Pandits, etc. Kinship for them refers to the domain of culturally defined social relationship among persons in different societies which are susceptible to analysis in cultural terms (Fruzzette and Ostor, 1976). Their indigenous notions on the subject are given in the next section.

Taking up from these works and within the general frame of cultural analysis I am trying to find out in this thesis whether or not these concepts of descent and filiation are a part of today's popular Hindi films. If so then how far do the films understand the concepts and how do they convey social ideas and, if a problem arises how it is resolved through the cinematic narratives.

CASTE AND KINSHIP

At this stage, it is important to mention that Indian kinship cannot be understood unless one understands the concept of caste in India. Caste is the building block of Indian society and has an important bearing on kinship notions of descent and consanguinity.

There is a need to revise L Dumont's understanding of Indian Kinship. He talked on one hand of the underlying unity of certain aspects Indian kinship yet differentiated on the other hand between northern and southern kinship. He saw no similarity between the two,

since North Indian kinship was based on caste system and South Indian system on equality between brothers-in-law (cross-cousin marriage); while Caste and Kinship were separated in South India, in the North the two are intimately connected through structural features of holism, hierarchy and purity-impurity. Alliance and Equivalence were emphasised for South to account for kinship relations resulting in the neglect of cast system.

However, the cultural theorists while reviewing position saw that the apparent differences at manifest levels were the regional variations. What emerged basically was the similarity of Kinship structures between South and North. In fact differences could be seen even among the various communities in north, (as we too shall see ahead). However there exists the underlying unity from the structural point of view, a powerful and striking feature - the caste or analogous group which is common to all Hindu India. However to elucidate caste, kinship and marriage rules what becomes important is to understand the construction of a person within the society. "By studying castesystem in general it is not possible to understand India, these becoming autonomous, closed systems of inquiry-ends in themselves-have prevented scholarly inquiry from escaping its confines and taking into account symbolic constructs more

perversive and regnant than caste and more natural to be cultural matrix of the region that the "naturalised" one of caste" (V. Daniels 1984; 1)

SECTION II

SEED AND EARTH

Kinship as we understand it, is socially constructed out of its biological basis. Almost all over India, this biological or sexual reproduction is expressed metaphorically as the SEED and EARTH, where earth (or field) represents the part of mother which receives into her the seed, symbolising the father's contribution in making the child.

Leela Dube (1986), in her forceful work, rightly blames the patriarchal norms for the denial of inheritance and succession rights to women and also for controlling female sexuality. Further she notes that the cultural understanding of father's contribution (seed) as being the essential for child's identity and the group placement results in a total ignoring of woman's contribution. "Men's right extends from sexual reproductive capacity to productive capacities and labour power too. The extent of her actual participation in productive process does not decide the worth of her contribution for she is dependent as far as the productive resources are concerned and works as a family

labourer. The notion of man as provider of shelter and food is firmly rooted in people's mind and therefore woman's role in cultural and other productive activity is considered only as supportive." (L. Dube 1986; 44).

However below I will be referring to various regional case material, (some of them Leela Dube also cites in her work) to show how a mother has a lot to do with the birth and growth of child, which makes the mother-child bond basic and strong in the society. I am mainly using Bengali and Tamil material, but it is also similar for Kashmiris, Punjabis and Telegu, as we shall see.

Fruzzetti and Ostor (1976) write that among the Bengalis the most common reference to marriage is in terms of field and seed, where woman is the field (Khetra) and the man a cultivator who provides the seed (hijn). The farmer bears the fruit (phal) which when ripe becomes heavy and falls. The wife is also called "ardhangini", one who contains a part of the husband, referring to both the marriage sacrament as well as its result. The seed (Sukura) is the characteristic of male element (purusha). It is made in the bone marrow of men and builds the bone structure of the child. In the womb the seed becomes blood and increases through mother's nourishment and blood. Thus she accepts the seed and

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increases the blood of the child. Although her own blood is the one she shares with her father, but her child will have only the blood of her husband. In addition to blood, various qualities (gunas) are passed on to the offspring by both mother and father. The mother contributes "matrishakti" a combination of power, force, ability and affect, shared by all children. The matriguna and pitriguna, then are seen in complementarity.

Similarly among the Kontaikatti Velalar, an upper non-Brahmin caste of South India, the foetus is originally believed to be blood, made from the blood of both the parents and transmitted to either sex. The father's blood is received as semen (pyam) which is concentrated blood while mother's blood come directly from uterine blood and breast milk (later on). The father's blood gives a child a form or a body (Utampu) and the mother's blood gives it the motion of spirit (Uyir). (S. Barnett 1976; 146-47).

V. Daniels in his work on Tamils near Tiruchurapalli (in Tamil Nadu) shows that the main concern in marriage is to ensure (through horoscopes) that there is compatibility among the couple to give and receive from each other many bodily substances chiefly the sexual fluids, called intiriam. This is to ensure the health and welfare of the couple as well as the foetus. According to

then the foetus is like a sprout (talir), the woman a field (Ksetra) and the man like a seed (hija) that is sown. Fetus is formed when the combination of excess fluids is secreted by the female (artava) and by male (sukram) at the same time inside the vagina (yoni) of the female where a healthy and controlled mixing of the two takes place. A portion of the mixture, a new substance is reabsorbed into the blood stream of both the partners and the rest either forms the foetus or helps to nourish the foetus already formed. For conception equal portions of male and female intiriam must combine and enter the womb to take shape. If the man's portion of the mixture is denser (atatti) than the woman's, it settles at the bottom of the womb resulting in a male foetus and if the woman's portion is denser the foetus will be a girl. Male intiriam goes to form the bones while female intiriam forms the flesh. The blood is formed from both male and female intiriam. (V. Daniels 1984; 163-82).

Matri Shakti (Bengali) and Uyir (Tamil), therefore, forms an important aspect in the formation of child inside the womb along with the seed of the father. Together the two encompass the child. Male is thus not opposed to female but encompasses the latter in hierarchical form. The child is born out of male line though sharing father's blood, but nourished through mother, both by blood and affection.

The Punjabis following the classical Hindu theory of man providing the seed and woman being the field, believe that the quality of seed is determined by the seed. But the field too should be able to bear the seed. (V. Das 1976; 3-5). There is thus the importance of having evenly matched qualities of both the genitor as well as the geneterix. This kind of thinking is also among the Telegus in Andhra Pradesh. Among them in case a young girl conceives soon after marriage, it is commented that "such a soil is very fertile". And if a man is having an extra marital relationship and his wife does not conceive, people comment "if you throw the seeds on the streets, how can you expect the crop in field". This presumes the necessity of both fertile land and proper seed to have a fruit, corresponding to the complementarity between the two as seen above. (Leela Dube 1986; 28-29).

Punjabis believe that in the child the hard parts of body such as bones made by the semen and blood is formed by the mother. However, this blood is only for the nourishment. Blood as a cultural category passes through the male line and is therefore father's.

SECTION III

SOCIAL CONSTRUCTION OF A PERSON

From the biological we move to the social aspect of kinship. In other words, we will now see how does the society define a child vis-a-vis the larger group after he comes into the world.

R. Nicholas and R. Inden (1977), like Schneider, take the kinship system to be a cultural system or a system of meanings and symbols. They look at the social relations among kinsmen by examining the symbols used in Bengali culture which have meanings connected with social solidarity either in the form of duties (Karma) or in one of these differentiated form of love (Prema). They use symbol as something which stands for something else while there is an essential relation between the symbol and that which it symbolises. In Bengali culture, symbols are often thought of as "things" e.g. person's body (sarira) house (griha), food (anna), semen (sukra), womb (garbha) etc. which are seen by them in context of symbolic actions, (samskara) e.g. marriage (vivah), upayana etc.

Bengali Hindus use two features to define their culture, namely shared or inherited substance (dhatu) and code of conduct (dharna). A person is thought to be born into a particular clan (kula), family (parivar) and sex (stri/purusha), and is accordingly define by a particular

substance containing an inherent code; which is inherited at birth, and shared by all such persons in the genus. According to this substance he follows the code of conduct.

Referents like kula and parivar too need to be examined here. "Kula" refers to ancestral male and designates patrilineage (clan) including dead ancestors. This is also used interchangeably with "Vamsa" which means children or offsprings especially male. Parivara takes into consideration only the people alive and living together.

From the ego's point of view, Bengalis apply the terms "Atmiya Swajan" or one's own people, to specific relations among persons with whom one shares. Outside this category lie people who are casual acquaintances even though a few kinship terms would be used for them. "Atmiya Swajan" are of two types : par excellence and residual. Par excellence Atmiya Swajan would include the closed subset of "Jnati-Kutumb". The residual Atmiya Swajan would include neighbours, village people etc. sharing land, wealth, etc. with them.

With all these categories and sub categories of residual and par excellence kin groups, one follows a particular code of conduct due to the fact that they share a form of common substance. "Jnati-Kutumb" is

defined as a category of one's people with whom one shares a body or bodily substance. Jnati class is defined by a shared body (relative) while Kutumb class is defined by a body given or accepted in marriage (Bride). However, these are not clear cut categories of consanguines and affines has understood in Anthropological terms instead the two categories overlap as we shall see ahead. Jnati kin are further of two types.

- a). Jnati par excellences - this includes men of father's clan, unmarried daughters, and inmarrying wives. For a married women it is therefore, her husband's clan which is par excellence Jnati, while for an unmarried girl it is her father's clan.
- b). Jnati residual set includes for a man as well as a woman her mother's father's clan (matri kul) and outmarrying women from one's clan and their children. For a married woman her father's clan is Jnati residual after her own marriage.

Jnati (both par excellence and residual) share common bodily substance by birth, and therefore fellow a particular code of conduct. This particular code of conduct that inheres in the bodies of persons classified at jnati enjoins them to sustain and nourish there relationship of shared bodily substance by sharing the non-bodily. It is considered proper, for instance, to share the same house, wealth and source of food. At the

level of Kula they consider the dead jnati to share balls of food (pinda). The action enjoined by the sharing of code of conduct are daily regulated and repeated in household activities in which persons participate together including working, eating and worshipping. These symbolic activities are restrictive and have as their goal the preservation of the individual bodies that share the body of the same master. "Kutumb" can again be divided into two types-

- a). Kutumb par excellence : This includes a man's wife's father, mother, brother and sisters; his daughter's husband, sister's husband and wife's brother's wife. For a married woman it is her sister's husband, brother's wife, and daughter's husband.
- b). Residual Kutumb : It consists of mother's father clan and married sisters and daughters. Here we see that residual Kutumb kin are same as residual Jnati kin. As a result there is an overlapping between the two categories. Kutumb like Jnati is not the generalised category of relatives by "law". Instead Kutumb's relations are defined by the sharing of the body of daughter who is given in marriage and accepted by husband. The daughters body, which is after marriage shared by persons of her husband clan, also continues to be shared by her father's clan, setting up a particular code of conduct that

sustains and nourishes the Kutumb relations between the two clans. This relationship is distinguished by the process of gift giving and gift receiving by father's clan and husband's clan respectively.

Thus the shared body defines the jnati class of relationships whose inherent code for conduct is sharing the non-bodily substances too. Similarly, the given or accepted body that defines the Kutumb class of relationships in a substances containing an inherent code for conduct enjoying gift giving. Both shared body and given body, as coded substance, are resolvable into a single "coded substance", the body containing a single code for conduct that enjoins love. The body is therefore distinctively a source of the love that Jnati-Kutumb have for each other. This presumption that all relationships should imply "love" as a code of conduct with the kin relations, can be seen as the native version of "axiom of amity" principle of Meyer Fortes. Among the Tamils the sharing of substance is with human beings as well as the surroundings. The Tamils feel that the village or the house are constituted of similar substances as the inhabitants, which they share and exchange. Just as human relationships are established because of the compatibility of bodily substances; so it is with one's village or his house, the relationship having a far reaching consequence affecting the very nature of social

obligations and ties. The villager concerns himself with what substances enter the village and affect its inhabitants, or effect of the quality of soil substance of the village and so on. A house is believed to be born, grow up and live to inter-act like a human being. Every thing has a substance and qualitlessness of substance is an impossibility in the Tamil world new. (V.Daniels 84; 105-163).

Fruzzetti and Ostor (1976, 83) while studying Bengali kinship, have dealt with the concept of blood (Rakta) more explicitly, using the ego based group, Bongsa or Vamsa. Bongsa or Vamsa has been taken as the bodily substance of the male (semen) alone by Inden and Nicholas (1977). Fruzzetti and Ostor (1983), however, include both the daughters and wives while understanding Bongsa as passing of blood. Through a wife a man establishes his own bongsa and transmits his blood to the children. Daughter too inherits their father's blood and retain it even after the marriage, when she changes her gotra and gives up her father's pinda. However she passes her husband's blood and not father's to her children.

The above question can also be seen in the light of T.N. Madan's work on Kashmiri Pandit (KP) society (1965, 89). The principle focus in a Kashmiri Pandit's life is on the activities of his house (gara, parivar or chulah).

One's own household stands in opposition to the households of one's brother and other agnates, though as a group they constitute a "kotamb". KP Pandit or Bhatta is the one who is a house holder, and thorough the performance of samaskara accumulates merit. The home (gara) is the place of one's seeking plentitude and joy, only if these are informed by dharma or a code of moral conduct. This socio-cultural identity of personhood explicitly expressed as Bhatta, Bhattil or the Pandit way of life, is considered to be the best ie., morally superior way of life.

"Within this household there is a subtle but crucial distinction between the agnatic core of kinfolk called "zamati" (those who are born into the family). and "amati" (those who have come into the family). A person classifies his mother along with own wife and the wives of other agnates as falling into the category of those recruited through marriage that is the category of amati. However this does not make her an affine for her husband's kin group as perhaps Dumont would explain it. Madan sees how among the Pandits, a person does not consider the characterisation of a mother as an affine or kinswoman as a matter of unequivocal choice : he refers to her as one or the other as one among the amati or as his mother - depending on the context. In a setting of the daily routine of household she is of course a

kinswoman par excellence, even though she is not one of the zamati, and is much loved and venerated; in the context of wider ritual and economic matters affecting the extended family, and its agnatic core in particular she is an affine an outsider. (T.N. Madan 1989; 203-206). While in the nuclear family the parents pretend to treat sons and daughters equally but in the context of intermarrying families they try to compensate the low status of the daughter by giving gifts on and after marriage, which are different from compensations made out for intergroup obligations. This is how relationship between wife givers and wife takers is crucial to the understanding of the pandit kinship system. This relationship is hierarchial and non-reciprocal relationship symbolised by the flow of gifts in one direction.

Veena Das (1976) shows the similar concepts of substance and code among the Punjabis. The Punjabis differentiate between the biological and social aspects of kinship. While the biological aspects are natural, the social aspects are culturally maintained among the beradari. It is felt that the members of the beradari share the same body particles and this is treated as little more than biological myth. In the case of beradari therefore behaviour is socially constructed and the phrase used for it is "duniyadari", meaning way of the

world. Thus it is said one has to visit relatives, or give gifts not because of flow from the reality of natural love but because the social appearances have to be maintained. The basic principle regarding the transcendence of natural kinship retains its force within the beradari and expresses primarily in the usage of kinship terms and in giving gifts. Das, therefore shows how in the Punjabi kinship the code is expressed the concept of "haq". This concept of haq can be used to express the right to receive as well as the right to give. Thus a girl has the haq, the right to receive gifts from her natal kin. She also has the "haq" to give her brother's children though these gifts always invite a larger return and are hence described as solicilaty. These gifts when articulated at the level of family are maintained either through direct exchange, as between kin or through indirect exchange as between the affines. (Veena Das 1976; 23-24).

According to the study by K. David, among the Tamils in Jaffna, kinsmen are divided into two Cakotarar or 'sharers' of natural bodily substance and Campantikkars or non sharers of bodily substance. Campantikkars are further divided into the category of 'uniters' of bodily substance or Campantikkars and the Non Uniters of bodily substance or Cakalar. Kinsmen such as M, F, FB, FDW, are the sharers or Cakotarar. There is zero alliance with

them. Kinsmen such as MZ, MZH are non uniters of bodily substance. With them there is twice alliance been the affines of affine. Marriage is strictly prohibited with these. Kinsmen such as FZ, or MB are the uniters with whom only one alliance relation is removed. Marriage with the uniter of bodily substance or Campanikkars are prescribed. (K. David 1973; 521-523).

Essential to this is the understanding that Tamils follow the theory of bilateral procreation and theory of woman's transubstitution. As we know among Tamils, father transmits Utampu while mother Uyir. Yet despite bilateral contribution to procreation, a child shares bodily substance with father's kin and not with mother since her body becomes identical with the father's.

Similarly among the Kontaikatti Velalar (KV), an upper non Brahmin land owning cast in Tamil Nadu, S. Barnett (1976), shows how each village cluster, where they live, is broken into ranked endogamous bilateral kindred called "Varkaiyars". While it is the fundamental KV unit of action, KV is also a member of "Kotiram" that crosses the endogamous "Varkaiyars" boundary. These are titles given to KV by mythological saints. (Some thing like Gotra of North India). Kotiram passes onto both children but at marriage woman's Kotiram changes into that of her

husband. Men who belong to the same "Varkaiyars" and shares same Kotiram belong to same "Kulum" (lineage).

With the Kulum then is the basic kinship formed. The kulum members marry within the Varkaiyars and marriage is between matrilineal and patrilineal cross-cousins. KVs follow "Kotram" and "Kulum" exogamy. Within the Kulum members called "Pankali" who are of two types: a). Narenkiya Pankali and b). Kotram Pankali.

The former are the men descendent from one's FFB and his brothers who share and partitioned the property. They also observed death pollution for sixteen days as against Kotram Pankali who observe only for ten days. Within a Varkaiyars, no Kotram is higher or lower and therefore no question of hypergamy arises.

Overlapping Varkaiyars and Kulums are KV idea of family (Kutumpam). It is used as residence as well as direct marriage alliance network. Residence is patrilineal with every one in Kutumpam sharing a Kotram including unmarried daughters and married wives. Kinship as direct alliance means close network between the bride and groom's house symbolised by gift giving and receiving in and across generations. These "Sampatis" or the bride's father's kin link a KV to the Varkaiyars as a whole. This is because of acceptance of two Sampati links:

- a) Rompa Santakaram: Those with whom the current direct alliance is on. eg. SWF, BWF, etc.
- b) Turan Sontakaram: With distant relations or alliance of alliance. eg. WBWF, WFWF, WZHF, etc.

KV's blood purity is derived, as we have seen, from two components one which can be transubstituted (Utampu) and one cannot be (Uyir). Utampu encompasses the Kotram (letter) and passes through the wife from father to sons and unwed daughters. This Utampu gets the motion from mother (Uyir) which also passes from her to children. But while among girls Utampu changes the Uyir remains the same for both but is passed only through the mother. The cultural implication of this relationship then finds central to it the concept of substance and code. This substance is the body or the blood-rakto in North India and Irratam in South India. The code of conduct which it follows forms the social relationship among its members. These patterns of relationship also guide the principle of marriage, alliance along with consanguinal relations. The total relationship becomes intelligible when seen with the context of caste, the basis of Indian society.

MOTHER-CHILD

Therefore to elucidate caste, kinship and marriage rule it becomes important to understand society as we have done through "the concept of personhood" - as the particular society understands it. Central to this is to

focus on the idea of a person in social relations where when and how is a person and how is this construction related to kinship studies.

While doing so, a lot of ambiguity arises on the question of woman as a person. While on one hand they are considered to be dependent on men for their social identity, on the other hand by virtue of the special mother-child bond they have an identity different than men. "Identity is defined in relation to men. Their participation in ritual is dependent upon their being wives. There are limitations on what they can do themselves. Thus a woman does not offer water to man, nor does she invest a boy with holy thread nor give away her daughter in marriage.....". (T.N. Madan, 1983;116). As a result their rituals too are treated as secondary and perfunctory as an aspect of the society at large or worse they are entirely ignored as a social group. However, Fruzzetti (1990) shows that women do remain in a separate domain, but being separate does not mean being isolated; on the contrary she shows that this separation yields a fuller understanding to a Complementary and hierarchical relation between women and society, clearly shown in the relationship of mother and child. Among the Panjabis as shown by Veena Das, the remarkable tie between mother and child which even though not emphasised in terms of kinship structure, is an important biological

fact. It begins right from the stage of foetus. Even though the quality of offspring is determined by the father, his role ends with Garbhdhana, its the mother who takes over the child in her womb by nourishing him. So much so mother's behaviour during pregnancy and food habits etc. have a vital impact on child's health and character. The act of "keeping the child in the womb for nine months" is conceptualised as an act of sacrifice by the woman who expects filial piety in return from the children. The mutual love of the mother-child is considered pre-social, in that it comes naturally unlearned behaviour. Mother is considered irreplaceable. The attempt to "decontextualise" this relation at the social level, takes it for granted that this bond can be disguised and not obliterated.

Among the Bengalis this tie is due to the matrishakti or matrigun which is to be affectionate. The affectionate ties with mother's brother and sister too characterise all of mother linked relationship. Just as blood relations endure, so does the affection of mother's side. The psychological connection between the mother-child and latter's dependence on former have been turned into the strongest moral obligation for the woman. The same basis of mother-child bond is used for according a very high value to maternal role. Veneration of mother is reiterated again and again. However, even though the

child is linked to father, the woman's right is considered to be moral. This can be seen among K.Ps, who speak eloquently of their notion of "matririn", the superior debt of human beings they owe their mother, for having given life to them. Not to speak of father, even gods are placed second only after the mother in a person's life. The men speak of woman as a "bacha parast", the devotees of children. (T.N. Madan 1983; 106).

In fact as we shall see in the next two chapters all this is shown explicitly in the Hindi films, where the mother reigns superior in every context.

SECTION IV

CLASSICAL RELIGIOUS SCRIPTUAL ANALYSIS

Perhaps the ambiguity on the concept and thus the placement of women in the society can be traced to the religious-scriptual texts. These texts have been often referred to by anthropologists to resolve the contradictions of social understanding. However, in matters related to women, they too seem to be unsure. One of the ambiguities can be seen about the Inherent Nature of Women.

The attempt of Tryambakayayam to resolve the crises of the contradiction about the women's nature is one of the examples. The Smrities and other ancient texts widely

acknowledged women as inherently wicked. This led to the question whether "stri dharma" or "stri achars" then had any relevance to them in response what results is the contradiction of statements. Why it is presumed that women are wicked, they do possess also, innate good qualities such as purity and that as women they are uniquely blessed. This contradiction is there distinction between strisuabbhav (wicked nature) and stridharma (the virtuous behaviour of women, accurately deviced. The physical aspect of being a woman - menstruation, sexuality, and child birth - are taboos, women as biological beings are condemned. The wild untranced Goddesses, their counterparts in myth and symbol are feared and appeased. Respect is reserved when their biology is controlled; the obedient wife, the selfless mother and gentle goddess of Indian imagination. (Leslie 1984; 246-272). It is through the marriage then that the inherent wickedness of woman changes into more acceptable form of identity.

Marriage which unifies two individuals is understood within the Indian context as a transaction between two groups resulting in the transfer of dominion over the woman from her father to her husband. The bride is given absolutely so that divorce or permanent return to father's house is ruled out. She is by marriage conceptually assimilated to her husband consisting his

other half (Aparadha) and so rendering thin complete and capable of offering sacrifices. She acquires her husband's Gotra upon marriage and upon death is offered pinda by his kinsmen. (Trautman 1981;246-71). The complete assimilation into her husband's family confers upon them 'rights' over her reproductive and sexual service in the lineage. Within the tradition if natural reproduction failed (with husband's death), devices such as levirate and niyoga were used. In levirate a woman on the death of her husband could marry again, usually her husband's full brother, if not him, then to a non-uterine brother or to a more distant sapinda (of same mourning group) or sagotra (same patrilineage sibling) brother of the dead man. Levirate emphasised the acceptance of interfamilial obligations and recognition of marriage as a tie between two families and not only between two individuals.

In vedas, the term dever (husband's younger brother) occurs many times. The younger brother who never married before the elder one had a relationship of extreme familiarity with his elder sister-in-law ending in a marriage of the two in case she became a widow. (Karve, 1965; 35-36)

With time, while widow remarriage has become prevalent almost all over India, levirate is confined

only to lower caste people. For example among the Chuhars of Khalatur in Saharanpur district of Western U.P., on her marriage a woman belongs to the patri-fraternal contingent of her husband. Once widowed, she is given to in Karawa (second marriage) to her dead husband's unmarried brother, whether elder or younger (saga bhai). If there is no unmarried brother, then too Chacha-Tau ke Bhai (patri-lateral parallel cousin) or to Mama-Phupha ke bhai (matri-lateral cross-cousin). If the new husband takes her away from her lineage he has to pay for it.

Important here is to see the difference between primary marriage and secondary marriage. A widow even though remarried has a lower status than an unwed girl married for the first time. This distinction is important in the context of the Hindi films as we shall see ahead.

Radcliffe-Brown has differentiated between true levirate and widow inheritance where a brother takes over the position of her husband and father to the widow and children. (Radcliffe-Brown 1950; 64). Paulina Kolinda prefers the term widow mating than widow inheritance because unless a man has left an unmarried brother there is a careful decision taken in assigning a widow to her next mate. Any subsequent meeting though legally accepted, is not considered a marriage as the primary marriage is. (Paulina Kolinda 1983; 202).

Niyoga, a classical legal concept, was a service provided by a dead man's brother when the former had left no surviving son. The brother was to have a sexual intercourse until she had conceived one or more sons. These sons were heirs to the dead man. Besides the brother a priest or a Brahmin was some times allowed to provide his seed. The child then was 'legitimately' fathered by a man who was not his mother's husband. The practice of Niyoga then "was a striking example of a strategy of heirship discussed in dharmashastras and abundantly illustrated in the great epic Mahabharata. While solving problems of dynastic perpetuation as seen in Mahabharata (where dynastic endangerment of Bharatas is removed by means of employing Brahmins to serve as surrogates) always tended to produce accentuating complications. This practice allowing childless men to appoint kinsmen as surrogates to sire children for them with their wives was never whole heartedly endorsed by the law makers. Eventually niyoga was given up as being inconsistent with Brahminised standards of marital chastity and devotion." (Sutherland, 1990; 73-103).

In later days niyoga was prescribed by reformers like Swami Dayanand Saraswati in recognition to female sexuality and as a means to fulfil woman's natural need for motherhood. He held 'motherhood' as a sole rationale for the existence of women. Crucial in this was her role

in procreation and rearing of special breed of men. For widows since remarriage would lead to family disputes based on property, he prescribed the institution of niyoga as given in the vedas.

The existence of levirate and niyoga signifies two themes:

- a). At an apparent level it helped in the continuity of lineage which underlines the fact of sharing the common descent within a patrilineal setup. Children (especially sons were required for giving pinda to the dead ancestors with whom they shared the same blood.
- b). At the latent level is the importance of motherhood in that it not only helped the above but also brought into the world a new life with whom she shared a special filial tie, irrespective of the patriarchal setup, mentioned above.

CONCLUSION

This chapter reviewed the indigenous South Asian ideas on descent, as presented by scholars tackling different geographical areas in India. They look for the cultural meanings of various relationships to place an individual within the context of descent and marriage as well as caste. In this chapter we saw that within the

regional variations an all India pattern emerges which constructs a person culturally on the basis of relations of blood.

Patriliney dominates in South Asia, i.e. a person is born into his or her father's lineage. Father is the provider of the seed - the essence of the creation of the offspring. He transmits his blood to the child which is passed on to the next generation through the male child. A female child inherits the blood from the father but after marriage cannot pass it on to her child, who in turn gets his blood patrilineally. Once born the child is introduced into the world through his father with whose agnates he shares a common gotra, pinda and descent. Theories of biological inheritance form the ideological basis of male privilege in inheritance and succession - a notion largely sustained in the metaphor of "Earth and Seed".

A woman on her marriage changes her gotra and pinda from that of her father to that of her husband, thus becoming identical with the husband. It would appear at one level that women have a secondary place in the society since they derive their identity from men - a father or a husband. But is not so. Women have a separate domain within which they follow rules and rituals (striachars) exclusive to them which provide means by

which women in roles and groups are related to the society as a whole. A woman mediates in between the two lineages that of her father and husband (who share her body) as well as in the creation of new lines. Blood ties with the father's line is not broken though she joins another lineage and produces children for them. The blood which she inherits from her father is used by her to augment the womb though it cannot be transmitted to the child. The blood which the child gets from the father encompasses within it the matri-shakti of Uyir which the mother brings along with her. After the child is born, she further nourishes it with her milk, establishing a special mother-child bond. This strong filial tie between mother and child makes her Complementary and relevant, as is recognised by the society in implicit terms. Birth is culturally constructed as being made possible through the father while it is given and nurtured through the mother i.e. given by mother and recognised through the father.

However the presentation of a woman, on the one hand as "marginal" due to patriliney and as "essential" and "complementary" on the other hand due to filial, biological ties, places her in an ambiguous position. This ambiguity is mainly due to the dichotomy between social and biological ties, where the cultural belief, while acknowledging the biological ties as strong and natural, relegates it to a "backstage" - giving way to

the social ties on "front stage". The biological ties follow the universal law of filiation, whereas the social ties are based on notions specific to the values and norms of a particular community.

The notion of "front stage and backstage" and "transcendence of natural biological facts for the social bonds", will keep coming up in this work. We shall however see ahead how its reversal ie. triumph of biological over social is important in the world of Hindi films.

CHAPTER II
MEANING OF POPULAR FILMS

INTRODUCTION

In a way, this chapter is a preface to the chapter - III; it is a break in the discourse which began in chapter - I and will be carried through in chapter - III. However, this brief interruption is important in order to contextualize is what follows in the next chapter.

Till now, in chapter - I, we saw how Anthropologists have been dealing with the indigenous understanding of descent : that is with "Descent Ideologies", in South Asian societies. In chapter - III, we shall see whether the pattern seen above is followed in Hindi films. But where does one place Hindi films ?

In this chapter, we shall try to understand from a sociological perspective Hindi films, and their relation with art, culture and popular culture. We shall also see the themes and trends followed by them down the decades making them popular.

Hindi film have over the years been the most popular form of entertainment among the masses of India. Every year roughly 700 films are made and watched by an average of 12.5 million every day. Within the urban environment especially, where everywhere there are signs and sounds from these films, the popular films dominate as a medium through which ideas and information, tastes and values are transmitted.

However while examining the relationship between popular films and society, we cannot overlook the fact that films are made for money. Within some quarters films are understood as commercial products and are therefore dismissed as an escape or a mere spectacle. It is believed that films are manufactured only for sale and since the consumers (audience) is not homogeneous or known, it is tailored to meet an average taste of the masses who "seek pleasure and distraction from daily grind" while watching these films. Hindi films thus are believed to be lacking insight into, as well as meaning of, the society. It was perhaps with such a notion in mind that Government encouraged the emergence of a new kind of cinema - the art films - which was in direct opposition to mainstream cinema. Government created various institutes for funding these non commercial films and promoted them through national awards and International exposures. However, this kind of cinema was neither critical nor subversive. Being the elite understanding of Indian culture, it appealed to the ideologues only. By superficial reproduction of reality, these films confirmed the existence of what it showed ; it became the stuff of conventional documentary, affirming what we already know. Not that these films makers were not committed to their belief but by dealing with issues without an analytical understanding of how

cinema operates, they landed up subverting the text. The press and media by responding with enthusiasm to the subject of these films, confused "context" with "form" and labelling it as "art" conferred upon these films, an emotional legitimacy instead of a critical reaction.

The polarisation between art and commercial films led to a three way split between entertainment, seriousness (equated to social realism) and art. While popular films have begun to incorporate seriousness in it while relating its essential entertainment character, art films are now considered a form of self indulgence and thus irrelevant.

Art, in classical form in India has not been synonymous with culture (being only an expression of it). It is only as popular art, (example popular films) that art begins to attain a synonymity with culture, being as everyday in character, as is culture as a whole. The everydayness of culture is in fact the key to the understanding of its place in Indian society, portrayed very well by Hindi films. Hindi films then may not be artistic in the sense of classical art, but has perfection in that it has popular appeal among people. In Hindu way of life, objects of art were not seen as expressions of their artistry but as agents for the reinforcement of the sensibility of the viewer, reader or

listener ; something that popular Hindi films master at.
(from N.Gopal; 1979).

As a genre of "popular culture", the interpretation of the Hindi film is inevitably beset by contradictions. "The question whether in modern times the masses are actually the subjects or generators of their culture or merely the objects or consumers. That is to say whether popular culture is a vehicle for propagation of society's dominant ideologies or on the contrary that it is the focus of subaltern resistance to that ideology". (A. Tyagi and P. Uberoi, 1990). The question then is whether through popular media, the film makers basically propagate the bourgeoisie ideology, reinforcing the social institutions of society which are basically oppressive. In this process, popular film by mythologizing serves the dominant political and exploitative end. Or whether popular media is made from within and below, a culture of conflict involving struggle to make social meanings in the interest of the subordinate. The popular culture thus is made in relation to structures of dominances, assuming either the form of "resistance" or "evasion" - the two being interrelated and involving pleasure and meaning. Answering such a question would mean taking a political standpoint, but one can say that the truth lies somewhere in between. (J. Fiske 1989; 1-8).

Thus we see that popular films as a part of both "popular art" as well as "popular culture" becomes a reflection of its cultural interests; telling us a great deal about the society that supports and sustains it. Every film, by telling stories, portraying characters and narrating events makes a symbolic sense of the world. It draws the symbols and archetypes from the society, which are the classification interpretations and inconsistencies imposed on an individual's understanding of the world by the society. The study of popular cinema then is a means to gain access to the principles and assumption which a society, uses to order and conceptualize its experience. Academic interests in the cinema are not new, we shall see below how a history of its shifting interests is itself a story of progressive definition of the key issues.

THEORETICAL STAND POINT

Broadly speaking there are two types of theories on films :

a). FORMALISTIC THEORIES

This tended to focus on the technical, formal and structural aspects of the film medium. For them the main concern is the shooting, editing etc. These kinds of film theories have Expressionism and Realism. The 1920's and 1930's saw rise of expressionism which focused on the use

of medium by the film makers, largely overlooking the audience. The 40's and 50's saw the rise realism which stressed on the individual shot.

The basic problem with these theories was that they assumed the thought in the film to be grounded in the social system and so analysed the thought in the film and proceeded to the social base. They thus viewed films as an epiphenomenon and were more successful in politically conscious and documentary films. These films never became popular since the reality of space and time was too restricted in them and reality was portrayed in them as a caricature.

Under Claude Levi - Strauss and structuralism, structural studies of films grew - which was known as semiotic theory. Here film was analysed through its signs - icons, indexical and so on. Main problem here was that there were many signs which the directors showed but the audience missed out or mis interpreted. Since each film is grounded in its cultural milieu, the context rather than the text became important.

b). AESTHETIC THEORIES

These concentrated on the content, message and perception of the film in social terms. This was presented by the entire school of Marxist tradition, beginning from Marx himself down to the Frankfurt School.

They considered films (as other social phenomena) in all its totality. This view of cinema can be understood in either or both of the following categories :

- a). One which treats it as a communication medium as a part of modern popular culture.
- b). Cinema as an art form seeking to apply to it the same criteria of judgments that govern its aesthetic principles in other spheres of artistic production and practice.

For them, popularity of film became an important feature in studying films. Films were considered to be a social process and could be studied without having artificial encumbrances of structures. One could study a film without reducing it to an epiphenomena.

SECTION I

PSYCHO - SOCIOLOGICAL UNDERSTANDING OF HINDI FILMS

Social scientists realised that popular cinema expresses and provides conceptual means of coping with some real social issues. Taking off in the direction of their disciplinary track, they seek to answer "how" and "in what way" this happens. Psychologists were the first ones who felt interested in films, as dreams and fantasy, relate to the unconscious, inner needs and tensions of the audience. They explained the success of films by the extent to which it met the unconscious emotional needs.

Anthropologists, concerned themselves with exploration of the iconography and mythic themes of the popular cinema. Sociologists have pointed towards the cognitive function of films - reinforcement of roles approved by society etc. We shall now see how some of these social scientists understand popular films within the context of society.

SUDHIR KAKAR

Sudhir Kakar uses the psychological model to see Hindi films as a collective fantasy or a group day dreaming. By fantasy he understands that world of imagination which is fueled by desire, formulated as demands on the people and their inability to fulfill these desires, where it does not proscribe them altogether. By remaking the past or inventing the future or by extending and withdrawing the desire beyond the reasonable limit, the power of fantasy comes to the rescue of the people. Cinema provides the foremost medium through which the people of the Indian subcontinent derive into the shared fantasy, mainly due to the specific cultural thrust and similar childbearing practical they have. According to Kakar the Indian ego can easily regress into childhood modes temporarily without feeling engulfed.

"Like adult daydreaming or children fairy tales, Hindi films are high fantasy products : they emphasis the

central features of fantasy such as fulfillment of wishes, the humbling of competitors and the destruction of enemies, while over simplifying the situation or eliminating the details "(S.Kakar 1983; 13). Since the family is a source of fantasy in an individual's life, most of the films, for Kakar, deal with the themes related to family and relationships there in. The mother-son relationship being very ambivalent becomes the foremost medium of collective fantasy. Through this relationship, Kakar looks at the characteristic of "splitting" - a mental process that involves the separation of a longed for object from the hated image of it - best portrayed in the image of a mother. She sets into the image of longed for mother, shown as a paragon of maternal perfection. This mother who suffers throughout due to social pressure evokes the fantasy of son as saviour - also shared by the women in relation to their sons.

"Splitting", this time of the self, is seen by Kakar in another aspect of Hindi films - plot involving two brothers (at times twins) who present good and bad values. The badness of one of them, however, is not a part of his character but a reaction to development deprivation basically due to the longing for mother.

Father - daughter relationship, a yet another important family relation, too is characterised by fantasy. The relationship according to Kakar is shown on the screen when the heroine is an adolescence i.e. when she reaches the Indian age of marriage. This reflection in Kakar's explanation, is due to the traumas of this age in a girl's life, hence important for fantasy. It consists of the wish for an intimacy with the father who often tends to withdraw from her at the onset of puberty; as the daughter is completely given over to the women's world, to be prepared for future role of daughter-in-law.

Kakar also sees these Hindi films as contemporary myths with continuity from ancient models where the vehicle of fantasy and process of identification, remove the main stresses of them audience arising in their cultural and familial relationships.

ASHIS NANDY

Like Kakar, he too uses psychology to analyses the popular Hindi films and calls them the most influential myth-maker. Nandy gives three principles on which the various themes of these films are made.

First principle is that of Hindi films being a spectacle, where a black is black and a white is a white - emotionally, motivationally and morally. All shades of grey are scrupulously avoided lest they detract from the

logic and charm of a spectacle. Overstatement, as seen in the dramatic change of hearts in Hindi films, and melodrama, become the crucial stylization of these films: "form" rather than "content" being important here.

The second principle followed is that of having a predictable climax and expected end. The basis for appeal is the special configuration which the film presents of already known themes (as Kakar says "familiar myths retold"). What differentiates a successful film from a unsuccessful one is the presentation of a more popular theme or an efficient combination of these themes. What becomes important is how far a film appeals to the audience as a captuating revision of the films seen in past.

Third important principle is of having a synchronised and a historical story line, where the climax is on a timeless tale and does not stress on the linear unfolding of the story. Identification is only to the extent that these become the "types". To identify anyone realistically in a particular time and space, detracts from the culture free appeal of the heroes and the heroines.

These principles are best seen at work, when dealing with the theme of "womanhood", which according to Nandy is the presentation of the traditional Indian fragmented

image of a woman. It is the psychological attempt to split off the bad woman and "depsychologize" the problem by turning it into an external social cause. Such women are represented by evil mother - in - law or arrogant caste conscious wives or seductive cabaret dancers etc. These are the images who within the Indian culture promote fear for primitive femininity. The perceived dangers from women are shown even in a heroine who becomes threatening by rejecting the hero and leading her to either self destruction through alcoholism etc. or by leading him to risk his life in unfavorable situations such as taking single handedly a group of villains. etc. But as there can be no real deliberately portrayed ambivalence towards the woman who released the destructive forces, the cause is ultimately placed outside her - shown bad due to the circumstances (created by a blackmailer) or through a genuine misunderstanding (created by a conspiracy). The aim is to show, a good woman who unwittingly turns bad or someone naive enough to be misguided. The powers of and dangers from womanhood are thereby underscored but in a psychologically manageable way. Inner conflicts are overlooked here by not distinguishing between the two kinds of heroes.

In fact the Hindi films function is to externalise inner passions generated by social or political problems created by events and persons outside. These events and

persons are both ideal types and representatives of different aspects of a fragmented self. The moment these fragments are combined into a single figure, they cease being Ideal types (in Weberian sense) - becoming psychological descriptions of conflict states in the Indian minds. Nandy explains similarly, the presence of "Doubles" in Hindi films, which we shall see ahead.

VEENA DAS

Her work on the mythological film "Jai Santoshi Ma" (1981; 43-57) has tried to explore the "cultural grammar" within which the story was created. She sees how even though this grammar is well rooted in Hindu culture: it is a myth, particularly suited to our times and not a copy of earlier myths about mother goddesses.

Das shows how in keeping with contemporary times, the source of ill being, for instance, is made diffused and non specific. As a result it is not possible to annihilate them at once. It was through this contemporariness of the myth that the cult itself emerged and spread in the society. She further shows how through the medium of film there was greater standardization : since the film was available to vast majority of illiterate masses and is rerun during the village festivals etc. Another aspect of film media is the doing away with any mediation since seeing is believing for the

viewers. Through the film Das seeks the opportunity provided to study how Hinduism has evolved in relation to its own tradition, the demands of society and the new media through which the message is spread. This becomes an important way to study myths !

SECTION II

POPULAR HINDI FILMS : TRENDS AND THEMES

All along in the history of Indian cinema, of the various themes projected on to the celluloid, some become popular. When sound was introduced into the films, it was the Bombay Industry, which took to making Hindi films. These films specialised in social issues and fantasy films which soon had country wide popularity.

In the 20s and the 30s of this decade, themes related to National movement (such as secularism, Nationalism and social Evils etc.) became popular. Examples of these are Municipal Election, Anand Math, Sant Tukaram, Chandidas and Herat etc..

The 40s saw the rise of mythological themes which for some time even overshadowed even the romantic films in popularity. Around the same time, films based on historical themes too became popular. By the 50's and especially in 60's these two themes reached the peak of their popularity. Among the mythological films, noteworthy films over the years are : Bharat Milap,

Draupadi, Shakuntala, Ram Rajaya, Luv-Kush, Sampuran, Ramayan, Bajrang Bali, Gopal Krishna, Jai Santoshi Ma, Yasoda Krishan, Kadambari, Raja Harish Chandra etc.

Film such as Shah Jahan, Sikender-i-Azam, Khazanchi, Rustum Aur Sohrab, Mughal-e-Azam, Anarkali, Jahanara, Beju Bawara, Mirza Ghalib etc were made on historical themes. However, not all these films were popular. Some films in the 80's failed miserably (Meera, Razia Sultan etc). But it does not mean that they have lost their relevance. Themes such as these are still very important since almost every popular film essentially draws from an ancient myth. Two other themes, those of Romance and Violence, also have been very popular. Playing hide and seek down the decades, romantic films (also violence films) have become very popular since the 70's.

Romantic films over these years have come in various shades. At one level it was a long distance affair where the hero eventually lost the girl. Sacrifice as a values in love was sidelined by bringing passion and romance into it. While all these dealt with adult love affairs; with love becoming a way of life for the whole nation (e.g. Aradhana, Kashmir Ki Kali, Kati Patang, Dil Apna aur Preet Parayee, Mehboob Ki Mehndi etc.) a new wave was created by introducing teenage love stories, (eg. Bobby, Love Story, Ek Duj Ke Liye, Qyamat Se Qyamat Tak and

Meine Pyar Kiya etc.). Violence which was there in the times of Dev Anand, Shammi and Shashi Kapoor was shown against the repressive social order and human hypocrisy. But Amitabh gave a break by becoming a rebel and choosing his fate while others were essentially conformists and through their actions tried to overcome the misfortune that befell them. "Amitabh does not negate the consequences of what has befallen him but negates his own inability to tolerate with patience what has been prescribed by violence "(S. Dasgupta 1990; 52) . What has ever since followed has been a variety of these types : such as violence in campus (Goonj, Holi), violence in politics (Pratighat, Mein Azad Hoon) etc.

Every popular film has a strong story line. Various sub plots get attached to it creating a multi layered plot, such a plot then while at one layer deals with popular themes such as romance, or violence or mythology etc; has in it yet another layer - that of a family structure emphasising on social relations and institutions. These are grounded in ancient Hindu mythologies. Each story line develops either within the framework of a family network or in an attempt to be united into a family structure. To do so the problems created by the social relationships within the social institutions need to be overcome. This takes the story to its climax and gives it a proper end. Such films are

usually popular. However, "the basis for its appeal is not the linear development of a story line but on the special configuration which the film presents of many known elements or themes derived from other movies. This can be said in light of the fact that films do not have an unexpected conclusion but rather a predictable climax." (A. Nandy 1981; 90-91) However, there is at present a crisis in Hindi films industry and it is impossible to predict a "hit". Formula which is a hit in one film fails miserably in another one. Infact, what makes a film a success or failure is the proportion or lack of aesthetic harmony in it. It becomes methodologically necessary to view the films on its own and see what is represented within it, as I have done for six films in the next chapter. Nevertheless one can make a few generalisations on the nature of the family structure.

SECTION III

FAMILY AND ROLE RELATIONSHIPS IN HINDI FILMS

Hindi films always has a reference to the family relationships of the hero and the heroine. Often these relationships, their ramifications and their consequences form the central theme of the plot. Various narrative devices are used to highlight the various role relationships. Sometimes, these relationships themselves become important to further the story or to bring it to a

logical end. Usually it is through a narrative device that the story gets a proper shape.

We shall below see some of the relationships and also the important lost and found narrative device, to see how these helps to further the story line.

PARENT - CHILDREN RELATIONS

One of the important relationships portrayed is that of mother-son; having basis in the Krishna-Yashoda myth, the main purpose in the mother's life is the welfare of the child. This is even stated by her -Main Ek Maa Hoon...(I am a mother) or Aap Ke Dil Main Agr Ma Ki Mamta Hoti.....(If only you had mother's love in your heart!) etc.

The mother is usually shown suffering due to the sadistic excesses of extended family, and her son as the only hope she has, often stated by the mother as Jab To Pad Likh Ke Bada Ho Jayega Mere Sabhi Dukh Door Ho Jayenge (When you grow up to be educated man, all my miseries will be over). The little boy also expresses this as - Tu Ro Mat Ma, Jab Main Bada Ho Jauga.....(Don't cry mother, when I grow up....) etc. Some films show the suffering of the mother due to the thoughtless father who deserted her in one way or the other. This is shown to have an impact on the son who grows up with the resolve to seek revenge. Examples of

such types are Trishul, Deewar, Mahaan etc. The son is even shown having verbal fights with the mother who does not approve of the negative attitude of the son.

Father-son relationship, on the other hand is by and large shown as a formal one, often tense too. The father is critical of his son's activities usually blaming the mother for it. This is stated as Dekhlo Apne Ladle Ko, Tumhare Dular Ne Bigad Diya Hai Ise (Look at your son, you have spoilt him with your affection) or Sambhalo Apne Ladle Ko.....(Take care of your dear son....) etc. While the father is often shown fixing up the marriage of his son for business gains (eg. Maine Pysar Kiya) or as a promise given to the dying father (eg. Haryali Aur Rasta); the mother at times approves of the son's choice Muje Ladki Pasand Hain (I like the girl).

Relations with father are thus defined within what anthropologist have called the politico-jural domain while with mother the relations are of affectivity. Hindi films then clearly demarcate the domain of descent and filiation as of politico-jural VS affectivity. Another important relationship portrayed in Hindi films is that of "father-daughter". He is usually shown a widower whose daughter, is either spoilt and pampered or is a heroic crutch of the poor, ailing father. Even if the mother is alive, the father-daughter relationship is shown as more

meaningful. Her marriage is the main obsession with the father, who even fixes up a innocent faced villain in many films. This worry is stated as Bas Is Ki Shaadi Ho Jati....(Only if she would get married). This closeness is threatened at times when the father does not approve of man she loves. However once the crisis is over, he gives her the ceremonial send off. This has a basis in the mythological story of Shankutala and Kanav-Muni.

Mother-daughter relationship, however is underplayed in the popular films. The mother is shown closer to the son and if she is a widow with only a daughter, the focus is not on mutual relationship but on the problems the two face together. When the father is shown as an authoritarian who disapproves of the daughter's choice, the mother sides with him rather than the daughter (eg. Pyar Jhukta Nahin). Even if she is shown sympathetic towards the daughter, she is not vocal or courageous enough to revolt against her husband (eg. Prem Rog). As against the films like Dil, Janam show how a mother favours the son against the father (a point I have made earlier). Only films such as Pakeeza, An Evening in Paris, Ahista-Ahista etc show a special mother-daughter bond. Interestingly the mother here is a prostitute and the bond can be understood basically as of parentage problem.

Motherhood is shown in yet way: When the heroine becomes pregnant she changes the "bad" father. Films show how a dacoit hero (Samadhi) or a violent hero (Deewar) has a change of heart at the news of becoming a father. The mother at times even runs off from her house when she realises that her child to-be born is unwanted (eg. Daag, Daddy etc.).

SIBLING RELATIONSHIPS

Among the Sibling relations, a Brother-Sister bond is portrayed as very sacred and reverent. Often shown are the "Rakhi scenes" which portrays the bond. Sometimes, the sister is shown physically handicapped (Majboor) which becomes a pivotal point in the change of the hero's character (he steals and is jailed etc.). Or else the hero's sister is raped (eg. Adalat) which makes him take on with the villains. Usually the sister is shown as a liability and her marriage is a big social obligation on the hero (Dulha Bikta Hai). Brother-Sister relation can be shown even in the lost-found narrative sequence, as we shall see later. In this case it is often a mark on the wrist of the brother (caused by a fire cracker while she was tying "rakhi" in childhood) by which she recognises him.

Sometimes the pattern is turned around. An Elder sister takes care of a younger brothers (Tapasya). She is

then shown to sacrifice her marriage etc. for them (Jeevan Dhara) and could be even ill treated by them later on (Prem Nagar) or even become unacceptable to the brother with whom she shares a wonderful childhood (Umran Jaan).

Sister-sister relation is often portrayed as a strong bond between the two (Hundred Days). At times one of them may even overlook the faults of the other one's lover (Naseeb). The elder sister is shown to be almost like a mother. At times a sister may even sacrifice her love for a man, if the other sister too loves him (Jeevan Dhara). Sisters are also shown as twins, where one is modern and the other one traditional (Sharmili). Twins are often shown as lost and found. (Geeta aur Sita, Chaalbaaz etc.). Sometimes one sister may marry another sister husband or lover (Basera).

The bond between brothers too is shown as significant. Usually the two are shown as having opposite nature; where one is good and the other bad (Parvarish) or one as serious and the other very frivolous (Ram-Lakhan) etc. At times the two brothers are very close even though they may have professional rivalry such as one in a policeman and the other is a smuggler and both know this. (Ram Balram). Brothers shown as twins or as lost and found will be seen ahead.

GRAND PARENTS - GRAND CHILDREN

This relationship is usually shown in the absence of the parents. In most cases, the grandparent(s) have previously disapproved of their child's marriage to his or her own choice. However towards the grand-child the attitude is of total acceptance (eg. Saagar, Daddy, Pyar Ka Sapna etc.). In such cases when the grandchild defies their order, the relationship becomes tense - Tum Bilkul Apne Baap/Maa Pe Gaye Ho (You are just like your father/mother). At times, a grandmother (usually mother's mother or even father's mother) is very sympathetic towards the daughter and even more supportive than mothers in films usually are (Chasme Badoor, Daddy). Grandmothers are usually shown as widows (Saagar, Chasme Badoor). Grandfathers too are usually alone and authoritarians. However they cannot really replace the parents and if a hero/heroine is shown as an orphan with the grandparents, the loss is clearly visible and the void never fills unless an abandoned parent is accepted by the grandparents.

FRIENDS

This is perhaps one of the most important relationship shown in the films. Noteworthy here is that the two friends are shown to be like brothers, who are treated so by the mothers too. (Dharam Veer, Naseeb, Dostana etc.). The sister of one may either be like a

sister to another one (Majboor) or at times may fall in love with her brother's friend (Naseeb, Tridev). Noteworthy is the point that there is an attempt to bring the friend into the family - as a brother or a brother-in-law. Noticeable feature in the friendship is that two friends fall in love with the same girl (Dostana, Ek Baar Muskurado). This could be a significant thing for such a unity of choice leads to a problem resolved through the sacrifice of one of them. Interestingly usually the one who is reciprocated in love, makes this sacrifice. Two things are noteworthy here:

- a). Is the friend's happiness more important than the beloved's happiness? (She too remains dissatisfied at the failure of first love). Does this portray the social tie as superior to biological tie? In films like Sangam [here the friend falls in love with the other man's (believed to be dead) girl friend. However when the supposedly dead friend returns, the other man withdraws from the love affair]. This can be seen in terms of V. Das's front stage/back stage argument where the biological tie with the lover assumes a backstage while the social tie of friendship comes to the front stage, though its importance cannot be overlooked - shown in the films as complete withdrawal from the woman for peace.

b). By showing that the two friends are in love with the same girl - and eventually one of them marries her - unless the other one dies, does he not stand to be the second choice for the girl? Is this pointing towards levitate?

Among the girls friendship is a weak tie. Usually friends are shown as companions with whom the heroine sings and enjoys. Usually friends remain close till marriage after which they become involved in their own world. (Swarg Narak). Some times the two friends fall in love with the same man (Mere Mehboob).

Friendship between a boy and a girl is rare. The boy usually has a crush on the girl since their childhood which may result in an affair and marriage (Parinda) or due to the indifference of the girl may fade out (Hundred days, Saagar).

Relationships acquire meaning within dramatic narratives such as lost and found, as we shall see now, which furthers the story whereby the hero and heroine are separated from their families at the beginning and united only in the end. Within this losing and finding of characters, the story develops and takes shape. Stories vary in showing the hero or heroine (less often) either separated from both parents (Amar Akbar Anthony) or hero separated from father only (Naseeb) or hero separated

from mother only (Girafaar) from parents and siblings both (Mahaan). Heroine is usually shown separated from her mother (An Evening in Paris), or from her brother (Charas) or from her father (Amar Akbar Anthony).

All these separated persons are shown in the film, to be known to each other though not being aware of their true relationship with each other. Sometimes, the son may be shown as working for his father without actually knowing who he is (Laawaris). The hero may be knowing his actual mother as a neighbour or poor widow and calls her "maa" without knowing the real relationship (Mard). The Brothers too are shown bumping into each other very often without knowing the truth (Amar Akbar Anthony).

Some films show a brother or a son giving blood to his brother or a father, as he is the only person available with the same blood group. The matching of the blood and its donation is sometimes done by who is not socially related to the receiver and is at times brought up in different caste, class, religious background. Such a coincidence could also be seen in terms of anthropological meaning of "blood", shared and transferred substance which transmits descent from one generation to another or shared by brothers in one generation.

This can also be understood in terms of the usage of "doubles" in Hindi films. Here the actor is shown playing two or three roles, of a father and son (sons) or two brothers. They may or may not be brought up in the same household or living together but definitely have different life style and social values according to the environment they are brought up in. Ashis Nandy, building on the theory of Otto Rank, explains doubles as a symbol of split self seeking to reconcile in fantasy two opposing aspects of Indian psychic (Nandy, 14 Oct. 1979).

Frequently the two boys (or girls) are revealed in the last scene or the climax as twins separated at birth by natural calamity or evil designs of a villain. In other plots, the son shown as the double of his father frees him of some problem (enemy, ill reputation etc.). eg. Mahaan. The son is thus able to overcome what the father could not in the next generation, thus being the extension of his father. This at times shown differently by widening the time span to a life time as is shown in films on reincarnation (Kudrat).

PARENTAGE

The question of parentage becomes important when a hero or heroine is getting married. Culturally accepted as the stage when a person gets social recognition, respectable and legitimate parentage is necessary.

Parentage of a person in the film is questioned on the following basis:

- a). When the parents are of ill repute ie. father alleged to be a murderer or robber etc. and/or mother is a prostitute or a woman of questionable status. (Naseeb, Ahista-Ahista)
- b). When the parents are economically of low status ie are poor or very rich. (Bobby, Pyaar Jhukta Nahin).
- c). If the person belongs to different religion (Julie), Caste (Sujata) or community (Ek Duje Ke Liye)
- d). If the two families have previous animosity (Qyamat Se Qyamat Tak) such a story is basically the remake of legendary love stories such as Laila-Majnu, Shiree-Farhad etc.
- e). If the person is found out to be illegitimate ie. born without parent's social marriage. Such a crisis is solved, for instance in knowing that the parents had got married in a temple without the knowledge of the world.

Of the five cases given above, two of them, where parents are of ill repute and where the person is illegitimate, are usually unknown to the person in the beginning and the revelation causes a restlessness which disappears only when he disproves these allegations. For example, he may set out to prove his father's innocence (Kala Pani) or raise the prostitute mother to a higher

and purer state (Main Tulsi Tere Angan Ki) or prove to the world that his parents were married before God if not before human witnesses (Aradhana).

The fact that both the parents should have respectability in society points out to the caste-like system which the Hindi films implicitly show.

CONCLUSION

We saw in this chapter how popular Hindi films by being a part of popular art and popular culture have a definite relationship of mutual give and take with the culture and society. The relationship between films and society has been of interest to theoreticians and academicians for a long time now. Various theories on Cinema have been propounded which have evolved and become refined with time. Psychoanalysts and social anthropologists too have while analysing films point out the family and the relations there in as intrinsic to the films. All the popular notions, they argue, find their basis in mythology. Observing the historical trend followed and the popular thematic developments within the general framework of these films I have shown here that role relations in the family, questions on parentage and dramatic devices such as 'lost and found' become important for their popularity. This is how Hindi films, become important for this study. With this background on

the films, in general, we shall see in the next chapter how various problematics of family, its relations, parentage, descent, caste and other such matters are resolved within this medium.

CHAPTER III
IDENTITY, ILLEGITIMACY AND
SOCIAL PATERNITY IN
HINDI FILMS

INTRODUCTION

In the chapter I, I had dealt with the descent Ideologies of South Asia. "Descent" can be understood through the cultural definition of social relationships. In doing so, important symbols of the society are arranged to bring out their meaning. These symbols and their meanings are essential for an individual to get "self-identity" - that is to become a "person".

In the pan-Indian context (derived through various South Asian descent ideologies); "Body" or "Blood" are the central cultural symbols which become meaningful as the "substance with an inherit code of conduct", transmitted to a person through birth. By sharing this substance and following the code of conduct, an individual gets the social recognition of being person. Caste too is a substance transmitted to a person at birth. Code and substance are transmitted through generations marrying within the same group. Any differentiation within the caste group, due to marriage with another caste group, results in the formation of a new caste, different from the ones it originated from. This creates a confusion in the code-substance relationships. This pan-Indian phenomenon of descent ideologies draws its essence from the definition of kinship (a biological and social process), in terms of

'seed and earth' metaphor as well as concepts such as levirate and surrogacy (Niyoga).

I have below analysed six popular films (if not hits); which are apparently simple love stories with some violence here and there. However, at a closer look we find that they basically deal with the question of self identity (= personhood), the main concern in the life of the characters. Being guided by patrilineal value system, the characters (both hero and the heroine) seek identity through the father. The crisis shown in the films is because the proper code for conduct is missing (due to social pressure) within the shared substance (or biological ties). This is shown in the work, through :

- a). Lost and found
- b). Illegitimacy
- c). Social Paternity.

The common thread in all these films seems to be the attempt to reconcile social and biological kinship (descent; and) once this is achieved, the story results in a happy ending.

SECTION I

LOST AND FOUND

In this section I have taken up two films - Mahaan and Chaalbaaz. I will first give the plot narrative of both and then a combined analysis.

Case I:

MAHAAN

Released in : 1984.

Directed by : S. Ramnathan.

Casting : Amitabh Bachchan, Waheeda Rehman, Zeenat Aman, Parveen Babi, Amjad Khan etc.

THE STORY:-

Amit (Amitabh Bachchan I) is a principled lawyer who lives with his painter wife Janaki (Waheeda Rehman). His friend Vikram (Amjad Khan) is caught in drug peddling. Amit does not help him out of the crisis as a result Vikram is sent to the jail. Vikram who is dying of revenge, on being released from the Jail, plants a murder case on Amit. In fear Amit runs off and is separated from his wife who is on her family way. Amit escapes to Nepal where he accidentally meets a dying millionaire who hands over his daughter to him. Amit now impersonates as "Rana Din Dayal" and brings up the dead man's daughter as his own niece. However he misses his wife and feels guilty for having deserted her. Meanwhile Janaki gives birth to a twin, but unknown to her the doctor gives away one of the sons to a childless couple, while Janaki brings up the other one. Time rolls on, both the sons grow up, one with the real mother - Shankar (Amitabh Bachchan II)

becomes a police man and falls in love with Rana Din Dayal's foster niece, Manju (Parveen Babi). He is aware of his father's past and is shown as a serious reflective young man who openly seeks revenge on his father who, according to the son, erred at the level of home as well as the society. The second son, Guru (Amitabh - III) grows up with his foster parents and in an actor by profession. He is a happy - go - lucky kind of man and falls in love with Sunita (Zeenat Aman) in a very easy and hilarious fashion.

Meanwhile the old enemy Vikram, has flourished and grown into a big smuggler inducting his own son, too, into a big underworld. He and his men are able to steal a costly necklace from police custody but being followed by police, hide it in a statue in an art gallery. Manju who is staying with Shankar's mother, sends the same statue to her uncle, through Shankar, who is going to Nepal for police investigation. Vikram's son (Shakti Kapoor) follows Shankar (for the statue) and chases him into an accident. Then impersonating as Shankar goes to Rana Din Dayal's house in search of the statue. However, Manju testifies to his not being Shankar but Vikram and his men take away both Din Dayal and Manju. Meanwhile Janaki comes to know that Din Dayal is actually Amit and comes over to Nepal but is also kidnapped by Vikram's men. She somehow runs away from them and lands up at the wedding

reception of Guru, her son. She recognises him and he comes to know of his existence. Guru to come to know of his real parents and brother, and sets off to look for his father. Instead of him, he meets Shankar at Din Dayal's house. Shankar has meanwhile reread his father's case and through investigations, comes to know of his innocence. He therefore, comes to meet the father in the capacity of his son, but meets the brother instead and through a dying servant (who has been killed by Vikram's men) come to know of the kidnapping. Together the two brothers save the father and the whole family is reunited along with the spouses.

CASE - II

CHAALBAAZ

Year of Release : 1989.

Directed By : T. Rama Rao.

Casting : Sridevi, Sunny Deol, Rajnikant,
Anupam Kher, Rohini Hatangari.

THE STORY :-

Twin daughters are born to a rich couple who die in an accident while the children are very young. One of them is stolen by a mad maid servant, while the other one brought up by her uncle (Anupam Kher) and his sister-in-law (Rohini Hatangari). These two ill-treat the girl

called Sita (Sridevi- I) which results in her becoming a nervous woman. The cruel uncle is outwardly a fine man and no one guesses the true family relations.

The other sister Gita (Sridevi - II) grows up in a slum while the mad maid (now her mother) is in an asylum. Gita who wants to be a film actress, circumstantially becomes a brave and bold girl, working as a petty actress in local shows. She has a friend-cum-companion, Ashok (Rajnikant) who is a taxi driver. He constantly helps her out of the troubles she gets into regularly. Gita meets Ravi (Sunny Deol) who is the only son of a rich man (Sayeed Jaffry), Sita's uncle's friend. Ravi falls for Gita and mistaking Sita for Gita decides to marry her. At this proposal, Gita's uncle gets threatened for he does not want to marry her off to an outsider and let the property pass away. So he fixes up her marriage to a relative, Shakti (Shakti Kapoor) who is a villainous and a ruthless rustic. Sita runs away from home and land up with Ashok. Ashok mistakes her for Gita and is amazed at the change. He is also very happy and the two fall in love.

Meanwhile Gita lands up by chance at Sita's house and creates a havoc there shocking everybody at the change. Due to this she is unable to meet Ravi who seeing Ashok and Sita and mistaking Sita for Gita misunderstands

Gita. Ashok and Sita decides to marry but Shakti spots Sita and realises Gita's existence in the world and the whole plot. He kidnaps Sita. Ashok follows and so do Ravi and Gita. Sita is poisoned by the uncle as there is a fighting etc. Somehow Gita saves Sita and the two come together. The truth is revealed by the mad mother-cum-maid who returns from the asylum after being fully cured. All is well in the end.

ANALYSIS :

In "Mahaan" the underlying theme is that of "Lost-found" where parents are children are lost at the beginning and later on united. The dramatic device used here to help them come together is "Doubles". Doubles appear in the film at two levels :

- a) Father and son(s)
- b) Brother and brother

The sons are brought up separately from their father and from each other. However what is shown along with this is what I call "unity of destiny" of the two brothers with their father. We see that the villain remains the same for the father as well as the sons. The problem of one generation is passed over to another generation and due to a double role a pattern is made which is synchronised. The two brothers get together to hand over their fathers enemy to police, and bringing the

family together. They emerge as an extension of the father.

This unity of fate is also seen in the case of the two brothers, but can be explained in terms of nature-nurture. The film shows the two brothers, born of the same mother, get separated and are brought up in different environments, Shankar who grows up with the mother, is unconsciously fed by her on the story that the father had deserted them. He grows up with the feeling of hatred and anger against the father. He becomes a policeman and wants to punish the father at two levels :

- a). legally as criminal who ran away from justice
- b). as a father for having deserted the family

(protection of the son towards a wronged mother).

He is constantly aware of the fact that his blood is that of a murderer and becomes a stern, hard man who does not even smile (Manju, his girlfriend repeatedly points this out).

Guru, on the other hand is brought by his foster parents who love him beyond limits. They are ever caring and are shown pampering him. He grows up becoming a happy go lucky man, who works in a theatre company but is most of the time living of his father. Here one sees the mythological structure of Krishna with Nandlal and Yashoda, emerging.

However despite these two different nurturing patterns, there emerges in the end same conditions - they discover that their parents are in trouble and both feel the urge to help them out of it. Thus natural bonds (shown here through likeness) brings together what separated them due to difference in nurturing.

The mother-son bond too emerges very strongly in this plot. Janaki who brings up Shankar is an ideal mother who gives up everything in life to give him a good life. She rises out of the distress of having been deserted by her husband because of the son to bring him up and make him a good police officer. She is shown to approve of his girlfriend at once. Whenever Shankar speaks against the father, she is pained but does not leave him etc. Shankar on his part grows up with the solemn pledge to bring back the erring father and make him pay for the miseries she had undergone.

Also 'Janaki at once recognises Guru, though she mistakes him for Shankar since she is not aware of Guru's presence. Using 'pun', the film shows the mother to be able to recognise her son. Once the whole matter is explained by the doctor present there, Guru at once rushes to his mother (Janaki) and leaving his bride and others rushes to rescue the brother and father, on her command.

The two brothers and the father who are bound by the same blood and pass it on along with descent characteristics, instantly are attracted to each other. When Shankar goes to question Rana Din Dayal on the statue, he at once recognises him as his father but does not acknowledge him. When he is convinced that the father is not a murderer, he goes again to the house - this time to settle the personal score. However he meets the brother instead. Guru tells him that the two of them are brothers. Seeing Shankar hesitate he says, "Aa Bhai, Gale Lagja" "(come and embrace me brother, saying) saying so Guru hugs Shankar and asks" Aab to Vishwas ho gaya na, Pooch Apne Dil Se" (Are you convinced now, ask your heart) With tears in eyes, Shankar holds him closer and says "Haan Bhai, Vishwas ho Gaya" (Yes brother, I am convinced). For the first time, we see emotions in Shankar's face (tears). He realises that Guru is more unfortunate than himself for he had to stay away from both the parents. Shankar then does not question the father for having deserted them. It seems as if in finding the lost brother, he gets the answer that the father would give. In the brother, Shankar finds something which even the mother could not provide and that which he had been seeking in his father - descent ties.

In Chaalbaaz the two sisters who are lost and later found are shown as doubles. The two girls, being of same genetic stock are brought up differently and have contrasting personalities we see how

<u>Sita</u>	<u>Gita</u>
Rich	Poor
Unloved	loved
Timid	Bold
Traditional	Modern

This could be seen as a case of doubled image of womanhood in the Indian culture on which new categories - the new split - have been superimposed by social change. Indian civilisation has worked with fractured concept of femininity. Seen on one hand as a nurturant, docile devoted natural being ; at another as a dangerous, unreliable seductive and violent, person who tends to act out her passions. (Ashis Nandy 81; 93-94). Here too Sita is shown as docile and devoted (winning over Ashok with her wifely devotion and dependence). And Gita as an aggressive, destructive seductress (who drinks beer in the pub and sings with urchins in the middle of the night). However Gita's image is not a negative one, there is no condemnation of Gita's life style. In fact all this attracts Ravi. So one sees that even though the two

sisters are dichotomously placed - what according to Ashis Nandy is the reconciliation in fantasy of two opposing aspects of Indian psyche - its manifestation is only at the level of parent - child or siblings (as doubles or not doubles) who eventually become together as agnates. The doubles then can be seen as either the extension of the father or mother or as superficially contrary to that of the brother or sister. In the former case it is shown that over a generation the problems remain the same. In the latter case this is mainly due to the difference in nurturance of the siblings. But in both the cases, these doubles unite in the end due to the natural elements shared by them. The contradictions are thus solved through "doubles". In Chaalbaaz we saw that the pathological conditions (such as step parently behavior and poverty) resulted in the contradiction between the sisters and was resolved too by their changing places because they were doubles. In "Mahaan", while upbringing made the two brothers different, their union was possible due to their sameness - mother supporting her son. And it is in their being lost and found that the unity of their real identity lies - that of sharing the common blood. Blood (khoon as in the films) is the not only shared with the father but also inherited from the mother. Mother often refers to the blood in the films. In Mahaan when Janaki mistaking Guru

for Shankar is told that she is mistaken, says "Kiya Mein Apne Khoon Ko Nahin Pehchanti" (Wouldn't I recognise my own blood).

In Mahaan, while the blood is shared from both the parents, physical identity is shown to be from the father alone (since both the brother look like father). In Chaalbaaz, the physical identity is unknown since the parents are unknown. However in films like Appu Raja or Bairag we see that the sons derive physical identity from the father while in Pakeeza and Masoom it was the mother from whom the daughter derives the physical identity. To my knowledge popular Hindi film has never presented the physical likeness of the father and daughter or mother and son.

Family ties then can be seen at two levels - biological and social. While at the social level, the father is closer to the daughter. However the mother - daughter and father - son relation is not absent. That too remains significant depending on the story. However at the biological level, the daughter shares her identity only with the mother while the son shares it with the father only. This can be explained in an anthropological sense. Biologically while both son and daughter inherit fathers blood, only a son can transmit it to the next generation. Similarly although both receive the mother's

substance (matri shakti or lyir) but only the daughter passes it on to her children. Can we say then that biological identity in these films is seen as that which can be transmitted along the line, from a father to the son and from a mother to the daughter? Is the social manifestation according to the rule of descent? Or does it mean that the explicit importance of a father for self-identity is basically due to the patrilinearity? Although there is no anthropologically evidence to this end, these questions need to be given a thought.

The "doubles" thus symbolise the biological aspect of "seed and earth". Using the dramatic device of lost-found, Hindi films emphasis the unity of substance and code, each individual has with the parents and siblings

SECTION II

MARRIAGE AND ILLEGITIMACY

Since both parents have important roles to play in the life of the children; they are usually tied in marriage. Marriage as an institution, then is useful to keep the parents and siblings together in a family. Marriage is also important since it unites caste and kinship. "Marriage is a reflection of hierarchical principle from without to within the endogamous group. Endogamous marriage is the main factors of status, without which one cannot maintain it.

In Hindi films, caste is shown relevant in the context of marriage. However reference to caste is implicit in the films as they are, "abstracted from empirical social reality. And yet such abstraction is an essential rule of the game. Any identification with the realistic depiction of a person is seen detracting from the culture free appeal of the heroes and the heroines" (A. Nandy 1981; 92).

Class and caste often get mixed up in these films for a high caste is depicted as a high class, for instance rich and are portrayed as Thakur Sahib or Sharmaji etc while drivers, secretary etc are Ramlal, Dinu Kaka or Munimji etc. And the fact that when it comes to the question of ascertaining the status of the child (as in society too), the caste status of mother becomes as relevant as that of the father. Descent or transmission of group membership depends on both the parents. Even though it is essentially through the father (male seed or patriarchy), mother's caste group is equally important to determine the quality of field. Any irregularity here results in excommunication of the parent and lowering of the status of the child in caste hierarchy.

This is also true of children born out of secondary marriages. Principle marriage is between man and woman of

same caste group, whose issue get the high status of the two parents. Others marriages (especially mixed) led to formation of lower status groups. Even Dharmashastras categorises varnas and ordered them in a hierarchy. "These were subjected to combinations by means of application of certain operations or rules such as Anuloma/Pratiloma and primary/secondary marriages, thereby creating a number of new ranked categories which can be identified as Jatis or their analogous "(Tambiah 1973; 194) Due to the fear of ex communication or due to the non acceptance of secondary wife in the family, concubinage replaces the secondary marriage. This is depicted very well in the Hindi films where the hero's father terminates all connections with him since he marries either a nurse, dancer, or a prostitute or a gardener/servant's daughter. On the contrary sons choice is eventually accepted if the girl is a teacher or even a respectable poor man's daughter.

Generally a marriage is socially recognised and arranged by elders - which is in accordance with caste endogamy and hypergamy, following the norm of giving dowry as in a partilineal set up. This marriage then leads to the reproduction of children and the perpetuation of family where sons are responsible for furthering it and daughters are necessary for other descent groups.

However, this does not happen always. In secondary marriage or concubinage the man and woman may have a child who has a low status - ie. is illegitimate. Legitimacy then is directly related to the product of socially accepted, normatively followed, endogenous and hypergamous marriage.

The question of illegitimacy is very extensively dealt with in our films. Significant point brought out in these films is that though socially anomalous, the illegitimate children too have a biological tie with the parents which is claimed by them. However the claim on the biological parenthood, is shown differently vis-a-vis the two parents.

With the mother, it is usually shown that even though illegitimate the mother and child live together (Janam) and this fact, which may already be known to the child or may be revealed later on, creates a crisis in the child's life which is resolved in the film, only at the end. It is perhaps the mother - child's basic biological bond which is portrayed as important than the social bond of legitimacy. If on the other hand it is shown that the child is deserted by the mother, it is either because of some conspiracy of which she is unknown or somebody (doctor or her father) lies to her about the child being dead (Aa Gale Lagja). Thereafter when she

marries according to societal norms and accidentally comes to know her son (living in a neighborhood etc), who is shown in misery due to lack of filial love - it causes pain to the real mother who just watches him suffer and suffers herself in turn. This is shown more on Karna-Kunti myth. The curiosity of the child to know who the mother is and why she left him becomes the focus of self identification. (Kabbie-Kabbie, Pyar Jukhta Nahin etc.)

However with the father the relationship is shown as tense since he is usually shown to have backed out of the marriage even after impregnating the woman-resulting in the low status of the child. The child in the case of father looks for identity within the politico-jural domain whereas with the mother affectivity bonds and claims become important. We shall see this in detail below :

CASE - III

LAWARIS

Released in : 1981

Directed By : Prakash Mehra.

Casting : Amitabh Bachchan, Zeenat Aman, Amzad Khan, Rakhee, ShriRam Lagoo.

THE STORY:-

Sunita Devi (Rakhee) and Jagadhar (Amjad Khan) have an affair and she gets pregnant. However Jagadhar abandons her and she dies in the childbirth. Sunita Devi's guardian who is her brother's friend, a lawyer sends away the child to Bombay with Dinu (Shri Ram lagoo), his driver. Dinu becomes an alcoholic while the child grows up to become Heera (Amitabh Bachchan). Heera works as a coolie and leads a third-rate mawali life. One day Dinu, when Heera considers him his father, tells him that he (Dinu) is not his (Heera) father, however does not reveal the identity of the real father. Heera gets very disturbed at his unknown parentage and calls himself a Lawaris. Heera leaves Dinu and in a brothel and meets Ranjit Babu (Ranjit), who is a spoilt rich man. He offers Heera a job in Kashmir, Heera meets Ranjit Babu's father, Seth Sahab (Amjad Khan). After Sunita Devi's death, Jagadhar/Seth Sahab's sister commits suicide because she is carrying an illegitimate child. This event changes his heart and he sobers down in life, marrying Bindu and having a son and a daughter becomes a saintly figure. Heera gets attracted to Seth Sahab and his daughter and the two reciprocate the feelings. Heera now meets Nisha (Zeenat Aman) his childhood love and the lawyer's daughter. Due to Ranjit's inhuman activities, Heera goes against him and soon the two develop bitter enmity for

each other. Ranjit involves Heera in a false rape/murder charge. At this time Dinu appears on the scene and tells everybody that Heera is Seth Sahib's son. However Seth Sahib does not have any guts to acknowledge this. After clearing up the charges against himself, Heera with a heavy heart sets out to return to his place. When he is leaving, Seth Sahib calls him back and acknowledges him as his son.

ANALYSIS

A superhit of its time, Laawaris as the name suggests, means one without any descent, the film has a direct reference to the crisis in a man's life who has no social status or parentage. Made in a typical lost-found formula, the film raise an important points relevant to my study.

Crisis appears in Heera's life when Dinu reveals to him the truth of their relationship. Since Dinu does not reveal his father identity, Heera calls himself Lawaris (a form of protest). Although Dinu has never been a responsible father to Heera, yet the presence of a "father" keeps him going in life. On realising that Dinu is not the father and that his actual father has thrown him off, his Laawaris identity becomes a burden for him. He puts this away by accepting the offer to go to Kashmir. (Note near the climax, Heera discards the new

clothes he had bought before going to Kashmir and changes into the old clothes and calls himself a laawaris). This burden of self identification as a laawaris is shown in the songs he sings, "Apni to Aise Waise, Kat Jayengi, Aap Ka kiya Hoga Janabe Ali....." "Jiska Koi nahin Uska to Khuda Hai Yaaron....." etc. Crisis here is shown only due to the father - for group placement. He even identifies the "fathers" of illegitimate children with the society which is hegemonic while the mothers and the children are the sufferers, bound together by the biological tie. Note he tells Nisha that, the rich men exploit poor women and thus the laawaris is produced. He threatens her and says that if he raped her and then disowned her and the child, even that child would be a laawaris unless her father camouflage the child by buying him a social father (Note a reference to social father, is negative). Thus he places the 'father' in a hegemonic category with whom social ties dominate the biological ties.

This is seen in the film where Heera works for his father without knowing who he is. Seth Sahib is at once attracted towards Heera (the natural biological ties) but when he comes to know the Heera is his son, does not acknowledge him at once. It is in the last scene, Heera takes leave from him saying that he being a laawaris would go back to Bombay. As Heera turns and walks away, Seth Sahib stops him and says, "Heera, laawaris Tu Nahin

Mein Hoon, Wapis Aaja Beta " (Heera, it's I and not you who is a laawaris). Seth Sahab then proclaims the defeat of social hegemony and calling him "beta", acknowledges the biological tie as superior to the social tie.

The mother, who is dead in the film is shown to be a support rather than a crisis for Heera. (Note how he relaxes and enjoys when he hears his mother's songs on the radio). In a way he identifies with her, as both were wronged by the social hegemony, represented by the father.

The illegitimacy being a social state of anomaly is shown in yet another form here. The classificatory mother's brother (the lawyer) does not kill the sister's son but due to social stigma attracted to the child's low status, sends him away with Dinu does not keep him, as normally is expected in complementary filiation ties. But while this tie is biological, it is neglected into the backstage and social status becomes important.

The triumph of biological over social ties resolves the problem in the film - giving it a happy end.

Case IV

DADDY

Released in : 1990

Directed by : Mahesh Bhatt

Casting : Pooja Bhatt, Nath Zutshi, Anupam Kher,
Soni Razdan etc.

THE STORY:-

Pooja (Pooja Bhatt), a model by profession, lives with her maternal grandparents. She has a boy friend Nikhil (Nath Zutshi) who is an Assistant Editor in a newspaper and is interested in marrying Pooja. However Pooja is reluctant because her grandparents want her to marry a boy of their choice. On the day of her engagement to this boy, she discovers that the drunk man who often rings her up to say, "I love you" is her father (she is brought up believing that both her parents were dead). This man, Anand Sarin (Anupam Kher) had once been a famous singer who on turning into an alcoholic is reduced to rags. Through her mother's diary (given by the servant woman) she learns that the mother (Soni Razdan) and Anand Sarin had a live in relation. Since Anand Sarin had been a married man before he meets her. Anand is not given divorce by her first wife while Soni's parents do not let her marry him without his divorce to the first wife.

Meanwhile Soni becomes pregnant and elopes with Anand as her parents want to abort the child she is carrying because it is illegitimate. The two live together and Pooja is born. However soon things turn sour between them over the issue of Anand's divorce. One day after the usual fight, Soni rings up her father to tell him that she has decided to return to him along with Pooja. But as she is about to leave, she hears Anand's song. Emotions overpower her and she turns back to go to him, but on the way meets with an accident and dies. Soni's parents stake claim on Pooja legally and the broken Anand loses her to them. On knowing all this Pooja gives up the idea of marriage and takes on to herself the rehabilitation of the father, The rest is the story of her struggle in the face of severe opposition from the grandparents. With Nikhil's support she finally succeeds to make Anand a big singer once again.

ANALYSIS

This is a Mahesh Bhatt film which was initially to be released as a "television film" but later on released as a commercial film in 1990.

Interestingly, the advertisements of the film stated it to be a movie which portrays the struggle of a daughter to rehabilitate her haywire father - "Ek Bigde Huye Baap Ko Sahi Rah Pa Lane Mein Beti Ka Prayas".

However I go beyond this to explain the film. I see the attempt of rehabilitation as a means for the daughter's search for self identity.

In a patrilineal society, an individual gets the "identity" through a father who transmits the substance (dhatu) necessary for transmission of membership, into his descent group. Within this group the individual shares this inherited substance and due to this follows a code for conduct (dharma), (Nicholas & Inden on Bengali kinship, 1977).

Looking at the story, we find that it follows the following narrative sequence:

- a). Pooja discovers that a poor drunkard is her father, who has lost his status as well as his identity.
- b). Pooja resolves to rehabilitate him to his actual position - that of Anand Sarin a famous and respectable singer.
- c). Through Pooja's struggle, he becomes once again a famous singer and is socially accepted back as Anand Sarin.
- d). Now Pooja moves in with Anand Sarin as his daughter (or common substance), sharing his house and acknowledging him as "daddy" (or code of conduct).

The above shows what I have said that Pooja attempts to rehabilitate not for the sake of her own identity.

This can be seen in that she does not rush off from her grandparents house to help her father but stays put there, keeping up with the opposition of the grandparents. Also she calls him by his name and not "daddy". She thus first puts him in his proper place and then establishes her relationship with him. Significant here is her moving over to his house after accepting his paternity.

A related point here is Pooja's awareness of following code of conduct. She is never shown to rebel. Being brought up by her grandparents, she feels obligated to them to the extent that she refuses to marry Nikhil, her boy friend, in order to marry their choice. She does not rebel against her grandparents or leave their house ever though they are against her for meeting her father. She respects them and even says so to her grandmother once, "Aap Meri Family Hein, Muje Aap Se Support Chahie" (You are my family, I need your support). Grandfather once rebukes her for being sympathetic towards a man who had killed her mother. To him she says, "Nanaji, Aap Bhi To Mujhe Janam Lene Se Phele Hi Maarna Chahte The, Phir Mein Aap Se Nafrat Kiyu Nahin Karti?" (Nanaji you too wanted to kill me in my mother's womb, why then do I not hate you). Such a feeling of respect for her grandparents make her feel responsible for the father too, her genitor. She then wants to look after her father .

However to do so she has to make him a father, to identify herself, "Sirf Bache He Ma-Baap Ka Naam Roshan Nahin Karte, Ma-Baap Bhi Aise Hone Chahiye Jin Par Bache Naaz Kar Sake" (It is not important for only the children to do their parents proud, the parents too should do their children proud).

We see how in the film there is initial similarity of the events in the mother-daughter life and how things change to give different end to their lives.

1. Anand comes to Soni's parents, at her insistence to ask for her. But due to the stigma of first marriage is sent off by Soni's father.

Anand comes for Pooja too on her insistence again with the stigma of being a drunkard and is sent off by the same man.

2. Soni, elopes with Anand. By running off from her father's house, she thus breaks the social norms.

Pooja -though does not leave the house, she does keep in contact with Anand Sarin against her grandparents wishes. However Pooja's actions are within normative limits because she is going against the grandfather for her own father.

Even the advertisement emphasised on the father-daughter tie - a kind of social recognition to it. This could also be seen as substance-code relationship. For

Pooja the choice is between her own father and her mother's father. In a patrilineal society blood ties are formed with the father which is superior to that of mother's father since it is transmitted and shared whereas grandfather's blood is not. In the film it can be noted that the grandfather uses treachery and illegitimate power (through his secretary or Nikhil's boss) to dissuade Pooja but has no direct method to do so.

3. Soni decides to return to her father but changes her mind when she hears Anand's song. As she turns to go back to Anand once again, she meets with an accident and dies. Pooja too decides to return to her father and so gets down to rehabilitating him. Even though she is dissuaded from doing so by her grandparents she does not agree and goes to him, to live with him happy thereafter.

This could be explained in terms of social bond versus biological bond. Pooja moves from her grandparents (a social bond) to her father (a biological bond); and her story is shown to have a happy ending. If she had been influenced by her grandparents to remain with them, one would see Pooja's "death" in it, assuming as I do that father was a symbol of self-search for her.

Biological tie in the film appears at yet another level - that of lovers, between Anand and Soni. However the story shows that parents-child bond may (in a good sense) contradict the bond between lovers.

Another representation of this is in the showing of Grandfather as loving and villainous alternately. He is shown caring towards his daughter in asking Anand Sarin to get a divorce before marrying Soni. Also when she rings up to tell him that she is returning to his house, he is sympathetic and kind towards her. However when Soni becomes pregnant, he changes into a villain in that he plans to abort the child because of social stigma against an unwed mother.

With Pooja too, he is fully justified in preventing her from meeting an "Anand Sarin" because of whom he already has lost a daughter. Yet he appears as villainous and hegemonic while doing so. The problem arises because of Soni; he was correct in preventing her from leaving him (she dies once she does so) but for Pooja by not letting her go to Anand Sarin, he negates his own stand because he prevents a daughter from going to her father. Thus he becomes "bad" when he allows the social consideration to prevail over the biological ties of parent-child or lovers.

In the last scene, when he apologises to Pooja by saying that he accepts his defeat. But the defeat is not of his cause because the daughter is not lost but is in that he tries to prevent a daughter from going to her father.

Another point here is that of transformation of the grandmother into a mother, which in Veena Das's terms is the triumph of biological over the social. With Soni, she is shown as a weak, unimpressionable mother who has no personal interaction with the daughter. She always appears with the husband, agreeing with everything he says.

However to Pooja she is a replacement of her mother. Linguistically too she is called "Badi Mummy" and not Nani, the actual relationship - But the grandfather is called Nanaji. She gives total support to Pooja. In the scene when Pooja goes to invite the grandparents for the competition, she openly confronts her husband and assures Pooja that she would be at the function, independent of her husband. Here one sees something of Soni in her. Note, Soni fights, confronts and walks out on her husband for the daughters sake (her admission to school is barred because the parents are not married). In doing so, Soni dies. In confronting her husband, the weak, fragile grandmother too "dies" replaced instead by a strong

source of strength. The total congruency of mother-grandmother is perhaps because the real mother is dead. This social mother slides in comfortably because of the common substance that mother Soni shared with her and is passed on to Pooja! The transformation and substitution leads to a happy ending whereas the earlier one was a tragedy.

An interesting point which rises out of film is that even though illegitimate Pooja is not socially unaccepted, the crises in the film is a personal one and the fact that her mother was the secondary wife (which for her proves to be fatal) has no impact on Pooja's life. This is because the first wife is the principal wife only if, she has children. In this case Since Anand's first wife has no children, she does not become the principal wife and though seen in the last scene at the function but does not prevent Pooja from going to Anand.

However this is not the case with other Mahesh Bhatt Telefilm called Janam which too deals with the illegitimacy. I have introduced this story briefly to strengthen the fact that recognition of biological ties over social ties lead to the happy ending in a film. In this plot, Kumar Gaurav lives with his mother (Anita Kanwar) who is a concubine of Anupam Kher. Kher is a

married man who has a legitimate family of a son and daughter. Though he fulfills all the material obligations of the mother-son, he does not give Gaurav his own name. The father along with the legitimate family makes it clear that he is an illegitimate son and thus out of the family. Throughout the film, Gaurav tries to bridge this gap between the social recognition and biological tie. (Note when he rescues the legitimate daughter in a party, he does so to rise in his father's estimation and not out of love for the girl; or he attends the grandmother's funeral to assent his presence rather than due to social obligation). When he fails to appease, he rebels and marries a girl of his choice. He then leaves the mother's house too. He decides to become a film maker and makes a film on his own life - showing the father's social position etc. This creates a panic in the father's house for their daughter is about to get married and such a publicity becomes threatening for her. However he goes ahead with it and the film becomes a hit. He gets an award for it. At the award winning ceremony, the father comes up to the stage and acknowledges him as his son! The end is again a happy one as biological ties are shown basic to social ties.

Another significant point made in the film is that Anupam Kher marries after having an affair with Anita Kanwar. Important here is that Anupam marries a woman

acceptable to his mother, despite the presence of a lover. This has implicit undertones of caste in it; whereby fearing excommunication or other threats from the family, Anupam does not marry but "keeps" the woman of lower caste (actress by profession) while marries within his caste. He buys the concubine a house and fulfills all the needs, as was done by rich men for low caste women with whom marriage was not possible or accepted socially.

Case V

MASOOM

Released in : 1981.

Directed by : Shekhar Kapur

Casting : Shabana Azami, Nasirudin Shah, Supriya Pathak, Jugal Hansraj etc.

THE STORY:-

D.K. (Nasirudin) is an architect who is married to Neena (Shabana Azami) and they live with their two daughters in Delhi. The girls are 7 and 5 years old. It is a happy family till one day D.K. gets a phone call from Nainital saying that he should come there and take away his son. D.K. is surprised at such a thing but soon remembers he had visited Nainital about 7 years ago and met a girl with whom he had a physical relation. However he was not aware of the existence of the child, who grows

up with his mother in Nainital. After his mother's death the child becomes lonely and unhappy and so his guardian the old school master decides to send him off to his father. At this D.K. confides in Neena and immediately things sour up between the two but they carry on for the children's sake. Meanwhile the child, Rahul (Jugal Hansraj) lands up at D.K.'s house. While everyone adjusts to him, Neena is reluctant to do so. In fact D.K. is quite fascinated by him and as a result of natural bond the child too becomes very close to him. However since Neena threatens to leave the house, D.K. decides to put Rahul in a hostel. Meanwhile Rahul comes to know of D.K.'s "relationship" with him and runs away from home on the eve of his departure. He later is brought back by a policeman. Next day while he is leaving for his hostel, Neena changes her mind and accepts him as a part of her own family. All is well in the end.

ANALYSIS

"Masoom" or the "innocent" is the reference to the little boy born out of the wedlock, who is looking for his social acceptance in his father's family. This social acceptance in this film comes when the father's legitimate wife accepts him as her biological son, evoked through the concept of universal motherhood here! In other words she accepts her husband's biological tie with Rahul.

For Rahul, the crisis arises when his real mother dies. Though when she was alive, he missed the father (note she often tells him that the father is away and will come to take him someday). With her death the urge for father's identity becomes acute. Had she been alive he would perhaps not been so desperate for a father, though he would have felt the void. Important to note here is then how even one parent (biological tie) can mean enough to compensate for other such ties. Eventually when D.K. too accepts him, this point is brought out sharply - one biological tie (with D.K.) gives Rahul a whole family.

D.K. and the son have a strong, attraction for each other. D.K. feels the "natural" affection for his son. With Rahul he shares a lot (picnic, horse rides etc.) whereas with his own daughters he is not so close. They are shown closer to the mother (whose birthday they celebrate and who sings to them, teaches them etc.). Even Rahul is close to the father, once even asks D.K., if he can call him "Papa". However the problem is of gaining the social recognition of the father and making the relation public. This is pointed out by their close friend when Rahul runs away from home, "Kamaal Hein Baccha Janta Hain Ki Tum Us Ke Baap Ho, Aur Tum Mante Hein Nahin - Bhagega Nahin To Kiya Kere?" (The child is aware of his father but you don't want to accept it, what

would he have done). Rahul runs away in shock because he realises that his father is a father to another household where the mother is not his and has also refused to be one. (Note when Rahul hurts himself and runs to Neena calling her "mummy", she rebukes him and does not even attend to the wound). This is brought out in yet another sequence. When Neena is singing to her daughters, Rahul who is listening to the song in his room, imagines his own mother singing to him and not Neena.

The social aspect which leads to the rejection of his biological tie with D.K. is overcome by Neena. The problem gets solved in the end when Neena accepts the child into the family.

Neena changes her mind when the friend evokes the biological/natural instinct of motherhood in her, "Tu Bhi To Ek Maa Hein, Agar Thodi Si Mamta Us Masoom Ko Bhi Mil Jati Hein To Usme Kiya Hein"? (You are a mother, if you give a bit of your affection to that innocent child, what is the harm?)

The above analysis show that for a happy ending, generally biological ties should be given precedence over social ties, values or norms. Where the social ties continue to contradict the biological ties, the end is tragic. (Ahista-Ahista, Shakti, Naam etc.)

SECTION III

SOCIAL PATERNITY IN HINDI FILMS

Through the device of Levirate and Niyoga (surrogacy), Indian society fulfilled the gap created by the failure of natural means of producing children. While Levirate was the marriage to the dead husband's brother for social paternity of the dead man's children; Niyoga allowed the society to appoint the younger brother to sire in the widowed sister-in-law, a child who would belong to the dead man. He would not marry the widowed sister-in-law. While in Levirate, the foster father "was actually mother's second husband, in Niyoga the actual father was not the mother's husband. In each case, the biological tie with the father was replaced by a social tie - yet another aspect where biological (could be biological and social) paternity is favoured to social paternity alone. However although Niyoga has lost its practicability in the society (confined only to epics and Dharam shastras); Levirate is still practiced among certain sections of the society. (P. Kolenda, 1983). Justification for these systems are sought in social idioms however its problematics are multidimensional, portrayed well in Hindi films, as we shall see below:

CASE VI

SILSILA

Released in : 1982.

Director : Yash Chopra

Casting : Amitabh Bachchan, Sanjiv Kumar, Rekha,
Jaya Bhaduri etc.

THE STORY:-

Ravi (Shashi Kapoor), a pilot in Indian Air Force, is in love with Sudha (Jaya Bhaduri) who lives with her mother in Kashmir. Ravi has a younger brother Amit (Amitabh Bachchan) who is an actor/play writer still struggling to make his name. Amit is in love with Chandani (Rekha). Meanwhile war breaks out and Ravi is killed in action. Amit is shattered and comes to meet Sudha who is in a better position. Amit comes to know that Sudha is pregnant, making things worse for her. She challenges Amit into marrying her and Amit gives in. He breaks off with Chandani who is married off to a doctor (Sanjiv Kumar). Amit enters into matrimony with Sudha doing his best to be a good husband within the shadow of his brother.

One day while out on a drive, Amit and Sudha meet with an accident in which she loses the child. Almost immediately Amit meets Chandani whose husband is Sudha's

doctor. They soon renew their old affair. Even though their spouses are suspicious, Amit and Chandani carry on. One day they are even caught red handed by Sudha's cousin, but Amit does not retreat. Once while her husband is away, Chandani elopes with Amit. Sudha does not stop Amit though tells him that she is in love with him.

However both Amit and Chandani realise that the society does not accept them, for the only recognised and accepted ties are those of their marriage to the respective spouses. While away, they come to know that the doctor's plane has crashed. Chandani breaks down and the two dash back to their place. Amit rushes towards the accident spot to see if he can save Chandani's husband. Sudha who too is present there, pleads with not to risk his life saying that she is pregnant and does not want to lose him. Amit promises to return. He rescues Chandani's husband, who clings to him in joy and relief. Amit returns to Sudha, telling her that he has broken all past ties and has come to stay forever.

ANALYSIS:

The film takes a turn when Amit marries, on Ravi's death, his fiancé Sudha. Even though Ravi and Sudha are not married, Sudha is expecting Ravi's child. Following the Levirate system, Amit marries for the sake of the child ie. to provide the social parentage. This has been

brought out here in yet another way. Sudha tells Amit that she wants to give the child, a father's name so that the child has a socially sanctioned parenthood to facilitate the child's placement in the society. This replacement of a father becomes necessary because she is unwed. One of the ways would have been to accept her as Ravi's widow. However this could be done by an elder of the family. In this situation all we have is a younger who is socially allowed only to marry her. Since socially sanctioned, it becomes the woman's right and even in the film, Sudha demands this and Amit cannot deny. Since the only bond for their coming together is the child, we see the two performing the role of husband-wife in an institutionalised fashion and not in an individual capacity.

An important point to understand here is that Chandani, Amit's lover symbolises his personal, individual life outside the social norms, as a biological existence. She is with him when he is struggling to become a star (note this has no connection with the plot, an individual sphere); she is with him when he succeeds as an actor (Note, Chandani and not Sudha is present at the award winning ceremony), she is with him in happiness (marriage party, dance etc) and his sorrow (when Ravi dies and Amit is desperate, she alone consoles him). In short, Chandani is always with him in his creative and

lonely moments (the song "Mein Aur Meri Tanhaye", when he just thinks of her) - as an individual and a biological being.

However Amit gives up all this temporarily and enters into the matrimony with Sudha. However when Sudha has the miscarriage, this bond weakens, for almost from nowhere does Chandani reappear into Amit's life and the two have a torrid renewed affair.

But when Sudha informs Amit of her second pregnancy - this time from Amit - he returns to her forever. When Sudha pleads him to come back to her, at the airport, he says, "Mein Zaroor Wapis Aaunga, Mein Vada Karta Hoon, Aur Ab Ke Jo Aaunga To Sabhi Samjate Aur Atith Se Rishta Tod Ke Aaunga" (I will return to you, I promise and when I come back this time, I will break all ties with the compromises and the past). There one sees that once the biological tie is established, what follows is a neat social adjustment. The correct order then is biological ties followed by social ties. After all the logical meaning of a marriage is to have an offspring [note in the film too this is pointed out to Rekha at the friend's "Akhand Path" where people (society) demand her identification within a marriage (a social arrangement) through a child (a biological tie)]. So unless, the two,

Amit and Sudha had a child of their own, Amit could not carry on living under the shadow of Ravi.

In another telefilm "Picnic" by Aparna Sen, one sees the bond between the widowed sister-in-law (Shabana Azami) and the brother-in-law (Farooq Sheikh). The brother-in-law does not marry after his brother's death and instead looks after the widowed sister-in-law and her son. He stays with them and the two establish an intimate relationship both at physical and communication level. Nothing concrete builds out of it since they are not socially married. However at the picnic he ignores her or often takes her for granted, a kind of treatment a husband gives his wife in public. (overlooks her participation in games or does not praise her song etc.) However his love for her is undoubted behind this outward indifference. The question again is whether social bonds (of being sister-in-law/brother-in-law) is the basis of all this or the biological tie which they establish within the marriage kind of setup they live in? The film shows the latter bond being the basis - also pointed out by Sreela Majumdar, who is Shabana's younger sister. In the film Farooq Sheikh gives her undue attention which is not liked by Shabana, so she tells her that being a younger sister she must not flirt with her "sasuralwalas". But Sreela point out, "Tum Saf Saf Kyun Nahin Kehti Ki Tum Us Se Pyar Karti Ho, Shaadi Kyun Nahin

Karleti Ho?" (Why don't you admit that you are in love with him, why don't you marry him?)

These films, we see, basically seem to be emphasising the biological which is the "individual" or "personal" as shown within the narrative. This does not however relate to the anthropologists emphasis that "social" is the important, recognised bond.

CONCLUSION

We saw in this chapter, how various themes, dealt in these films tend to point towards the fact that biology must definitely combine with social tie rather than a social tie alone being highlighted. The absence of biological ties shown either due to the child being lost or being illegitimate or not being a natural one or the relationship between the two individuals having no real biological basis (of a common child or due to social prohibitions etc), creates problems which are irreconcilable. Only when the social overtones are controlled and combined with biological realities, does one attain normalcy within these relations.

When biological relations are established anthropologically, the substance is shared by the genitor with the child and a code of conduct (inherent in it), is followed. But if due to societal pressures these codes get ignored a serious crisis arises. The biological ties,

however are not totally ignored, rather they assume a 'back stage'. That is to say biological ties are kept away from every day life and social convictions and values are allowed to occupy the 'front stage'. However once these biological ties emerge from the back stage on to the front stage they not only resolve the crisis in the films but also give it a happy ending. This is also shown in terms of the "pull" of the blood-substance which is natural and transcends the differences of nurturance shown in the film as social differentiations etc.



CONCLUSION
TOWARDS A NEW PARADIGM

We have reviewed in this study, two social domains, each having its own discourse on the "Construction of Person". Within the first domain, that of Anthropology, we saw how through kinship studies, Functionalists were the first to propound descent ideologies. They studied unilinear descent groups, mostly in Africa, classifying people and groups as consanguineous, affiances etc. They saw a kin group important for the recruitment and perpetuation of the group, and emphasized on its social and political structure. However, they clashed with the Alliance theorists who saw kinship as a means of organizing marriage between two groups.

The controversy between the Descent theorists and the Alliance theorists had a major impact on the understanding of Indian kinship. Structureless such as L. Dumont, differentiated between the North and South Indian kinship systems. Dumont saw the South Indian kin groups as units in system of alliance expressed in marriage and based on equality between brothers-in-law. Thus while kinship in North was seen to be intimately connected with caste, in South it came to be viewed as one based on Alliance, Equivalence and devoid of caste.

This serious problem of fragmenting Indian kinship system was overcome by Cultural Anthropologists who have attempted to study the indigenous South Asian societies.

In doing so, they examined regional cultures through the vernacular languages, to understand kinship as well as caste (with rules of marriage etc.) and pointed out the following:

- a). Caste is the underlying structure in the kinship system of North as well as South India.
- b). Regional variations can be seen not only between South and North but also between various North Indian cultures, which is normal.
- c). There has been an attempt to form a Pan-Indian descent Ideologies through these regional studies.

The cultural theorists then reduce the kinship system to a system of symbols where symbols stand for something else without any intrinsic relation between the symbol and what it stands for. They look for cultural meaning of relationships to place an individual within the context of descent and marriage. With each regional variation there is an attempt to construct a 'person' on the basis of relations of blood. The 'person' is constructed culturally; and ideal construction being the one where an individual performs various duties (samaskara) by following a code of moral conduct (dharma), resulting in joy and happiness (sukh).

The second domain, that of Hindi films, being a mass medium and having a wide appeal especially in the urban

areas, is a contemporary media. Following a vernacular mode of communication (Hindi), it too attempts to give an all India projection. Even though, it represents more northern than southern or eastern cultures, its popularity is no less in south or east than in north. In fact in these regions where their own regional films are made and appreciated, Hindi films have a dominant role to play in influencing the popular taste. This can be seen in the mutual give and take of stories and ideas between regional popular Hindi films. From the popularity point of view alone Hindi films definitely project a Pan-Indian image of culture.

Personhood in these films is portrayed through the search for self identity, a recurrent theme in popular films. It is in fact seen that the Hindi films seek "personhood" mainly within biological identity which may or may not be social too. Popular films always have stories based on the life of an individual. Being Mythological in structure, the stories bring out sharply the concept of "ideal personhood", within the kinship patterns. This has been brought out explicitly in the analysis above. These films show that as in the society, biological ties are placed in the back stage away from the public view, where as the social ties occupy the front stage in an individual's life. While biological ties are natural, the social ties are basically

constructed out of the social norms and values. However, this portrayal leads to several problematics in Hindi films. Only when the biological ties slip into the front stage there by reversing the order, the crisis is resolved in films. As against the Anthropologists, who explain the human behaviour in purely cultural terms, these films gives significance to the biology in human behaviour. This can be seen in the case of "social paternity" and "illegitimacy" in the Hindi films.

In recognising the biological ties as superior, Hindi films go on to show that even anomalous human categories (such as illegitimate children) are important. In saying this these films seem to be placing the illegitimate biological ties at par with the legitimate biological ties. In doing so it would seem that Hindi films demolish a caste system as they do not recognise a hierarchy of individuals. And since the reference to the caste is only implicit in the popular films this point gets strengthened further. However this seems to be clashing with the real life practice of the people. "Reversal of social vs biological" and "projection of caste system" therefore present a dichotomy which needs to be seen from the sociological perspective.

Could one say that since the reference to caste system and its justification lies within the Sanskritic

tradition, Hindi films being non-classical reject it ? Or is this contemporary projection of caste due to the preference given to the biological ties over the sociological one ? Or is it the subaltern resistance to the society's dominant ideology which propagate stratification and social differentiation ?

This study also raises certain issues which are dealt with differently by the Hindi films on one the hand and by the Anthropological discourses on the other hand.

In the two films I reviewed, we saw that biological identity is shared with the parent of the same sex i.e. between a father and son and a mother and daughter. Anthropological studies too seem to be implying this in a way. They show that the sex of the foetus depends on the ratio of male contribution to female contribution i.e. if the ratio is more or "the man's portion of the mixture is denser than the woman's it settles at the bottom of the womb resulting.....", the foetus would be a male and if otherwise the foetus would be female. Also these studies show that the male substance which encompasses the female substances though inherited by both the son and the daughter is passed on only by the son to the next generation. The female substance (also mother's substance) remains with the son but cannot be passed on to the next generation. The daughter, on the other hand,

cannot pass the male (father's) substance to her children, but passes the mother's substance to them. We see then, how bodily substances are passed on unilineally, from father to son and mother to daughter represented in the Hindi films by the physical likeness.

Therefore we see interaction between the Anthropological discourse and Hindi films at two levels :

- a). issues raised in the Anthropological discourses seem to be dealing with differently within Hindi films e.g. treatment to caste system as well as the biological vs social ties, and biological identity.
- b). questions which are unexpected and unapprehended in Anthropological discourse come out very sharply within the Hindi films e.g. whether identity = substance transmitted ? Whether it is patrilinearity which accounts for the obvious identity among women?

These points should help to sensitise the Anthropologists to look at the cultures in a new way. Anthropological studies especially the cultural studies are seen to be getting influenced by the classical understanding of culture, tending to ignore the popular performance. Through the study of popular Hindi films: whereby I have raised some questions and presented some issues, I attempt a modern reconstruction of the domain of kinship, on the basis of the analysis of a mass medium

(popular Hindi films) which is contemporary. This work makes no great claims for generality none the less, I believe it does point out towards the complexity of issues involved and suggests some questions for future explorations.

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1542