

**PATRIARCHAL IDEOLOGY AND FAMILY :
A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY**

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MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

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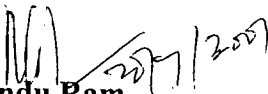
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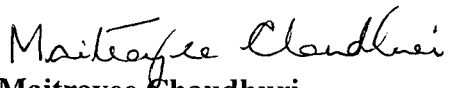
This is to certify that this dissertation entitled '*PATRIARCHAL IDEOLOGY AND THE FAMILY: A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY*' submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy has not been previously submitted for any other degree of this university and is my original work.



A.VETRIVEL MURUGAN

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


Nandu Ram
(Chairperson)


Maitrayee Chaudhuri
(Supervisor)

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Seven years ago, I was introduced to sociological writings. Since then, I have been enjoying freedom to think and reflect on various philosophical, sociological and political issues. Sociology was introduced to me as a discipline, whose primary concern is to study society. More significantly, my exposure to J.N.U. has enlightened me in this regard. My exposure to the contemporary sociological literature has somehow convinced me that sociology has also to address to various social problems. More significantly any social problem is strongly rooted in ideological element or apparatus, therefore it is indispensable to grasp those elements to comprehend its nature. My growth in this discipline further shaped my theoretical assumptions in this regard, and thus by the time I completed my post graduation, I was in a position to take a theoretical stand that any social problem has to be traced back to its ideological apparatus. One can not rule out the impact of Marxian writings in taking such a stand. Gradually I also began to realize the complexity in taking such a stand. Thus my academic development and exposure to gender studies had further strengthened my theoretical position.

Feminist perspective was introduced to me in my post graduate studies. Since then, I have been particularly focusing on various problems and issues, most of which are the result of the existing feminist literature, particularly within the domain of sociology. Therefore, this study has been the result of these developments. Given this background, I would like to acknowledge, those, who helped me out, in carrying out this research.

My specific interest in gender can be traced back to the social environment, in which I was born and brought up. My parents have always been a source of inspiration for undertaking this study. More significantly, my mother's experiences of the past were a significant determining factor in shaping a specific interest on gender. Therefore, I dedicate this study to my parents in general, and mother in particular.

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I believe that research is a collective activity, which cannot be undertaken in isolation of others. This is true particularly in this study. My colleague **Ms Archana Prasad** has been contributing to my study through discussions and suggestion despite her own engagements. She devoted her time in proof reading entire dissertation without which it would not have been possible to bring out this study in its present format. Therefore I thank her for her cooperation and sincere efforts.

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CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION

The emergence of sociology in the west is inextricably linked with Industrial and French revolutions. The founders of sociology had responded to its impact on various social institutions, and the destabilizing character of these developments was focused upon in the early sociological writings. Family was one such institution, which had undergone great transformations, due to these developments. Therefore, the primary concern of the founders of sociology was to restore the order and stability of the society. Not surprisingly, existing social inequality within the society was either neglected or considered as pathological. Gender was one of such neglected factor in sociological writings.

The neglect of inequality in the economic sphere within the academic sociology led to the emergence of the Marxist sociology whose main preoccupation was to highlight the existing inequalities in the class system. Thus Marxism was borne by unattached intelligentsia, by political groups and parties oriented to lower strata, groups who were in rebellion against an emerging bourgeoisie society that excluded them. Gouldner (1971) argues that Early Marxism and Academic Sociology both agreed that modern society was experiencing problems that could be solved only by building or borrowing new patterns. However, both differed in the manner of approaching such problems. Much like evolutionaries, academic sociological writings advocated the view that through these problems, the society was slowly maturing and moving towards the equilibrating tendency. However, Marxist writers viewed these problems as rooted in conflicts inherent in the new society and therefore insoluble within its master framework. However, both academic and Marxist writers did not give adequate emphasis to the existing gender inequality. While Marxian own writings, occasionally touched up on certain factors related with gender inequality, it was completely absent in other non-Marxist conventional sociological writings.

The emergence of feminist movements in the west had an enormous impact on sociological writings. With their interrogation, it became increasingly difficult for the conventional sociological perspectives to ignore women's question. In India, feminist interrogation started during the second phase of women's movements. Since then, researches on women's problems have been increasing to a considerable extent. Consequently, contemporary academic institutions, though with greater reluctance, are increasingly incorporating concepts and tools of the feminist scholars. However, perhaps surprisingly, feminist researchers and teaching have not

given adequate emphasis to the ideological construction of gender role within the domain of the family. This may seem surprising, considering that the concept of 'socialization' has been so critical in sociological research. However, this concept in itself operates with a notion of society as an undifferentiated unit and of individuals who are assumed to be similarly placed in and viz. a viz. the society. When we talk of ideology, inherent in the understanding, is the idea of society differences along the axes of class, caste and gender. At the same time, in order to locate the origin and the development of patriarchy, historically and ideologically, it becomes inevitable to grasp the theoretical development of both ideology and patriarchy. Similarly, the concept of family is important to grasp it's role in inculcating patriarchal norms and values on it's members. Therefore, in this study, I shall attempt to look at these concepts, and try to show their role in the understanding patriarchal ideology.

I

Relevance of the study

Sociological development for the past two centuries has introduced a wide variety of concepts and theories. Many of them can be traced back to the early philosophical writings. In fact, the emergence of the discipline itself was a revolt against mere psychological or philosophical explanation of the existing social reality. The early sociological writings were based on some conventional perspectives, such as functionalism, diffusionism, evolutionism etc. Not surprisingly, a specific emphasis was given to these conventional theories in sociological researches and teaching. Therefore, any area, which falls outside these perspectives, was considered as ideological. However, Marxist writings had an enormous impact on sociological writings. Consequently, many Marxist paradigms were incorporated in to the sociological theories and concepts. The concept of ideology was one of such conceptual tool, which acquired it's significance in sociology, due to the influence of Marxist writings, and thus literature on this has been gradually increasing. Similarly the concept of patriarchy is a major analytical tool in feminist analysis. Therefore, both these concepts are significant to grasp the ideological construction of patriarchy. Since family is the primary institution in inculcating patriarchal norms and values on it's members, it is inevitable to look at it's theoretical developments. In this study, I shall use these three important concepts to uncover the ideological construction of patriarchy. Given this condition, one needs to ask: Why is it important to use these three concepts to grasp patriarchal ideology? More significantly, Why is it so important to do this

conceptual exercise to grasp the ideological construction of patriarchy? In order to answer to this question, one needs to look at the place, these concepts occupy in sociological writings.

Sociologically, each one of these concepts has occupied central position in different schools of thought. The concept of ideology was a major analytical tool in the writings of French ideologies and German idealists. It is true that this concept has undergone major theoretical shift in sociological writings. Despite such change, this concept is considered as a gender neutral one. Though there are different conceptions of ideology, they do not consider gender as a factor in the determination of ideological domination and power relations.

Similarly, the concept of patriarchy has been analyzed extensively by both anthropologists and feminist scholars. In anthropological writings, this concept was confined to the family and the kinship structure. However, feminist writers extended its meaning to the wider social structure. Needless to point out that this concept also acquired distinct meanings in different perspectives within feminist writings. However, the inherent ideological elements within distinct feminist perspectives were confined to specific theoretical positions. For example, liberal feminists while acknowledging the role of socialization have neglected the role of domination and power relations in the ideological construction of patriarchy. Though these two elements are present in Marxist/socialist analysis, they have failed to incorporate the role of socialization in the ideological formation of patriarchy. In like manner, radicals while emphasizing the construction of masculinity and femininity have failed to look at the role of ideology in such developments. Though, the notion of ideology is inherent in their analysis, they have not specifically looked at the theories of ideology in grasping both patriarchy and family. These developments bring out two important points. First, philosophical and sociological writings treated ideology as a gender-neutral concept. Second, the concept of patriarchy was confined to the early anthropological writings, and the writings of the feminist scholars. Therefore, this conceptual exercise is inevitable to grasp theoretically, the deep-rooted patriarchal structure and its ideological construction. More significantly, it is inevitable to inter link these concepts to grasp patriarchal ideology. In this study, I attempt to extend these concepts beyond their limitations in understanding the ideological construction of patriarchy.

It was also attempted within sociology and social anthropology to inter link patriarchy with family and kinship structure. In sociology and social anthropology, family is considered as the most important social institution, which performs some basic functions that are indispensable for the survival of the society. Not surprisingly, the existing gender role within family was considered as indispensable for the survival of the society. Therefore, any change in these aspects were resisted and considered as abnormal or dysfunctional for the society. More significantly, this theoretical position born out of the conventional theories had an enormous impact on family research.

Considering these developments, one is confronted with a wide variety of problems. Why is it so important to link these concepts to grasp the ideological construction of patriarchy? Can the power relations and the patriarchal oppression be adequately grasped without looking at its ideological bases? Can the ideological bases of patriarchy be studied in isolation from theories of ideology? Why does family occupy central theme in sociological and anthropological writings? Why is it the cases that most writings on family have neglected gender relations in general and gender inequality in particular? Through out this study, I shall attempt to explore these problems.

II

Scope of the study

This study starts with the basic assumption that gender relations within the domain of family and kinship structure can be adequately grasped only by looking at its ideological basis. I intent to use three basic concepts, namely patriarchy, ideology and family, which are indispensable to grasp patriarchal ideology. To uncover any ideological apparatus, it becomes inevitable to grasp the concept of ideology, and its historical development. More significantly, there are different conceptions of ideology and it is indispensable to look at them to grasp this concept. Such analysis will also bring out its role in understanding patriarchy.

The concept of patriarchy is another major analytical tool in this regard. This concept is understood differently by different scholars and therefore, it becomes extremely formidable to introduce any single uncontested conception of patriarchy. I attempt to deal with this differently by looking at different perspectives within feminist writings. The meaning of these two concepts have been changing for the past two centuries. Therefore, it is indispensable to grasp its

meanings and the changing character. More significantly, it has to be grasped by looking at its historical development.

Patriarchal norms and values are imposed on people through various social institutions. Family is one of such important institution, which plays a crucial role in inculcating patriarchal norms and values on its members through socialization. Therefore, it becomes inevitable to look at different writings on family. More significantly, family research in sociology and social anthropology is predominantly based on the conventional perspectives. Their emphasis to the positive functions of family made them neglect the existing gender relations in general and gender inequality in particular, within the domain of family. Therefore, in this research, I shall seek to demonstrate this argument by looking at the conventional theories of family and kinship structure, both in Indian writings and the western writings. I shall also argue that these studies are inadequate to understand the patriarchal ideology of family.

Since the beginning of the second phase of the Indian women's movement, feminist writings on family have been increasing to a considerable extent. It was attempted within feminist writings, to critically look at the conventional theories of family and kinship structure. Unlike the west, Indian feminist analysis revolves around the problem of development, social reforms, its failure in emphasizing the deep-rooted structural gender inequalities, etc. Methodologically, it is significant to note that Indian feminist scholars used distinct perspectives within the domain of feminism on different occasions to uncover the gender relations and it is difficult to categorize their writings on similar lines with the west. Therefore, it is important to look at their writings to uncover the ideological construction of patriarchy, particularly within the domain of family. Another issue, which necessarily will crop up in this study, is the role of cultural and structural variations in the ideological construction of patriarchy. Thus this study attempts to look at patriarchal ideology by inter linking the above mentioned concepts and theoretical paradigms.

III

Basic objectives of the study

In the fore going sections, I have briefly outlined the background for choosing my area of study. I have also looked at the inadequacy of the existing conventional theories in grasping the

ideological construction of patriarchy. Given this back round, this study has the following objectives.

- To study the underlying theoretical assumptions of Ideology,
- To conceptualize patriarchy, by looking at distinct writings of the feminist scholars of the west,
- To uncover the in built ideological structure of patriarchy within the domain of family by looking at it's conventional theories,
- To grasp the concept of patriarchy by looking at the Indian feminist writings,
- To grasp patriarchy by inter linking with different cultural and structural variations.
- To extract important analytical tools and thus conceptualize patriarchal ideology.

Bearing these objectives in mind, an attempt will be made to see to what extent they can be achieved. Through these objectives, I seek to emphasize the significance of this conceptual exercise in theorizing the patriarchal ideology.

IV

Chapterization

As it has been mentioned, this study aims to uncover the ideological construction of patriarchy by looking at three important concepts, namely, ideology, patriarchy and family. These concepts will be analyzed separately, in different chapters. In the final chapter, these concepts will be used as analytical tools to uncover some basic characteristics of the patriarchal ideology. The following is a brief outline of this research.

The concept of ideology is very complex and multiple conceptions have developed since it's first appearance in seventeenth century. This concept can be adequately grasped, only by looking at it's major theoretical contributions and their changing nature according to the historical and the social change. One significant point to be noted is that this concept acquired a new meaning, particularly, with the Marxist contributions. For the first time Marx extracted this concept from mere ideas and extended it's meaning to the existing historical and the material condition of human beings. The twentieth century's Marxists writers further developed this concept. Therefore, theoretical shift within Marxist writings will also be emphasized

I shall briefly look at this concept in sociological writings as well. A brief survey of the existing literature on this concept will show us its significance in understanding the patriarchal ideology. One can make a shift from ideology to the patriarchal ideology, by introducing the concept of patriarchy. Needless to point out that this concept also was distinctively analyzed by both social anthropologists and feminist writers. I shall attempt in Chapter three to conceptualize patriarchy, by looking at the earlier anthropological writings and the heterogeneous character of the feminist writings of the west. I shall also attempt to extract some important elements of distinct perspectives within the feminist writings of the west, which is essential to conceptualize patriarchy.

As I have pointed out, patriarchy was considered as the earliest form of the social system, in which the eldest male ruled the family. More significantly, this speculative assumption has been largely adopted by most of the scholars of the family research. I attempt in Chapter four to uncover the inherent ideological bias within the family research. This finding will be based on the writings on family and the kinship structure, both by the western and the Indian scholars.

A brief survey of the existing literature on family and kinship structure will clearly reveal its inadequacy in grasping the existing gender relations in general and gender inequality in particular. This will necessitate one to look at the feminist writings on family, which use the concept of patriarchy as a major analytical tool. Though, one can not rule out the role of western feminist writings in understanding the deep-rooted patriarchal structure, one has to transfigure his or her analysis to the Indian society by looking at the existing feminist literature.

Unlike the west, Indian feminist writings revolve around the question of development, social reform, their impact on the existing gender relations, etc. These unique characteristics of the Indian feminist writings can be attributed to the existing historical and the social condition of Indian women, which is significantly different from that of the middle class white women of the west.

In contrast to the west, Indian feminist analysis attempts to conceptualize patriarchy by looking at the microstructures, such as the family, household, the kinship structure etc. They also inter link these structural elements with the other structural and the cultural variations such as the

caste, community, state, etc., not only to demonstrate the heterogeneous characteristics of Indian patriarchy, but also to uncover the cross cultural patriarchal structure. More significantly, Indian patriarchal structure can be adequately grasped only by looking at their analysis of these structural elements. Therefore, I shall attempt in Chapter five, to grasp the concept of patriarchy by looking at Indian feminist writings on both micro, and the macro structural elements.

A closer look at these analytical tools will reveal their importance in conceptualizing patriarchal ideology, particularly within the domain of family. In my conclusion, I shall endeavour to extract some important concepts and analytical tools to grasp patriarchal ideology of the family. Finally, I shall try to show to what extent the problems raised here can be resolved through this study.

CHAPTER - 2

THEORIES OF IDEOLOGY

Introduction

In sociology, and social anthropology, there has been considerable literature on gender have appearing for the past two decades. In response to the efforts of feminist scholars, the present academia is gradually incorporating feminist analysis in to the existing methodological tools. However, most studies, even feminist, has not given adequate emphasis to the ideological construction of the gender role, particularly within the domain of family. It is true that the manner in which gender roles are constructed within family, has been extensively analyzed by the feminist scholars, by looking at the concept of socialization, and thus they questioned the treatment of this concept, as a gender neutral one. However, in such analysis, the role of domination, power relations, and the manner in which it is deep-rooted in ideology has been neglected in feminist analysis. This study is an attempt to look at the deep-rooted patriarchal structure, by looking at it's ideological apparatus within the domain of family. In this chapter, I shall specifically concentrate on different conceptions of ideology. In the next chapter, I shall attempt to conceptualize patriarchy.

The concept of ideology emerged in the late 18th century's Europe. For the past three centuries, this concept has undergone greater transformation. In this chapter, an attempt will be made to describe such theoretical developments. This concept first appeared in the works of the 18th century's French philosophers, and till mid 19th century, this concept was confined to the writings of the French and the German idealist philosophers. Therefore, in the first section, I shall briefly describe the origin and development of ideology in the idealist philosophical writings.

However, in the 19th century, Marxist writings detached this concept from mere ideas, and extended it's content to the existing historical and the material conditions. More significantly, 20th century's Marxist writers, attempted to change this concept, according to the changing historical development of that century. Therefore, it will be attempted in the second section to describe the use of this concept, within the domain of Marxism.

The origin and the development of sociology as a discipline further contributed to the theoretical development of this concept. More significantly, it was attempted within the domain of the

dominant structural functional school of thought to give an alternative conception of ideology to Marxism, which is the subject of discussion in the final section. Also within sociological writings, a group of scholars attempted to reincorporate some of Marxist elements and thus they contrasted with the sociology of knowledge. Therefore, I shall also endeavor to uncover the underlying theoretical notions in such writings.

I

The concept of ideology in the early philosophical writings

The concept of ideology first systematically appeared in the writings of the late 18th and the early 19th century's philosophers of Europe. Such writings can be analyzed by looking at the ideologies of France, and the German idealists.

Destutt de Tracy originally introduced the concept of ideology in the late 18th century. According to him, Ideology is a 'science of ideas'. By drawing inspiration from the early liberal philosophers such as John Locke, Tienne Bonnot de Condillac etc, Tracy argued that we could know things only through our sensation. A systematic analysis of these ideas, and sensations could provide a firm basis for all scientific inferences of a more practical kind. He called such scientific project as 'ideology'. "Ideology was to be 'positive, useful, and rigorous exactitude'." (Quoted in Thompson, 1990:30)

He further believed that the science of ideas was the ultimate source of knowledge, education, morality, etc. Such ideology in his view regulates the society. More significantly, Tracy extended science to the field of arts and social sciences. "While de Tracy envisaged the possibility of extending the science to the social and political realm, most of his contributions were with the analysis of intellectual faculties, forms of experience and as logic and grammar." (Thompson, 1990:30)

By analyzing the human faculties of thinking, feeling, memory judgement, etc, He became increasingly concerned with naturalism, in which human being is a complex animal. Therefore, in order to understand it's thinking, feeling, memory, and other experiences, ideology in his view has to be treated as a branch of Zoology'.

In contrast to Tracy, Napoleon argued that Ideology was an abstract speculative doctrine, which was divorced from the realities of political power. The political clout of the early 19th century, changed his attitude towards ideology. The dichotomy of the scientific explanation versus the speculative doctrine, was the result of then existing political clash between the French ideologies:

Moreover, as the term 'ideology' slipped into the political arena and hurled back at the philosophers by an emperor under siege, the sense reference of the term began to change. It ceased to refer only to the science of ideas and began to refer also to the ideas themselves, that is, to a body of ideas, which are alleged to be erroneous and divorced from the practical realities of political life. The sense of the term also changed, for it could no longer lay claim unequivocally to the positive spirit of the Enlightenment" (Thompson 1990:32).

These theoretical shifts, in a sense gave rise to the development of the negative concept of ideology. Napoleon condemned merely all forms of religious thoughts as ideology. Thus ideology was viewed as abstract and illusory ideas. In the context of this, it has been attempted to define this concept. The Encyclopedia Britannica defines this concept as follows.

In the loose sense of the word, ideology may mean any kind of action-oriented theory' or any attempt to approach politics in the light of a system of ideas. Ideology in the stricter sense stays fairly close to Destutt de Tracy's original conception and may be identified by five characteristics: (1) it contains an explanatory theory of a more or less comprehensive kind about human experience and the external world; (2) it sets out a program, in generalized and abstract terms, of social and political organization; (3) it conceives the realization of this program as entailing a struggle; (4) it seeks not merely to persuade but to recruit loyal adherents, demanding what is sometimes called commitment; (5) it addresses a wide public but may tend to confer some special role of leadership on intellectuals. (The new encyclopedia Britannica, 15th edition: 768).

The above definition also signifies the fact that the appearance of the concept of ideology in the philosophical writings of the French ideologies is the first stepped in the development of different schools of thought, such as the positivism, socialism, etc. As one shall see later, the definition of this concept was extended to the existing materiel and the historical condition of . This will be elaborately analyzed in the writings of Karl Marx, and his followers.

The German idealists did not concentrate on the scientific explanation of ideas, but rather their primacy on the spirit or he ideas, made them advocate the view that all the existing empirical realities are the manifestation of ideas. Hegel was a significant idealist of this kind. According to him, any empirical reality assumes the character of the real truth of the idea.

Hegel identified being and thought and this led him to follow the history of the abstract Idea as if it were 'the real', while real human practice was transformed into a mere manifestation, a finite phase, of this Idea. By means of this inversion, human activity 'necessarily appears as the activity and product of something other than itself', and this led Hegel 'to convert the subjective into the objective and the objective into the subjective'. From this perspective, any empirical reality assumes the character of being the real truth of the Idea (Larrain 1983:11).

Thus he even identified the present state as the incarnation of god's will. Following this, Hegel, in his 'Phenomenology of Mind, distinguishes the sphere of appearances from the inner world. According to Hegel, the inner reality of things is the reverse of, their phenomenal forms.

By the law of this inverted world, then, the self-same in the first world is the unlike of itself, and the unlike in the first is equally unlike to itself.. what by the law of the first is sweet, is, in this inner, inverted reality, sour ; what is there black is here white. This inversion affects the natural world as much as the spiritual world. It is not just that what appears sweet is in fact sour, or that oxygen becomes hydrogen, but also that the punishment of a crime is really self-punishment and that what is despised in one world is honourable in the other. In short, looked at on the surface, this inverted world is the antithesis of the first in the sense that it has the latter outside itself, and repels that world from itself as an inverted reality; that the one is the sphere of appearance, while the other is the inherent being; that the one is the world as it is for an other, the other again the world as it is for itself. (quoted in Larrain 1983:122)

Hegel further argues that the inner reality was so different from the existing phenomenon that it could not be known. According to him, the super sensible world reached beyond the other world, and at the same time, it has the other world in itself, and it's opposite in a single unity. Thus Hegel analyzed the distinction between the inner reality and it's phenomena, in an infinite way. According to him, this is the ultimate nature of life, and in this way, all distinctions are dissolved. Therefore, in Hegel's view, the internal identity is the self-consciousness.

Thus Hegel gives primacy to the ideas in his analysis. This analysis shows the fact that though, Hegel does not systematically analyze ideology, his explanation of the existing reality, the distinction between the appearance of the inner reality, and it's phenomena, etc imply his conception of ideology. Most importantly, Marxist criticism of Hegelian philosophy takes this point as the central one in formulating a materialistic explanation of ideology. In the following section, I shall briefly look at the Marxist conception of ideology.

II.1.2: *Marxist conception of ideology*

Marxist analysis had given a new meaning to the concept of ideology. As I have pointed out, Marxist writings for the first time, extracted the concept of ideology from the mere metaphysical ideas, and dogmas, and emphasized the need for the understanding of this concept by tracing it

back to the historical and the material condition of the real human beings. In this section, I shall attempt to look at Marxist contribution, by briefly reviewing the writings of Marx, and the 20th century's Marxist writers.

Marxist writings do not offer a single conception of ideology, but rather, multiple theoretical assumptions can be found within Marx's own writings. In order to grasp Marxist conception of ideology, one has to link it with his intellectual development. For the purpose of analysis, Marxist intellectual development can be categorized in to three stages.

During the first stage, Marx was very much involved in philosophical debates, and criticisms. More significantly, he has drawn his initial theoretical assumptions by critically looking at the philosophical writings of the French ideologies, and the German idealists. Such philosophical criticism can be observed in his *'Economic and the Philosophic Manuscript'*, *'Critic of Hegelian Philosophy of Rights'*, etc. Some 20th century's Marxist writers argue that Marx at this stage did not produce his original writings. However, this stage led to the construction of the next stage, in which he had introduced the materialist conception of history, and thus he systematically analyzed the historical development of the European society. More significantly, the concept of ideology systematically appeared for the first time, in his *German Ideology*. In the third stage, He analyzes the capitalist social relations. In the context of his intellectual development, it should be noted that theoretical paradigms of each of these three stages are important in the understanding of his conception of ideology. Further analysis will explicate this fact.

As it has been pointed out, Marxist conception of ideology was an attempt to link the development of the system of ideas, and thought by linking with it's historical and the materiel condition. Marxist attitude towards the idealists can be very much observed in his Preface to the *German ideology*. Marx and Engels write:

Hitherto men have always formed wrong ideas about themselves, about what they are and what they ought to be. They have arranged their relations according to their ideas of God, of normal man, etc. The products of their brains have got out of their hands. They, the creators, have bowed down before their creations. Let us liberate them from the chimeras, the ideas, dogmas, imaginary beings under the yoke of which they are pining away. Let us revolt against this rule of concepts. Let us teach men, says one, how to exchange these imaginations for thoughts which correspond to the essence of man: says another.

how to take up a critical attitude to them; says the third, how to get them out of their heads; and existing reality will collapse (Marx and Engels, 1932:22).

This passage signifies the fact that Marx and Engels, while formulating a materialist conception of ideology, strongly contest the idealist explanation of the existing reality. They further compare the German idealists, with that of the French ideologies. They argue that the young Hegelians laboured under the illusion that the real battle to be the battle of ideas. Thus the German idealists believed that by critically looking at these ideas, the receiving realities themselves could be changed. However, Marxian and Engels's attempt in German ideology was to change these idealistic notions.

Marx's and Engels's critique of the Hegelians' 'critical thinking' was an attempt to disarm the approach erstwhile associates. Their aim was 'to debunk and discredit the philosophical struggle with the shadows of reality, which appeals to the muddled German nation. The Young Hegelians thought they radical but were in fact quite conservative, mere sheep for wolves. In branding their views as 'the German ideology', Marx Engels sought to discredit them by association with doctrines which been fervently denounced in France several decades earlier. (Thompson, 1993:37&38)

They categorize the writings of the Hegelians, as ideological. It uncovers the fact that much like Napoleon, Marx and Engels in this context use the negative concept of ideology. However, the aim of Marx and Engels went well beyond Napoleon. Unlike the French ideologies, Marxist conception of ideology is closely linked with the social determination of the human consciousness. They attempt to explicate such link, in their German ideology.

Marx and Engels further contests the reduction of metaphysical, political, juridical, moral and other conceptions to religion, which was the central focus in the analysis of the German idealists. In contrast to them, Marx and Engels state that the ideology has to be grasped by looking at the real human history. As they put it:

Gradually every dominant relationship was declared to be a religious relationship and transformed into a cult, a cult of law, a cult of the state, etc. It was through out merely a question of dogmas and belief in dogmas. The world was sanctified to an ever-increasing extent till at last the venerable Saint Max was able to canonise it en bloc and thus dispose of it once for all. The Old Hegelians had understood everything as soon as it was science, does not concern us here: but we will have to examine the history of men, since almost the whole ideology amounts either to a distorted conception of this history or to a complete abstraction from it. Ideology is itself only one of the aspects of this history (Marx and Engels, 1932:29).

Thus in order to uncover the historical development of the ideology, Marx and Engels turn their attention towards the historical development of human beings. According to them, the first premise of the human history is the existence of the real human individuals. Therefore, in their view, the first fact to be established is the physical organization of these individuals, and their relations with nature. They also state that men have begun to distinguish themselves from animals, as soon as they began to produce their means of subsistence. Thus men are indirectly producing their material life. However, this elementary mode of production in their view, should not be treated as mere reproduction of the human individuals, but rather it is a definite form of activity of these individuals. "a definite form of expressing their life, a definite mode of life on their part As individuals express their life, so they are. What they are, therefore, coincides with their production, both with what they produce and" (Marx and Engels, 1932:33). Incomplete quote

Thus Marx and Engels argue that men are dependent on their material condition of their production. Given this premise, they further analyze the historical development of this material condition. According to them, with the increase of population, material production makes its appearance. This factor also further reinforces the intercourse of the individuals, which is again determined by the production. They further elaborate the increase of such intercourse, and attempt to interlink it with the division of labour and the result of which, wealth increases and private property develops. They further elaborately analyze the historical development of the private property. With the transformation of the property from communal to ancient, and from ancient to the feudal, and finally, from feudal to the capitalist, the material condition of is also simultaneously changing. Subsequently, also develop social consciousness. More significantly, this development is closely interwoven with the development of ideology. Marx and Engels further write:

The production of ideas, of conceptions, of consciousness, is at first directly interwoven with the material activity and the material intercourse of men—the language of real life. Conceiving, thinking, the mental intercourse of men at this stage still appear as the direct efflux of their material behaviour. The same applies to mental production as expressed in the language of the politics, laws, morality, religion, metaphysics, etc., of a people. Men are the producers of their conceptions, ideas, etc., that is, real, active men, as they are conditioned by a definite development of their productive forces and of the intercourse corresponding to these, up to its furthest forms. Consciousness [das Bewusstsein] can never be anything else than conscious being [das bewusste Sein], and the being of men is their actual life-process. If in all ideology men and their relations appears upside-down as

in a camera obscura, this phenomenon arises just as much from their historical life-process as the inversion of objects on the retina does from their physical life-process. (Marx and Engels, 1932:36.)

From this passage, one can uncover the fact that Marxist conception of ideology looks at the material condition of in understanding the production of their ideas, which is in direct contrast with the German idealists. More significantly, this analysis has a positive connotation, in contrast to his earlier conception, in which, he categorized the Hegelian system of ideas as 'ideological. Marxist concept, with its present form, also gives centrality to the social consciousness, in contrast to the mental consciousness, which was the major tool in the writings of the German idealists.

It is not consciousness that determines life, but life that determines consciousness. For the first manner of approach the starting-point is consciousness taken as the living individual; for the second manner of approach, which conforms to real life, it is the real living individuals themselves, and consciousness is considered solely as their consciousness. This manner of approach is not devoid of premises. It starts out from the real premises and does not abandon them for a moment. Its premises are men, not in any fantastic isolation and fixity, but in their actual, empirically perceptible process of development under definite conditions (Marx and Engels 1932:38).

Thus Marx looks at the concept of ideology from the point of view of the existing human beings, rather than that of the speculative idealist doctrine. Given these premises, Marx and Engels bring in the role of class in ideological formation. More importantly, such analysis is evident in German Ideology itself. As I have mentioned, Marxian earliest interest was to contest the Hegelian philosophers and their mystical outlook in explaining the social reality. However, in their later analysis, their concept of ideology was used to understand the existing social structure in general, and the social class in particular. Marx and Engels write:

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling material force of society is at the same time its ruling intellectual force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal consequently also controls the means of mental production, so that the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are on the whole subject to it. The ruling ideas are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relations, the dominant material relations grasped as ideas; hence of the relations which make one class the ruling one therefore, the ideas of its dominance. The individuals composing the ruling class possess among other things consciousness, and therefore think. Insofar, therefore, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an historical epoch, it is semi-evident that they do this in its whole range, hence among other things rule also as thinkers, as producers of ideas, and regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age: thus their ideas are the ruling ideas of the epoch. (Marx and Engels, 1932:59.)

This passage brings out a theoretical shift in understanding the Marxist conception of ideology. From this passage, one can uncover three important theoretical shifts in the analysis of the Marxist conception of ideology. Firstly, this passage signifies the fact that Marx and Engels give centrality to the ideological apparatus in understanding the existing social, political and the economic structure. Secondly, they, argue that the ideas are the mental production of the ruling class. Thirdly, this passage also implies that the intellectual force is also under the control of the ruling class, and thus the rulers suppress the mental production of the subordinate class. Interestingly enough, feminist scholars in understanding the deep-rooted patriarchal structure, borrow heavily from the Marxist conception of the 'ruling class ideology'. However, the manner in which they extract this concept from the economic structure, will be elaborated in the third Chapter. However, suffice it to say at this juncture, that Marxist analysis has an enormous impact on the feminist writers, in explaining the ideological domination of the ruling class.

Marx further states that a period of social revolution breaks out when ever-expanding forces of production come into conflict with the relations of production. According to him, such transformations can be uncovered by looking at both the material transformation of the economic conditions of production and the legal, political, religious, aesthetic or philosophic, or in his own words, 'ideological forms. Thus he argues that men become conscious of the conflict between the two and fight it out. According to him, such consciousness should be explained from the contradiction of material life. Thus in Marxist analysis, change in the mental production is strongly rooted in the material condition of .

In German Ideology, Marx had analyzed the impact of the ruling class, in ideological formation, in general terms. However, in his later writings, he further developed his conception of ideology, by looking at the specific form of capitalist social relations. With the writing of the Grundrisse and Capital. Marx applied his theoretical formulation to look at the specific form of the capitalist social relations. Some Marxist writers have shown that the influence of Hegelian logic is manifest in these writings, in terms of the distinction between two levels of reality: the level of appearances or phenomenal forms, and the level of real relations or the essence. By analyzing the structure of the capitalist economy, Marx arrived at a conclusion that it's material practice is not simple, and not revealed, in it's original form. Therefore, to understand such structure in totality, Marx distinguished two spheres of capitalist material practice, namely 'the sphere of circulation,



or exchange, and the sphere of production. Thus he once again reinforces the view that ideas must be explained from its practice.

Marx had already arrived at the conclusion that if ideas distorted or 'inverted' reality it was because reality itself was upside down. This had been conceived as a direct relationship. By this later stage Marx propounded the idea that this relationship is mediated and complexified by a level of appearances constitutive of reality itself. Thus the basic capitalist 'inversion', namely the fact that past labour dominates living labour, 'necessarily produces certain correspondingly inverted conceptions, a transposed consciousness which is further developed by the metamorphoses and modifications of the actual circulation process (Larrain1983: 32.).

Thus in Marxian view, ideology conceals the contradictory essential relations, not only by inverting in consciousness an already inverted reality, but also because it is based on a sphere of reality. This can further be explained by looking at the circulation of commodity in the capitalist society. "The circulation of commodities appears as that which is immediately present on the surface of bourgeois society from which the apparent equality of exchange relations is visible for all to see. At the level of the market relations it appears that 'the cost price of a commodity constitutes its actual value, and that surplus-value springs from selling the product above its value' (Marx, 1932:73). Thus Marx analyzes the manner in which ideology operates, within the domain of the capitalist society.

As it has been mentioned, some scholars trace back the scientific development of the Marxist conception of ideology to his writings of 'Capital'. However, this analysis uncovers the fact that the analytical tools developed by Marx, in his German ideology is further systematically analyzed by Marx, in his later writings. Through this analysis, I attempted to briefly review the concept of ideology within the writings of Marx. As it has been pointed out, the 20th century's Marxist writers attempted to modify some of his theoretical assumptions, depending up on the historical development. I shall briefly look at their theories below.

II.1.3. Ideology and the 20th century's Marxist writers

Soon after Marx's death the concept of ideology began to acquire new meanings. However, it does not imply that the concept has lost its original connotation. Rather the 20th century's scholars attempted to look at it critically, according to the change in the social, cultural and the political settings. However, the first generation of Marxist writers, did not make much theoretical shift from Marx. For example, the late 19th and the early 20th century Marxist writers analyzed

the economic analysis of the new imperialist phase of capitalism and worked out a Marxist political theory. They did not concentrate much on the concept of ideology. Therefore, I intend to briefly look at some Marxist writers, who give centrality to the concept of ideology.

Antonio Gramsci was the most significant Marxist writer, who attempted to define ideology, despite the fact that German ideology was not published in his period. Through his writings, he constantly contests the negative concept of ideology. He writes:

It seems to me that there is a potential element of error in assessing the value of ideologies, due to the fact (by no means casual) that the name ideology is given both to the necessary superstructure of a particular structure and to the arbitrary elucubrations of particular individuals. The bad sense of the word has become widespread, with the effect that the theoretical analysis of the concept of ideology has been modified and denatured (Gramsci 1996:376).

Thus he rejects the primacy given to the particular individuals in understanding the conception of ideology, which is also a major concern for Marx. More significantly, this passage brings out his attitude towards the negative concept of ideology. More significantly, Marx and Engels, while criticizing the Hegelian philosophical writings as ideological, they implied a negative concept of ideology, which is closely linked with philosophy. However, Gramsci gives a new meaning to the philosophical element of . As he puts it,

It is essential to destroy the widespread prejudice that philosophy is a strange and difficult thing just because it is the specific intellectual activity of a particular category of specialists or of professional and systematic philosophers. It must first be shown that all men are "philosophers", by defining the limits and characteristics of the "spontaneous philosophy" which is proper to everybody. This philosophy is contained in: L language itself, which is a totality of determined notions and concepts and not just of words grammatically devoid of content; "common sense" and "good sense"; 13. Popular religion and, therefore, also in the entire system of beliefs, superstitions, opinions, ways of seeing things and of acting, which are collectively bundled together under the name of "folklore" (Gramsci, 1996:323).

In the context of this passage, it should be noted that most of the above mentioned elements are ideological in Marxist explanation. From this passage, one can also observe a gradual shift towards the positive concept of ideology. He further states that 'common sense is the starting point for philosophy. However, Gramsci distinguishes philosophy from that of the common sense, so that the convergent points and the points of departure between the two can be demarcated. He writes: "In philosophy the features of individual elaboration of thought are the most salient: in common sense on the other hand it is the diffuse, uncoordinated features of a

generic form of thought common to a particular period and a particular popular environment (Gramsci, 1996:330).

He further states that the relationship between philosophy and common sense is assured by politics. This analysis uncovers the fact that by tracing the philosophical system to the human common sense, Gramsci like Marx, gives primacy to the material condition of . However, it should be noted that the material condition, as it has always been interpreted, does not only imply the economic condition, but rather it includes the social environment of .

According to Gramsci, the philosophy of praxis stands in opposition to ideology. Therefore, in his view, ideology must be analyzed historically, in the terms of the philosophy of praxis, as a super structure. He further combats some of the existing assumptions, of this concept. First, it is believed that ideology is distinct from structure, and therefore, it is not the ideology which changes the structure, but vice-versa.

Another general assumption is that a given political solution is ideological, and therefore, it can not change the structure, even it advocates for such change. Thirdly, it is also asserted that ideology is a pure appearance. In order to eliminate such pit falls, he pleads for the historical understanding of ideology. As he puts it:

One must therefore distinguish between historically organic ideologies, those, that is, which are necessary to a given structure, and ideologies that are arbitrary, rationalistic, or "willed". To the extent that ideologies are historically necessary they have a validity which is "psychological"; they "organize" human masses, and create the terrain on which men move, acquire consciousness of their position, struggle, etc. To the extent that they are arbitrary they only create individual "movements", polemics and so on (though even these are not completely useless, since they function like an error which by contrasting with truth, demonstrates it) (Gramsci 1996:376-377).

From this passage, one can extract two important conclusions. First, the distinction between the 'historically organic ideology, and the 'arbitrary one, clearly brings out the differences between the collective ideology and the specific ideological positions, which are polemical. As we shall see in the next section, Karl Mannheim adopts this distinction in his conception of ideology.

Much like the earlier Marxist writers, Althusser presented the negative concept of ideology. He distinguishes between the theory of ideology in general and the theory of particular ideologies. According to him, the object of the theory of ideology in general is 'an omni-historical reality, by which he means that 'structure and functioning are immutable, present in the same form throughout the history. He further states that ideology function to secure cohesion among human beings, and between them and their conditions of existence. It allows the reproduction and survival of society. In Althusser's perspective, ideology exists to unite the society. Thus he attempts to incorporate functionalist perspective in explaining the existence of ideological apparatus.

The theory of particular ideology focuses on the social historical formation, where, the existence of specific class division determines the general functioning of ideology, and thus the dominant position of the ruling class is maintained by making the exploitative class to accept their conditions. Like Marx, Althusser also brings in the role of imagination in explicating the ideological apparatus. He notes that ideology secures the domination of the ruling class, because, it is 'a representation of the imaginary relationship of individuals to their real conditions of existence'. This makes them to subordinate themselves to the ruling class. Thus much like Marx, Althusser uses the negative concept of ideology. This fact is further reinforced by his argument that Science is radically different from, and indeed opposed to ideology. He also asserts that the ideology can be used to protest against the dominant class. While accepting Marxian emphasis to the role of social structure on the ideological apparatus, Althusser makes an epistemological brake with Marx, by introducing the function of ideology.

Habermas critically looks at some of the traditional Marxist terminologies to explain the concept of ideology. He argues that today the problem of language has replaced the traditional problem of consciousness. His theoretical assumptions are significant in a period, where the information technology is rapidly developing. Habermas further states that ideology in the contemporary society is no longer based on the capitalist relations, market, and the principle of equal exchange, but rather, it has become a form of technocratic consciousness, which has the effect of depoliticising the masses. Technocratic consciousness, in his view, narrows down the differences between the communicative interaction and purposive-rational action by justifying

decisions as ' they were 'technical' and not political'. However, he notes that science is not entirely innocent, but rather it has become the source of a new ideological consciousness. However, one can not rule out the role of class domination within the modern capitalist society. Habbermas himself acknowledges this fact, when he writes:

Today's dominant, rather glassy background ideology, which makes a fetish of science, is more irresistible and farther-reaching than ideologies of the old type. For with the veiling of practical problems it not only justifies a particular class's interest in domination and represses another class's partial need for emancipation, but affects the human race's emancipatory interest as such. (Quoted in Lorain, 1993:105).

Thus Habbermas does not completely rule of the role of social structure in the formation of ideology. According to Habbermas, in every exchange of speech acts there implicitly exists the idea of a genuine consensus, which makes reference to an 'ideal speech situation'. Such consensus can arise only through appropriately interpreted generalisable interests. He further notes that in taking up a practical discourse, one expects an ideal speech situation, and a consensus is reached through a common interest. Habbermas calls such consensus as 'rational consensus'. Thus in his view, from this, one can judge the systematically distorted communication. In the fore going analysis, I have briefly looked at the Marxist conception of ideology, and it's theoretical shifts from Marx to Habbermas. As it has been mentioned, the concept of ideology also has been used within the domain of sociology

influence sociological research, and teaching. Therefore, it is fruitful to begin this section by looking at the use of this concept in the structural functional perspective.

II.II.1 The structural functional conception of ideology

The early sociological writings did not specifically analyze the concept of ideology and its role on different social systems. However, their attitude towards this concept can be grasped by looking at their writings. Sociology emerged as a conservative response to the development of the industrial revolution, and its subsequent changes in the European society. Under these circumstances, sociological writings of that century were concerned with the impact of these developments, and their impact on various social institutions.

August Comte, the founding father of sociology, distinguished three stages of society, namely the theological stage, the metaphysical stage, and the positive stage. Thus he argues that the theological stage, based on religious dogmas, ideas, beliefs, etc. is later replaced by the metaphysical stage, which is based on speculative doctrines, and finally the positive stage, in which scientific thinking is predominant. This theoretical assumption implies that Comte considers the ideas as the elementary stage, which has to be replaced by more developed positive stage. However, his concern with the order of each epoch, and social institutions, that maintain social stability. Comte in his 'positive philosophy' argues that as the individual's is specialised, so individual interest is increased to the solidarity of the group. Thus Comte looks at the manner in which both individual and groups are united.

More significantly, Durkheim developed this further and thus he systematically analyzed the division of labour and its impact on collectivity. However, unlike Comte, Durkheim states that the principal basis for social group, in an industrial society is the necessity for co-operation, which further reinforces division of labour. However, Durkheim does not consider the morality, which binds the group as static. As Gouldner puts it: While Durkheim explained that moral values are important for social stability, 'modern no longer requires the same degree of moral consensus, this consensus entails the same items of belief, necessary for periods. (quoted in Abercrombie, 1984:38).

Further more, one can uncover his attitude towards the concept of ideology, by looking at his theory of 'social fact'. According to Durkheim, a social fact exists outside individuals, and it can

not be reducible to its constituent parts. Further more social fact can be found in collectivity, rather than individuals. More significantly, social fact also constrains on individuals, and thus ensuring their subordination to the collectivity. Durkheim distinguishes “social fact” from psychological fact in terms of consciousness. For Durkheim “social fact” exists in the group consciousness whereas psychological fact exists in individual consciousness. Therefore, his concern was to study social fact objectively.

In the previous section, I analyzed the role of social structure in the ideological formation. If one applies Durkheim's concept of social fact, then the general ideology of Althusser, or the group ideology of Gramsci can be considered as social fact. However, his preoccupation with order and stability, has made him undermine the ideological domination of a particular class by another.

Talcott Parsons further developed Durkheim's functional paradigm within the domain of sociology. According to him, family is an important institution, through which the norms and values of the society are internalized through socialization. His theoretical assumptions on family will be discussed in the next chapter. However, suffice it to say at this juncture that in Parsonian analysis, family even in the modern society continues to play two major roles, namely the socialization of the child, and the stabilization of the human personality. The impact of his theory on liberal feminist writings will be discussed in Chapter III.

In the fore going analysis, I have briefly elucidated the concept of ideology within the domain of the structural functional approach. Such functionalist theoretical paradigms were considered as an alternative to the Marxist conception of ideology. However, Structural functionalists did not systematically analyze this concept. More over, one has to seek their explanation in their general theoretical assumptions. However, Some scholars to look at this concept by comparing it with the sociology of knowledge. Karl Mannheim is one of such thinkers, who systematically analyzed this concept, within the domain of the sociological writings. I shall analyze bellow the main features of his conception of ideology.

II.II.2 Ideology and the sociology of knowledge

By looking at the structural functional school of thought, I sought to demonstrate that their preoccupation with the order and stability of the society made them to look at only the positive functions of the existing norms and values of the society. Never the less, structural functional

theory was considered as an alternative to the Marxist concept of ideology. Also within the sociological writings, some scholars attempted to look at ideology by bring in the sociology of knowledge. Karl Mannheim was one of such scholars who systematically analyzed this concept. To certain extent, Mannheim reintroduces some Marxist theoretical assumptions in his conception of ideology. However, Mannheim makes a significant departure from the dominant theories of ideology. Mannheim's conception of thought and ideology are closely linked. According to him, thought is not transcendental. However, it has to be traced back to the social structure. Since thought has a bearing on ideology, the later has to be grasped looking at the specific social context. Mannheim writes:

The significance of social knowledge grows proportionately with the increasing necessity of regulatory intervention in the social process. This so called pre-scientific in exact mode of thought, however, (which paradoxically, the logicians and philosophers also use when they have to make practical decisions), is not to be understood solely by the use of logical analysis. It constitutes a complex, which can not be readily detached, either from the psychological roots of emotional and vital impulses which underlie it, or from the situation in which it arises and which it seeks to solve (Mannheim 1936:1-2).

Though he acknowledges the relevance of both psychological and social factor of in understanding one's ideological apparatus, he prioritizes the later than the former. As he puts it "that the approach of sociology of knowledge, intentionally does not start with the single individual and his thinking in order then to proceed directly in the manner of the philosopher to the abstract heights of 'thoughts as such" (Mannheim, 1936:3).

Given this methodological background, Mannheim shifts his attention towards the concept of ideology. He looks at this concept from two different angles, namely, from the 'particular, and from total. He writes:

The term particular conception of ideology is implied, 'when the term denotes that we are skeptical of the ideas and representations, advanced by our opponent. They are regarded as more or less conscious disguises of the real nature of a situation, the true recognition of which would not be in accord with his interests. These distortions range all the way from conscious less to half conscious and unwitting disguises; from calculated attempt to degree others to self deception (Mannheim, 1936:49).

In contrast to this, the total conception of ideology denotes: "the ideology of an age or of a concrete historico- social group, for e.g, of a class, when we are concerned with the characteristics and composition of the total structure of the mind of this group or the epoch (Mannheim, 1936:49&50). He further compares and contrasts both the conceptions of ideology.

According to Mannheim, both the conceptions of ideology fall back on subject, whether individual, or group, and it can be analyzed by looking at its social condition. However, both have some dissimilarities as well.

1. The particular conception of ideology texts to analyze a part of an individual's ideas, or its context. On the other hand, the total conception of ideology calls in to question, the total conceptual apparatus, and thus attempts to understand these concepts as a growth of collective life of which one part takes.
2. The particular conception makes the analysis, at purely psychological level. Where as, the total conception of ideology treats individual's ideas as a response to the group to which the actor belongs.
3. The particular form of ideology may emerge in response to the individual's conscious efforts to conceive, or distraught for a specific reason. The total on the other hand, gives a specific emphasis to the structural differences in minds, operating in different in different social settings. In such situations, the term 'group ideology' accure more frequently.

Mannheim considers the total conception of ideology as sociological. It becomes more evident, when he writes:

The aim of analysis at this level is the reconstruction of a systematic theoretical basis underlying the single judgements of the individual, analyses of ideologies in the particular sense making the content of individual thought largely dependent on the interests of the subject, can never achieve this basic reconstruction of the whole outlook of a social group. They can at best reveal the collective psychological aspects of ideology, or lead to some development of mass psychology, dealing either with the different behavior of the individual in the crowd or with the results of the mass integration of the psychic experience of many individuals (Mannheim 1936:52-53).

He further distinguishes the non-evaluative conception of ideology from the evaluative one. In non-evaluative conception, one attempts to make non-evaluative investigation, and thus one is expected to detach himself, or herself from the ideological apparatus. On the other hand, in evaluative conception, one has to incorporate his or her own subjective interpretation. Given this theoretical background, he shifts his attention towards the sociology of knowledge.

According to Mannheim, ideology's aim is to uncover conscious disceptions, and disguises of a human interest groups, where as, the sociology of knowledge makes deliberate efforts to grasp the manner in which given objects present themselves to the subjects according to differences in

social settings. Thus it also argues that mental structures are differently formed in different social and historical settings. He further argues that in the earlier conceptions of ideology, the distinction between ideology and the sociology of knowledge is not clearly demarcated, but in the modern theoretical formulations, a clear distinction is drawn between the two. As he puts it "it is advisable to separate more sharply these two types, both of which were formerly described as ideologies. Hence we speak of particular conception of ideology" (Manheim 1936: 231).

He further argues that like the total conception of ideology, sociology of knowledge also analyzes the total mental structure of an individual, or a group. Thus he tries to differentiate ideology from that of the sociology of knowledge. More significantly, this distinction is very much reflected within the domain of sociology. Even today, many of the sensitive areas are neglected under the ground that they are ideological. However, with Mannheim's contribution, it has become increasingly difficult for sociological researches and teachings to ignore the ideological apparatus.

I have briefly described different conceptions of ideology. We have looked at both positive and the negative conceptions of ideology. By looking at the theoretical development of this concept, I seek to demonstrate it is indispensable to grasp ideology, conceptually to look at any kind of structural domination, which is deep-rooted in ideology. More significantly, patriarchal structure can be adequately grasped, only by looking at its ideological construction. In the following chapter, I intend to analyze the concept of patriarchy, which is another major analytical tool in the understanding of the patriarchal ideology.

CHAPTER - 3

CONCEPTUALIZING PATRIARCHY

Introduction

Gender had been a largely neglected area in social research for long years but the feminist intervention has gradually led to an interrogation of existing concepts and theories. Though, gender perspective is still marginalised in social research, increasingly it has become difficult for mainstream discipline to ignore feminist critiques. A closer look at the Indian literature on family will explicate this argument. I shall also try to trace it back to the existing male bias, within social research. However, before looking at this, it becomes inevitable to grasp the concept of patriarchy, which is a major analytical tool in feminist writings.

Women's role in family has extensively been quoted in various ethnographic studies. However, These studies in most case neglected gender relations, in general, and gender inequality in particular. This argument will be further explicated in the next chapter. Such factors necessitate us to conceptualize patriarchy and the manner in which it constructs the gender role within the domain of family. More significantly, women's subordination within the domain of family can be adequately grasped, only by looking at the deep-rooted patriarchal structure. Therefore, it becomes inevitable to grasp patriarchy both at conceptual and empirical level.

In simple terms, patriarchy is a social system in which the father is the head of the family and descent is traced through the paternal line. It is "a hypothetical social system based on the absolute authority of the father or an elderly male over the family group." (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Volume 9, 15th Edition). This definition signifies the fact that the power in the patriarchal society is rested in the hands of the eldest male member of the family. Sometimes patriarchy also includes in its meaning "patriapotestas, the system in which power to govern members of even the extended family rested in the hands of a father and his kin." (The New Encyclopaedia Britannica: Volume 9, 15th edition).

However, in various ethnographic and the feminist writings, this narrower definition has been extended to the wider social structure. Therefore, in this chapter, let us try to grasp this concept by looking at both anthropological and the feminist writings. In the 19th century, this concept was analyzed in speculative anthropological writings. However, in the 20th century, through various ethnographic studies, many of the 19th century's claims have been contested. Through

our analysis, one can also uncover the paradigm shift from the dichotomy of the matriarchy verses the patriarchy, to the matrilineality verses the patrilineality. Therefore, in part one, let us briefly look at the concept of patriarchy in anthropological tradition. In part two, One shall attempt to explore this concept by looking at the feminist writings of the west. More significantly, these writings are themselves diverged, and therefore, it is extremely formidable to propose any single theoretical model. Hence, One shall attempt to look at the divergent perspectives in feminist writings. In the final section, One shall try to extract some important features in each theoretical model. Such analysis is indispensable to incorporate some important features in conceptualizing patriarchy.

I

The Concept of Patriarchy in the Anthropological Tradition

The 19th century's anthropological tradition speculatively analyzed the patriarchal society. By drawing inspiration from the Darwinian evolutionary theory, Henry Maine and L.H. Morgan, envision patriarchy as having developed through evolutionary stages. According to Henry Maine, patriarchy existed from earliest stage of the human society. I shall seek to argue that Indian family researches were largely influenced by this theoretical development. In contrast to Maine, J.J. Bachofens and L.H. Morgan argue that matriarchy was the earliest evolutionary stage in the development of the human society. According to Bachofens, human society in the promiscuous stage did not have any social organization. In such societies, lived in the state of sexual promiscuity. He called such promiscuous stage as 'hetaerism'. In such societies, the lineage was reckoned only through the female line. He further argues that (gynecocracy) that is the domination of the eldest female member of the society is more prevalent in the primitive society. The evolution from hetaerism to monogamy is the consequence of the change in the religious ideas.

While accepting his notion of change from hetaerism to monogamy, Engels extracts his theory from religious dogmas, and ideas. And thus argues that Bachofens mystical out look had averted him from describing the existence of polygamy, and polyandrous forms of marriages. Engels begins his analysis by looking at the communistic household, which in his view, was definite in area and women's spear preponderated over men. In a communistic household, the lineage is

reckoned only through female line. Engels calls this as 'mother right', which is significantly different from that of the legal rights.

The communistic household implies the supremacy of women in the house, just as the exclusive recognition of a natural mother, because of the impossibility of determining the natural father with certainty, signifies high esteem for the women, that is, for the mothers. (Engels 1948: 49)

Through this formulation, Engels rejects the existing absurd notion that women have always been slaves of men. In the communistic household, the women taking husbands from other clans preponderated, and thus he contests the existence of the patriarchal family in the primitive society. He further writes:

Usually the female portion ruled the house; the stores were in common; but woe to the luckless husband or lover who was too shiftless to do his share of the providing. No matter how many children or whatever goods he might have in the house, he might at any time be ordered to pack up his blanket and budge; and after such orders it would not be healthful for him to attempt to disobey. The house would be too hot for him; and he had to retreat to his own clan [gens]; or, as was often done, go and start a new matrimonial alliance in some other. The women were the great power among the clans [gentes], as everywhere else. They did not hesitate, when occasion required, to knock off the horns, as it was technically called, from the head of the chief and send him back to the ranks of the warriors. (Engels 1948: 49)

Following Morgan, Engels divides the historical development of the family into four major types, namely:

- Consanguinal family,
- Punaluan family,
- Pairing family,
- Monogamous family.

In the consanguine family, group marriage is the most prevalent form. In this stage, marriage groups are arranged on general lines, and in such systems, all the grandfathers and grandmothers within the limits of the family are the mutual wives and mutual husbands. The same is transmitted to their younger generations. Thus in such families, only the ancestors, and descents are excluded from marrying with one another. He also acknowledges the absence of incest taboo in such societies. Engels argues that the existence of this family is the necessary preliminary

stage in the historical analysis of the family. Engels further articulates that with the development of the Punaluan family, the incest taboo was introduced and thus marriage was institutionalized. According to Engels, the development of this stage also accompanied by the prohibition of the cross-cousin marriage. It is visible in the form of some existing practice among some tribes of abducting women for marriage. With the establishment of the pairing family, the society also develops the idea of favorite wife, and favorite husband. At this stage, even the group marriage starts dying out. However, occasional adultery and polygamous marriage are prevalent, but only for men, not for women. Adultery on the part of women in the pairing family is strictly punished. Thus the domination and the subjugation of women appear at this stage in its elementary form. On the other hand, these developments in this stage do not result in the complete domination and subjugation of women. For example, though, the marriage is institutionalized, it can be dissolved on the interest of either party. At this juncture, one needs to ask why did the control over female's sexuality begin at this stage? Engels locates the cause for this question to the scarcity of women.

He further states that the communistic household persists till the pairing family. However, the undermining of the communistic household on the part of women paved a way for the emergence of the monogamous family. He further analyzes the role of private property in subordinating women. According to him, the wealth of the primitive society, because of its simplistic character did not necessitate the control over the female sexuality. However, the development of the pairing family was accompanied with the undermining of the communistic household, the increase of population, and the transfer of power from women to the men. It was further reinforced by the emergence of the private property.

With the increase of wealth in the family, the status occupied by its members also had undergone greater transformation. These developments also resulted in the change of women's status, and thus mother rights were substituted by father right. With the establishment of the monogamous family, women have virtually become the slaves of men. The monogamous family had strictly imposed marital norms and values on women. Thus Engels traces back the origin of patriarchy to the emergence of the monogamous marriage, and the origin and the development of

the private property. It would be interesting to see how Engels describes the institutionalization of the marriage in the patriarchal family. He writes:

The monogamous family differs from pairing marriage in the far greater rigidity of the marriage tie, which can now no longer be dissolved at the pleasure of either party. Now, as a rule, only the man can dissolve it and cast off his wife. The right of conjugal infidelity remains his even now, sanctioned, at least, by custom (the Code Napoleon expressly concedes this right to the husband as long as he does not bring his concubine into the conjugal home), and is exercised more and more with the growing development of society. Should the wife recall the ancient sexual practice and desire to revive it, she is punished more severely than ever before. (Engels 1948:40)

Thus unlike Henri Maine, Engels traces back the patriarchal society to the establishment of the monogamous family. He further describes the substitution of the mother rights by the father rights as follows. The overthrow of mother right was the world-historic defeat of the female sex. The man seized the reins in the house also, the woman was degraded, enthralled, the slave of the man's lust, a mere instrument for breeding children. This lowered position of women, especially manifest among the Greeks of the Heroic and still more of the classical age, has become gradually embellished and dissembled and, in part, clothed in a milder form, but by no means abolished. (Engels 1948:57)

At this juncture, Engels correlates the establishment of the monogamous family with the emergence of the private property. He also refutes the view that monogamous marriages are the fruits of the individual's sex love. He writes:

It was the first form of the family based not on natural but on economic conditions, namely, on the victory of private property over original, naturally developed common ownership. The rule of the man in the family, the procreation of children who could only be his, destined to be the heirs of his wealth--these alone were frankly avowed by the Greeks as the exclusive aims of monogamy. (Engels 1948:65)

In the context of this passage, one can uncover the fact that control on female sexuality is greater among the wealthier class or caste, than that of the lower sections of the society. He further equates gender inequality in the monogamous family with that of the class antagonism. As he puts it:

In an old unpublished manuscript, the work of Marx and myself in 1846, I find the following: "The first division of labour is that between man and woman for child breeding." And today I can add: The first class antagonism which appears in history coincides with the development of the antagonism between man and woman in monogamous marriage, and the first class oppression with that of the female sex by the male. (Engels 1948:65-66)

The 20th century's ethnographers have questioned Engels's theoretical assumptions. Feminist's criticism of the Engels's understanding of the historical development of the patriarchal family, revolves around some conceptual tools used by him to describe its historical development. They questioned his concept of the sexual division of labour within the household, prioritizing class over gender relations and so on.

Rosalind Coward, argued that Engels's theoretical notions assumes the men's productive tasks, and women's domestic works as the natural division of labour. Therefore, in her view, such essentializing notions undermine the social construction of gender relations. Lerner questions his conception of the sexual division of labour. She writes,

Engels's description of the primitive sexual division of labour reads curiously like a description of European peasant households read back into pre-history. The ethnographic information on which he based these generalizations has been disproved. In most primitive societies of the past and in all hunting/gathering societies still existent today, women provide on the average 60 percent or more of the food. To do so they often range far from home, carrying their babies and children with them. Further the assumption that there is one formula and one pattern for the sexual division of labour is erroneous. The particular work done by men and women has differed greatly in different cultures, largely depending on the ecological situation in which the people find themselves. (Lerner 1986: 21-22)

Despite these criticisms, feminist scholars have largely adopted Engels's theoretical assumptions. This will be further elaborated in the next section. In the later anthropological writings, many of these speculative claims have been tested through field works. The paradigm shifts in such studies will be discussed below.

The 20th century's anthropologists through their ethnographic studies had attempted to test many of the 19th century's speculative and the hypothetical claims. (Patricia Oberoi, 1995) argues that in the 20th century's anthropological writings there is a paradigm shift in analyzing this concept. Despite its failure to incorporate gender perspective in to the subject, anthropological debates

contributed to the development of this concept, and thus patriarchy was considered as a social organization, in which man is in a dominant position, and women is in the subordinate one. This concept was used in a more conventional sense in the structural functional analysis. It is significant to note that in the structural functional analysis, both patriarchy and matriarchy are posited against each other, and thus they are treated as polar opposite structures. This is most evident in Radcliffe-Brown's definition. According to Brown,

A society may be called patriarchal when descent is matrilineal (i.e., the children belong to the group of the father), marriage is patrilocal (i.e., the wife removes to the local group of the husband), inheritance (of property) and succession (to rank) are in the male line, and the family is patri-potestal (i.e., the authority over the members of the family is in the hands of the father or his relatives). On the other hand, a society can be called matriarchal when descent, inheritance and succession are in the female line, marriage is matrilocal (the husband removing to the home of his wife), and when authority over children is wielded by the mother's relatives. (Quoted in Uberoi 1995: 200-01)

Radcliffe-Brown further argues that the existence of complete female authority has not been reported in all the well-known societies. Thus he articulates that the patriarchy, based on the male authority must have been existed universally. In the middle of the 20th century, one can uncover a paradigm shift in anthropological writings, from the dichotomy of the patriarchy verses the matriarchy, to the patrilineality verses the matrilineality. One has already analyzed in brief, the heterogeneous characteristics of the Indian kinship structure. More significantly, the studies in kinship and family have always been influenced by the dominant patrilineal bias. A closer look at the ideological dimension of the kinship structure also can expose the deep-rooted patriarchal structure, especially within the domain of the family.

In the fifth chapter, I shall look at Indian writings on family and seek to demonstrate that these studies in most cases reflected the patrilineal ideology, and thus a specific emphasis was given to the solidarity of the patrilineally oriented joint family. In the late 20th century, feminist anthropologists focused their attention towards the ideological dimension of the kinship structure. The comparison of both patrilineal and matrilineal ideology can show us it's role in justifying the existing sexual asymmetry and the unequal distribution of the authority within the domain of family.

Women's status in both matrilineal and the patrilineal kinship group can be traced back to its ideological apparatus. More significantly, such analysis will show as their social and the economic status. In the patrilineal descent group, both boys and girls take their social identity from the father. However, identity of women is distinguished from that of men. In such societies, men's identity is a permanent member of these units, a daughter is a transient or impermanent member. "A son has the potential to continue the patrilineal; but a daughter enters the family for only a short sojourn." (Dube 1997: 34)

Therefore, in patrilineal communities, marriage of a woman implies the loss of her membership in her parental home. The religious texts and Puranas also reinforce this notion. In contrast to this, the ideology of the matrilineal and the bilateral societies considers the children of both sex as belonging to both the parents. However, the biological role of the mother is given the centrality in these societies. "Children of neither sex are made to feel that they are temporary or peripheral members of the group of birth. Ego is at the centre of the bilateral kinship system. In post-marital residential arrangements there is some choice and flexibility." (Dube 1997: 35)

It would be great interest to learn that these underlying ideological notions are reflected in the material condition of women. This can be observed in terms of the allocation of the authority, decision making power, and other resources within the domain of the household and the wider kin group. In patrilineal descent group, both the line of authority and the line of descent are persistently kept in the hands of men. However, in the matrilineal societies, the line of descent and group placement, runs through women. Schneider (1961)

In patrilineal descent group, both men and women are subordinated to the authority of men. According to Schneider, such male authority is also reflected in the allocation of the sex roles, and the marital norms. However, in the matrilineal descent group, the centrality is given to the women's role as nurturers of children. As Schneider puts it,

Matrilineal descent groups depend for their continuity and operation on retaining control over both male and female members. Women are required to care for the new members of the descent group and to give these new members their membership in the group (since a child belongs to the group of its mother). The control which the matrilineal descent group exercises over its female members must ensure that the children will achieve primary orientation to the matrilineal descent group and develop primary ties of loyalty to it. (Schneider 1961: 8)

Another crucial difference lies in the control of the female sexuality. In patrilineal society, a woman's sexual and the reproductive activities are the primary concern of husband. However, in the matrilineal descent group, a woman bears children to strengthen her own and her brother's descent group. Therefore, her brother has a specific interest in her sexual and the reproductive abilities, despite the fact that she is the tabooed sexual object for him. These differences clearly uncover the underlying ideological differences between the patrilineal and the matrilineal descent groups. It also shows us the relative gender equality in the matrilineal communities. Does it mean that these groups are devoid of the patriarchal authority? Some anthropologists have seriously taken up this question.

The authority of the patriarchs in the matrilineal descent groups is prevalent in the form of the authority of the 'mother's brother. Even among *Garos*, which is predominantly based on the shifting cultivation, the common ownership of the land is vested in the hands of the eldest male member of the household. "Although none individually owned land, men (as husbands and matrilineal kinsmen) enjoyed considerable rights in land management and control, and jural authority was vested in men alone." (Agarwal: 1994 103.)

The *Khasis* of Meghalaya give centrality to the mother's nurturance role, and the matrilineal descent group ideologically justifies such roles. According to this, the mother, who nurtures the child during its incubation, should have rights over her child. This is rooted in their idea of the reproduction. According to the *Khasis* ideology, the unborn child derives its life from the mother's blood, and therefore, the mother's blood is the life-giving force. Thus, the centrality is given to her. This view contrasts the dominant patrilineal Hindu ideology, according to which, the semen provides the life-giving force. More significantly, this underlying ideological notions also determines the material condition of the *Khasis* women. For example, the property is inherited from the mother to the youngest daughter. However, the *Khasis* also consider men as the protectors. This is expressed through symbolic and the cultural systems. (Nongbri, 1993) describes this by looking at the folk dance of the *Khasis*. She writes,

While women are central to the family in *Khasis* ideology, they need to be protected and guarded by men. Just as the woman's role in reproduction and nurturance favors the mother, a man's physiological strength, according to the *Khasis*, gives him authority over women. The saying 'man has twelve strength' (u rangbah khadar bor) highlights man's superior power and confers on him the role of the protector and the provider (Unongbsa u

nongbtiah) vis-a-vis the woman who is the nurturer and the holder (ka nong lum). These role models of men and women are vividly brought out in their folk dances. The *Khasis* dance forms to the silent grace and discipline of women. During their festivals women dance in the centre of the circle with eyes downcast in an act of modesty and restraint. Men dance forming a protective ring around them holding either a sword or weed brush in hand. The sword symbolizes protection and defence while the weed brush symbolizes guidance and advice. (Nongbri 1993: 179 -180)

The above analysis shows us the manner in which patriarchy functions within the matrilineal descent group. It also exposes the ideological construction of the sex/gender role in such societies. The comparison between patrilineal and the matrilineal descent groups signifies the fact that patriarchal ideology constrains both women and men, differently, on different kin groups. (Schneider 1961) implicitly acknowledges this point by distinguishing the ancestry from the descent group. According to her, a descent group is a decision-making group, where as, a lineage is a group which distributes the resources within the kin group, and assembles for legal, administrative, ceremonial, or other purposes. It has a head, who ceremonially owns the property. The Nayar *Taravad*, structurally can be categorized as a lineage. Among the Nayars, the Kuranavan is considered as the head of the Taravad.

The underlying patriarchal structure in the matrilineal societies can be more adequately grasped by looking at the gender role of both women and men. Though there are surface level differences between the patrilineal and matrilineal descent groups, the gender role within these groups shares some commonalities. This is more evident in terms of men's authoritative role, and women's domestic obligations, and their role as the nurturers of children. As Schneider puts it,

The role of women as women has been defined as that of responsibility for the care of children. I now add that the role of men as men is defined as that of having authority over women and children (except perhaps for specially qualifying conditions applicable to a very few women of the society). Positions of highest authority within the matrilineal descent group will, therefore, ordinarily be vested in statuses occupied by men. (Schneider 1961: 6)

More significantly, the gender role of both women and men of the matrilineal descent group share similarities. With the patrilineal descent groups. One shall seek to argue in the Chapter 5 that women's role as mothers and the nurturers of children is the central focus in the dominant patrilineal Hindu ideology. Thus this analysis implicitly articulates the manner which patriarchal

ideology functions in both matrilineal and the patrilineal descent groups. Schneider also acknowledges this point, when she writes,

...matrilineal and patrilineal descent groups are precise mirror images of each other, identical in their structure except for the superficial point that in one group membership is obtained through the father, in the other through the mother. Otherwise, every element is identical. (Schneider 1961: 7)

Through this analysis, one can observe the paradigm shift in anthropological writings, from the patriarchy verses the matriarchy, to the patrilineality verses the matrilineality. It also explains the manner in which patriarchy functions, within the domain of the matrilineal societies. More significantly, these writings look at gender relations only from the descent groups. However, the feminist perspective extends the concept of patriarchy to the wider social structure. In the following section, this point will be analyzed in great length.

II

The concept of patriarchy in the feminist writings

The feminist scholars look at the concept of patriarchy in a much broader perspective. First, they extend its definition from the father's or eldest male authority to the wider social structure. Second, unlike the conventional theorists, they attempt to uncover the patriarchal dimension in other forms of domination such as class, race, caste, etc. Feminist writings on family traces back the existing gender inequality to the family and its related institutions. Despite the change in the gender roles, feminist analysis always has to grapple with the biological reductionist, claim, that the reproductive functions of family, is indispensable for the survival of the society. In the next chapter, I shall try to see to what extent these theoretical assumptions have an impact on the sociological and the anthropological writings on family, marriage and the kinship structure. Despite the divergent theoretical paradigms, feminist analysis questions these reductionist assumptions. Feminist conception of patriarchy also can be analyzed under five major categories, namely, the liberals, Marxist/socialist, the radicals, dual theorists and the postmodernist.

III.II.1. Liberal feminism

Philosophically, the emergence of liberalism can be traced back to the enlightenment period in the Europe, in the 17th and the 18th centuries. The liberals consider family and the household as the gender-neutral institution. Liberal feminists draw their inspiration from the Liberal

democratic values. to which the state is an important institution, that co-ordinate the power relations between . According to liberals, the notion of democracy should be equated with the notion of equality, which includes not only the economic equality, but also the equal opportunity to realize one's human capacity. In a liberal democratic state, conform to the constitutional authority of the state.

Liberal feminist scholars argue that gender roles within the domain of family is internalized through socialization. This theoretical assumption can be traced back to Parsonian theory of family. Parsons conceptualized gender relations, in terms of sex roles, within the domain of family. Thus he argued that men in the family performed the instrumental role and women the expressive one. According to him, family as a social institution existed, because of its central function of the 'socialization of children, and stabilization of human personality. His conceptualization of family will be analyzed in the next chapter.

Much like Parsonian analysis, the liberal feminists of the 20th century attempt to trace back the gender inequality to the ideological apparatus. However, their notion of ideology is not extended to the historical and the material condition of , which is the major focus in some Marxist feminist analysis. According to the liberals, the ideology includes the norms and values of the society, which in their view, is internalized in family through socialization.

By drawing inspirations from these theoretical assumptions, the liberal feminists critiqued patriarchy. Walby states that equality of opportunities in educational institutions, identifying the sex based biases and prejudices etc. is the major focus in their analysis. They consider the denial of these rights to women and the sex-based bias is the result of the specific situations. According to them, even some institutionalized patriarchal structural elements such as the male violence, rape etc should be contested by using the constitutional means.

Feminist liberals argue that women evolved equally with men and participate in the Cartesian ontological dualism in at least its normative form. That is, like many contemporary liberals they view human beings as especially valuable for their mental capacity for rationality, without committing to Descartes' mind/body polarity (Kachuck 1995:171). The early liberal feminists, while acknowledging the uniqueness of the household production, questioned many of the

classical theoretical assumptions. They demanded for greater gender equality within family marriage and its other related institutions. For example, Mary Wollstonecraft, an 18th century's writer criticized the unjust family relations she saw around her. At the same time, by emphasizing women's role as mothers, she argued that such roles are indispensable for strengthening the family. John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor, in the 19th century, denounced patriarchal power relations within the family, and thus advocated for greater gender equality in legal rights, including the right to vote and equal opportunities in paid work, and educational institutions. However, they differed in bestowing primacy to women's role as mothers, and the participation of married women in the labour market. However, Mill, was one of thoughts to emphasize the need for equality in family, particularly between the wife and the husband, without which, there could be no hope for Justice in the larger spheres of social and political life. They also believe that the increasing demand for the liberal egalitarian values, the family ideology is also undergoing a process of change.

Young and Willmott (1975) argued that the family was becoming more symmetrical as the result of the change in the family ideology. They also asserted that the sex role in the family were becoming segregated, due to the increasing men's participation in the domestic work, and women's participation in the paid work. However, in developing countries, the liberal feminists have to address to the question of development. For example, in India, the liberal feminists address to the developmental problems such as The equal opportunity in education, and employment, land rights to women in the context of the agricultural economy, etc. The liberals also acknowledge the role performed by the policy makers as a landmark in the development of women. According to them, the emphasis of the policy makers is shifting from women's welfare measures, to the equality of opportunity in their over all development. (Kabeer 1995)

Sociological writings on development are preoccupied with the correlation between the modernization and the subsequent change in the democratic value. According these theories, modernization would lead to the growth of the modern liberal egalitarian values, and thus undermine the traditional authoritarian structures in the realm of the social and the political institutions. They along with the liberal economists offered an optimistic vision of the

modernization and the subsequent change of the sex/gender roles. In fact, Lewis went to the extent of arguing that in the light of modernization, women benefit more than men do.

Liberal feminism is criticized for the neglect of the deep-rooted structural gender inequality in the society. Their preoccupation with the liberal theoretical paradigms such as the equal opportunities, Fundamental rights, Individual freedom etc have made them to sideline the long term persistence of the patriarchal structure. More significantly, they treat family as a gender-neutral household, and thus neglecting the expropriation of women's labour by the individual patriarchs, no matter, whether fathers, husbands, or brothers. Their optimistic vision of the social change and its impact on the sex/gender role in the household has aborted them from looking at the invisible patriarchal ideology in the modern development and its impact on the household.

While arguing for women's equal accessibility to the public institutions, they neglect the fact that the structural constraints such as class, caste, race etc can be a barrier to such equality, and thus it becomes more clear, that some women are more powerful than others which is sidelined in liberal feminist's analysis. Kessler-Harris argues that the powerful became the winners, and they created the political economy, 'capitalism' which encourages inequality between men and women through competition (1984). It is significant to note that with the opening up of the liberal markets this is becoming a worldwide phenomenon. Kachuck states that the middle class women are the most beneficiaries of this development, and therefore, not surprisingly, they advocate liberal feminist school of thought. With these theoretical notions, it become inevitable to look at some feminist perspectives, which trace back the existing gender inequality to the patriarchal structure.

III.II.2 Marxist/socialist feminism

Marxist feminism starts with the premise that men's domination over women is the by-product of the capitalist domination over labour. Therefore, the exploitation of one class by another determines the gender inequality. Some Marxist feminists retain a materialist analysis of class relations and combine this with an analysis of gender relations in terms of ideology and culture. (Walby 1981:4) The fundamental difference between the Marxist feminists and the socialist feminists is that the former considers family as the sight of oppression, where as, the later traces it back to the ideological apparatus of the society.

The 20th century's Marxists have modified Engels's theory, and thus they try to incorporate the ideological elements in to the explanation of the patriarchal oppression. Althusser (1971) viewed family as an ideological state apparatus whose function was to socialize children for the capitalist system. Thus he treated women's domestic labour as an ideological activity, rather than the naive economic labour. James and Dalla Costa (1973) argued that housework created both value, and surplus value, and therefore, women's work was central to capitalism. They also stated that women were politically central to the socialist movement. However, Seccombe (1974) argued that domestic labour created value but not Surplus value. However, it is significant to note that these theoretical assumptions neglect the existing unequal power relations between the wife and the husband. Gardiner (1975) acknowledges the obvious inequality between spouses and the benefit to the husband of the arrangement.

More significantly, these theoretical notions though acknowledge the unequal gender relations within the household; they revolve around the economic indicators, and thus neglecting the role of some non-economic institutions in perpetuating unequal gender relations in family. Some writers in the late 70s analyzed gender relations in the family from the ideological point of view. More significantly, such paradigm shift emerged from the criticism of the Marxist theory in general and Marxist treatment of gender in particular. For example, Barrett (1980) stressed the importance of the non-economists analysis of the family. She also argued for the importance of ideology in the construction of gender. However, her stress on ideology is significantly different from that of the Althusser's notion. Unlike Althusser, She states that masculine and feminine people are constructed by the gender, ideology, in and around the family, and it is through the family, these constructions are constantly reproduced.

In socialist feminist analysis, the family is seen as the basic institution, which ensures the sustainability of the workers. By drawing inspiration from Engels, this approach traces back the domination of women to the emergence of private property, and the subsequent development of the monogamous marriage and the establishment of the patriarchal family. However, the feminist socialists, while denying his theoretical formulations of women's role in the domestic work, they share with him the historical development of the family and the origin and the development of the patriarchal family, and the domination and the subjugation of women. Kachuck distinguishes

the Marxist feminists from that of the socialist feminists. She states that the socialist feminists give a specific emphasis to the concept of 'Gender and 'sexuality in conceptualizing patriarchy. Therefore, they are distinguished from the conventional Marxist feminists who's analysis is preoccupied with the 'class struggle. Kachuck also acknowledges some similarities between the two. She writes,

Both socialist and Marxist feminists agree that humans are defined by their production of the means of their existence. Both see humans, not as liberals do, differentiate from animals by their rational capacity, but as biological beings in a continual process of praxis to solve problems of existence. Work is considered the essence of humanness, changing in form as people perceive new needs, devise ways to satisfy them, and develop appropriate social relations. Sociality, then, is seen as the human condition. Therefore, the liberal problem of explaining why autonomous beings come together is averted. Instead, the problem posed is how to regain a natural sociality, which has been spoiled by social systems, currently exemplified in capitalism. (Kachuck 1995:179)

Another crucial point to be noted is that, both Marxist and socialist feminists emphasize the need for a dialectical analysis of the history, to uncover the development of the existing patriarchal and the capitalist domination. They also attempt to correlate the technological development with that of the patriarchal and the capitalist domination. Suffice it to say at this juncture that, both Marxist, and socialist feminists, unlike the liberals, is seeking for further social change through dialectical process. These approaches also have been applied within the domain of the developmental studies. Unlike liberals, Marxist notion of development incorporated the structural inequality and it's role in obstructing the social, political and the economic development. They start with the premise that capital accumulation is the driving force behind unequal development and social conflict. They also acknowledged the role of unequally produced sexual inequality in sustaining the existing unequal international social order. (Kabeer, 1995) Naila Kabeer distinguishes three kinds of Marxist feminists, within the domain of the developmental studies, namely, the dependency feminists, the global capitalist patriarchy and the social relationists.

For the dependency feminists, gender inequality can't be understood in isolation from the capitalist mode of production which placed the developing, and the developed world unequally, and thus the former has to rely up on the later for it's sustenance. Therefore in such unequal world, the so-called development could not release women from the patriarchal oppression. They also acknowledge the existence of the pre capitalist mode of production in the domestic sphere.

According to the dependency feminists, the services carried out by women in the family, constantly reproduced the commodity, labour power etc in a generational bases. Since these were not contractual, they can not be strictly categorized as the capitalist mode of production. (Saffiotti 1977) In the context of this, one can argue that the existing inequality within the domain of family can be adequately grasped, only by tracing it back to the ideological construction of the gender role.

Unlike the dependency feminists, the advocates of the global capitalist patriarchy give a specific emphasis to the role of non-capitalist institutions in generating and sustaining gender inequality. The German theorist (Mies 1986) incorporated the concept of 'patriarchy' in to the developmental studies. Thus she argued that the existence of women's subordination should be seen as the long persisting male domination over women. 'The idea of capitalist patriarchy denoted patriarchal civilization as a system, of which capitalism constitutes the most recent and most universal manifestation' (Kabeer 1995: 50).

She also traces back the subordinate role of the women even in the hunting gathering society to their reproduction, according to which the women's whole body involved in production. This is in contrast to the men's hunting weapons, which were used, for distraction. From such role the universal patriarchal structure developed. She rejects the dependency feminist argument of the gender oppression as secondary to the class oppression. Therefore, her analysis implies that despite the change in the economic mode of production, patriarchy remains much the same. According to Mies, men created the patriarchy, through violence, which persists until today, and used as a tool for the domination and the subjugation of women by men, irrespective of the territorial and the structural differences. However, One shall seek to demonstrate that the concept of patriarchy has to be explained by incorporating the structural and the cultural variations, such as class, caste race, community, etc. In contrast to the dependency feminists, and the global capitalist patriarchy, the social relationist's approach argues that men's domination over women has to be analyzed by treating both women and men as the historically located actors, who are seeking to transform their life's As Kabeer puts it,

While WID scholarship presented women making individual choices in the face of prejudice and constraint, these accounts present women as having no choices at all in the face of overarching structures of power. However, as Birke points out, an alternative

form of 'holism' is possible which seeks to uncover the interconnections between different spheres and levels of society, and between individuals and social structures. A concern with structural forces need not preclude awareness of women and men as historically located actors coping with, and seeking to transform, the conditions of their lives. And while male dominance may be a near-universal phenomenon, it generally operates in more concealed and variable ways than allowed by the global patriarchal model. (Kabeer 1995: 53-54)

This approach also challenges the treatment of women as the separate category while analyzing their subordination. Such theoretical assumption ignores men's invisible role in subordinating women. More significantly, Marxist theory emerged as an emancipatory project, and thus advocated for an alternative, through which the capitalist domination can be overthrown. In the context of the gender perspective, it is significant to note that such an alternative model in the socialist analysis can best be seen in the writings of Engels. He writes,

With the passage of time means of production into common property, the individual family ceases to be the economic unit of society. Private housekeeping is transformed into a social industry. The care and education of the children becomes a public matter. Society takes care of all children equally, irrespective of whether they are born in wedlock or not. Thus, the anxiety about the "consequences," which is today the most important social factor--both moral and economic--that hinders a girl from giving herself freely to the man she loves, disappears. (Engels 1948: 54)

By drawing inspiration from these theoretical assumptions, both Marxist and the socialist feminists look for the familial alternative. Marxist feminist analysis is criticized for too narrowly reducing the gender inequality to the capitalist domination. If the liberal individual is reduced to pure self-interest, the Marxist individual is defined purely in relation to class interest. (Kabeer 1995:46) Harman (1981) argues that Marxist analysis fails to acknowledge the politics of sexism. therefore, such factors can be uncovered, if it is substantiated by the feminist analysis. Despite these setbacks, feminist writers acknowledge the Marxist/Socialist emphasis to the structural domination in conceptualizing patriarchy.

III.II.3 Radical Feminism

Unlike the liberal and the socialist feminism, radical feminism starts with the premise that men as a dominant group are the main beneficiaries of women's subordinate position. Unlike the liberal and the socialist feminists, they do not reduce gender inequality to the other social system. They argue that patriarchal domination has to be traced back to the sexuality. They treat even the personal aspect of the life as political. Therefore, male domination involves the expropriation of the female sexuality. As Walby puts it:

Sexual practice is seen to be socially constructed around male notions of desire, not women's. Further, sexuality is seen as a major site of male domination over women, through which men impose their notion of femininity on women. Heterosexuality is socially institutionalized in contemporary society and organizes many other aspects of gender relations. Male violence against women is considered to be part of a system of controlling women, unlike the conventional view which holds that rape and battering are isolated instances caused by psychological problems in a few men. (Walby 1981: 3)

One may further add that the emergence of lesbianism as an alternative to the heterosexuality, and the familial inequality as the radical reaction to the existing patriarchal domination. Radical feminist analysis of the family is centered around the exploitation of wives by husbands in the household. One has already noted the centrality given to the sexuality in radical's analysis. Walby points out distinct analytical tools within the radical feminist school of thought. According to Firestone, (1975) reproduction is central to the existing gender inequality within family. "The Biological hazards surrounding reproduction, such as pregnancy, menstruation, childbirth, breast-feeding, and child rearing, make women vulnerable and dependent on men. This creates two classes based on sex, men and women. (Walby 1990)

By drawing some of the Marxian notions, Firestone considers reproduction to be the real material base of human society; However, various conceptual apparatus in other radical feminist theories have substituted the centrality given to reproduction. For example, Brownmiller (1976) sees rape as central to the expropriation of the female sexuality by men. Some scholars give specific emphasis to the institutionalized gender inequality. For instance, Rich (1980) argues that institutionalized heterosexuality is the basis, for the expropriation of women's sexuality by men within the domain of the household. More significantly, lesbianism draws its inspiration from such theoretical development. However, various scholars have questioned radical feminist's centrality to the reproduction. They argue that modern technological development can release women from the limitations of biology. Radical feminists are also criticized for their ahistorical approach. However, in my view, despite these limitations, radical feminists do provide some important methodological tools in understanding the gender inequality of the household and family. Radical feminists are also criticized for essentialising the biological role, and thus neglecting the historical development of patriarchy. It also ignores the role of structural and the cultural variations in conceptualizing patriarchy. However, its emphasis to the sexuality in understanding patriarchal domination can not be completely neglected.

III.II.4 Dual System Theory

Dual systems theory is an attempt to synthesize both radical and socialist feminist theoretical assumptions. According to this theory, both capitalist, and patriarchal systems are prevalent in the society. Therefore, contemporary patriarchy is the result of both capitalist and the patriarchal systems. Zillah considers both the system as closely interacting with one another, and therefore, change in one system causes changes in another. However, Hartmann (1979) argues that they are analytically separable from one another. Mitchell (1975) discusses gender in terms of the two analytically separable systems, namely, the capitalist relations, and the law of patriarchy. The former determines the economic order, where as, the later fabricates human's unconscious. In order to uncover the existing patriarchal Ideology, she uses Freudian theory of unconscious. However, Hartmann doesn't over emphasize the role of ideology in understanding patriarchy. Rather she traces it back to the men's expropriation of women's labour in the household, and the public domain.

Delthy retains both materialistic accounts of the Marxist analysis, and the radicalist analysis of the women's oppression by men, in her theoretical formulation. She argues that the exploitation of women's labour in the home is the cornerstone of their oppression by men. But unlike the marxist feminists, she puts forward the view that men are the beneficiaries of women's domestic labour. Therefore, she calls the expropriation of women's domestic labour by men as patriarchal exploitation, than that of the capitalist one. She also makes a significant departure from Marxist feminist scholars by distinguishing the domestic mode of production from that of the capitalist mode of production. However, she states that both the modes of production exist simultaneously. On similar lines with Marx, she identifies two classes: that is, producing class (housewives) and the expropriating class (husbands). However, unlike Marxists, she distinguishes the men's work from that of the women's work. She argues that the differentiation of these two can not be considered as the result of two different tasks, but rather they have to be traced back to the relations of production, which are socially constructed.

It is true that the domestic mode of production has some unique characteristics, which have to be distinguished from the capitalist mode of production. However, the points of convergence, and departures of both the modes of production should be specified, which is absent in Delthy's

analysis. Therefore, methodological acknowledgement of these analytical problems makes one to be skeptical about the dual character of her theory. Walby states that Delthy's analysis is limited by the perfunctory treatment of capitalist relations. As Walby puts it,

Most of her analysis is about patriarchal domination, and only a small part about the intersection with capitalism. Indeed had she not made clear, if limited, reference to a capitalist as well as patriarchal mode of production it might have been more appropriate to categorize her a sub-type of radical feminism. The articulation of the domestic mode of production with that of capitalism is an area where Delthy's thesis is seriously limited and needs extensive development. (Walby 1990: 77)

She further states that the drawbacks in Delthy's analysis should be taken just as a methodological and the conceptual problem. Therefore, acknowledgement of such methodological issues does not in any way reject her theoretical contributions. Unlike Delthy, Hartmann (1981) gives centrality to the paid work, and its impact on women's position in the household. It would be of great interest to learn that her analysis in the context of the modern capitalist development advocates the view, that women are caught between the patriarchal exploitation of the husbands in the home, and that of the capitalist employers in the labour market. Thus she questions the simple conclusion that women's liberation from the household exploitation is possible with their increasing participation in the labour market. In the context of this, it would be more fruitful to point out that The ideological construction of patriarchy within household has to be explored by interconnecting it with the other social, political, and the economic institutions.

The feminist scholars have criticized dual systems theory's dichotomy of the capitalist and the patriarchal system. According to them, it is extremely formidable to maintain the distinction between the capitalism and patriarchy. Young (1981) claims that it is impossible to separate them in analytical level. If it is not separated, then, it would be difficult to uncover the distinction between the capitalist system and patriarchy. If the radicals make such distinction, then they are not able to account for patriarchal aspects in that level they have allocated to capital or for capitalist elements in the level allocated to patriarchy. Walby questions such simple dichotomization of the capitalist and the patriarchal systems. As she puts it:

The specification of the nature of the separation between patriarchy and capitalism is necessary and achievable. It is inappropriate to allocate different levels of the social formation to the different systems, in the manner of Mitchell, for the reasons noted by Young. However, Hartmann's analysis is problematic in that it both underestimates the

tension between patriarchy and capitalism and insufficiently specifies the different structures of patriarchy. A further limitation of existing forms of dual-systems theory is that they do not cover the full range of patriarchal structures. For instance, sexuality and violence are given very little analytic space in the work of Hartmann and Eisenstein. Most accounts suggest that either the material level (Hartmann, Eisenstein) or the cultural (Mitchell) is the significant basis of patriarchy. I think this is a mistake, and that a broader range of structures should be theorized as part of the patriarchal side of the dual systems. (Walby 1981:7)

In the context of this passage, it is significant to note that feminist writings within the domain of the social sciences tend to use the features of both capitalist and the patriarchal systems to uncover the existing gender inequality. This argument can be more clearly exonerated, as one progresses.

III.II.5 Feminist Post-Modernism

The development of postmodern theories is a critical response to the existing well established theoretical paradigms. Therefore, feminist postmodernists also formulate their theories by rejecting the enlightenment's fundamental proposition: the assumption of a self-abstracted from its contingencies (body, emotion, and social location) knowing universal laws of nature (Kachuck, 1995). They also contest women's self subjectivity, which is prevalent in most of the above mentioned theoretical paradigms. In contrast to these perspectives, postmodern feminists advocate 'indeterminacy', by which multiple view points can be incorporated into the theory formation. This theory also rejects the enlightenment claim of the human experience and promising human progress. It also does not accept the universal laws in understanding the society, which is the main focus in the scientific analysis. It also rejects the claim of the mainstream science that the conflict between knowledge, truth, and power can be overcome on the ground of reason. Postmodernists also reject certain meta narratives such as Marxism, humanism, etc.

Butler (1992) emphasizes the need for incorporating the subject's identity in feminist writings. She denies the male rational construction of the objective and the subjective self. For her the self is a political construct and there are many subjectivities. She further argues that subjectivity is a process of 'becoming' through repeated performative acts. Thus in her view, Gender is not a cultural inscription written on sex bodies, but rather it is culturally and discursively constructed.

This theoretical assumption implies that the self can grow larger, and it may not conform to a single socially prescribed identity. Thus She emphasizes the need for the incorporation of multiple subjectivities in the understanding of the cultural construction of gender identity.

More significantly, feminist writers have contested most of the postmodern claims. Some feminists give a specific emphasis to the concept of discourse, and the subjective human experience. Some critiques see thread beneath the redefinition of women as mere subjects, and thus undermining the role of structure in inculcating the patriarchal norms and values.

Some critiques signify the incorporation of structural, and the cultural variations in social theories. Despite its criticism to the modernity, postmodernism also is reduced to the individualism, through its plea for the local approach, which is of course the products of modern liberal society. Though postmodern feminist theories claim to have acknowledged different theoretical paradigms, it actually boils down to some of the conservative liberal theoretical paradigms. As Kuchuck puts it:

Although difference is acknowledged, there is no theory of difference, reflecting the difficulty of locating women in extant paradigms. The female subject disappears into *he* in the rationalist framework and dissolves into a plurality in postmodernism. Postmodernists attempt to simplify the problem by arguing for local perspectives, where homogeneity is assumed. This renders useless any cross-cultural work on gender and leaves invisible patriarchy and other macro level structures of power. Rather than abandoning such projects or writing off feminism because some feminists falsely universalize female behavior, a better solution lies in giving closer attention to axes of social constructs intertwined with gender. (Kuchuck 1995:187)

Despite these limitations, some conceptual tools of the postmodern theories can be used to uncover the specific patriarchal structure. In the light of the above analysis, it becomes clearer that both universalistic and particularistic methodological tools have to be applied more consciously in conceptualizing patriarchy. In the following section, One shall make an attempt to extract some important features in these theoretical paradigms.

III

Integrating different theoretical paradigms

In the previous section, by analyzing distinct perspectives within the domain of the feminist writings, it has been attempted to demonstrate that each approach has to contribute in some way

or another in conceptualizing patriarchy. In this section. One shall attempt to arrive at a common point, by which the concept of patriarchy can be more adequately grasped.

Despite the speculative and the hypothetical nature of the 19th century's anthropological writings, they necessitated us to look at the domination and the subjugation of women historically. Most of these writings emerged largely in response to the industrial revolution, and the subsequent change in the European society. Therefore, these writings were directed against the destabilizing nature of these changes. However, when one apply these writings to the present society, their limitations also should be acknowledged. For example, these writings could not substantiate their claims through empirical studies. Moreover their methodological tools were very limited.

As has been mentioned earlier, many of the 19th century's claims have been questioned by the 20th century's anthropological writings. These writings have introduced wide variety of concepts and analytical tools, for example, concepts like lineage, descent group. Therefore it becomes inevitable to rethink the simple dichotomy of the patriarchy verses the matriarchy. However, through this analysis, it has been pointed out that the concept of patriarchy in these writings is confined only to the descent groups. This limitation necessitates looking at the feminist writings on this concept. A brief survey of the feminist literature has exposed the heterogeneous characteristics of these writings.

Despite the fact that liberal feminists neglected the deep-rooted patriarchal structure, their emphasis to ideology and it's internalization through socialization is indispensable to grasp patriarchy, and the manner in which, it impinges on women. The socialist notion of class and gender oppression is necessary to grasp the interconnection between social class, and patriarchal oppressions. The radical's emphasis to sexuality introduced a new analytical tool to understand the domination of women by men. Despite it's ahistorical and biological-reductionist character, the concept of Sexuality is the major analytical tool in conceptualizing patriarchy. By synthesizing capitalist relations with patriarchy, Dual systems theories have problematized the interconnection between the two. Though the point of departure and convergence between the two have not been specified in these approaches, this attempt is essential to look at patriarchy in a much broader perspective. Though postmodernists through their emphasis to indeterminacy

boil down to the liberal enlightenment theory, their emphasis to the cultural and structural variations should be seriously considered in conceptualizing patriarchy.

Therefore patriarchy has to be conceptualized by incorporating these theoretical elements. More significantly, multidimensional understanding of patriarchy is indispensable to look at its distinctive forms, depending up on the cultural and the structural variations. Sylvia Walby (1991) states that the concept of patriarchy can not be understood through the mono causal explanation. She also refutes the universal form of the patriarchy. Such notions, in her view, do not illustrate the historical and cultural variations. She attributes the reason to the existence of the base super structure model of causal relations in such grand theories. She further writes,

In a theory in which there is only one causal element it is not surprising that there are difficulties in understanding variation and change. Theorizing more than one causal base can solve this problem. I am arguing that there are six main structures, which make up a system of patriarchy: paid work, housework, sexuality, culture, violence and the state. The interrelationships between these create different forms of patriarchy. (Walby 1990:16)

This passage signifies the multi dimensional approach in analyzing patriarchy. Given this condition, She defines, “patriarchy as a system of social structures and practices in which men-dominate-, oppress and exploit women. The use of the term social structure is important here, since it clearly implies rejection both of biological determinism, and the notion that every individual man is in a dominant position and every woman in a subordinate one. Patriarchy needs to be conceptualized at different levels of abstraction. At the most abstract level it exists as a system of social relations.” (Walby 1990:20)

Therefore, in this chapter, one can argue that despite the heterogeneous characteristics of the feminist writings, they all arrive at a common point. More significantly, Each of these theoretical models are contesting the patriarchal domination through distinctive forms. However, when one transfigures the analysis to the third world/developing countries, certain structural and cultural variations such as caste, community, ethnicity, etc have to be incorporated in to the theory formation. In Chapter 5, an attempt will be made to grasp patriarchal domination in India by incorporating these structural variations. However, before, making such attempt, it is indispensable to look at the Indian writings on family and kinship structure, so that the inherent

patriarchal ideology in these studies can be adequately grasped. Therefore, in the following chapter, I shall analyze Indian writings on family and kinship structure.

CHAPTER - 4

**FAMILY RESEARCH AND
DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVE**

Introduction

Family has been a major subject of research in sociology & social anthropology. It sounds strange, therefore, to suggest that these disciplines have neglected the study of women. In fact, women's role in family rituals, religious practices, domestic work has always been analyzed in these disciplines. The point, however, is that although the role and status of women may have been described, the perspective tended to be one that neglected the question of gender inequality. I shall illustrate this argument in this chapter by reviewing literature within Indian sociology and social anthropology. The writers I intend to review are in chronological order: Irawati Karve (1953); G.S.Ghurey (1955); K.N.Kapadia (1953-62); Louis Dumont (1961); Nimkoff (1959); A.M.Shah (1973-88); Andre Bettile (1991).

After reviewing these writings, I shall also briefly examine the elements of functionalist perspective in these writings and its inadequacy in analyzing gender inequality. Another point that will necessarily crop up in this chapter is the manner in which western writings on family made their impact felt on Indian writings. I shall briefly touch upon those writings initially itself so that their influence on Indian family research can be adequately grasped. My analysis in this chapter will also show, the manner in which the nineteenth century's speculative claim of the patriarchal society as the first form of the social system, made its impact felt on the conventional scholars of the family research.

It is even more important to have an understanding of the conceptual tools that were used in family research. Therefore, I shall begin with some basic concepts that shaped theoretical perspectives in Indian as well as western writings.

I

Some Basic Concepts

Conventional theories in social research emerged out of the predominant perspectives, such as Functionalism, Evolutionism, Diffusionism etc. In late 60s Marxism and Feminism had been incorporated in to the social research .

IV.I.1 Evolutionism

Herbert Spencer first explicitly articulated the evolutionist perspective in sociology. Later, this had been adapted by other anthropologists and sociologists such as Emile Durkheim, E.B.Tylor, Thomas Hobbes etc. According to this perspective society is moving from a simple to a complex stage through different stages. In the realm of social organization, this theory holds that there was a development from territorial groups composed of families to the segmental societies, clans and larger groupings. The unilineal theories of evolution compare the socio cultural development and thus, they put forward the view that socio-cultural evolution, like biological evolution exhibits a progressive differentiation of structure and specialization of functions. (For further references see New Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. V, 50th edition)

By reviewing western as well as Indian writings on family, I shall try to demonstrate how the preoccupation with the joint family to the nuclear family is an evolutionary explanation of the family, a transition. It is significant to note that this perspective also analyses the development of society through different stages.

IV.I.2 Functionalism

Elements of Functionalism were prevalent even in Spencer's evolutionary thought. However, Emile Durkheim, in his "Division of Labour and Society" had systematically analyzed this concept. Twentieth century anthropologists such as Bronislaw Malinowski, A.R. Radcliffe-Brown etc had found functionalism an alternative to the evolutionary perspective. The American sociologist Talcott Parson further elaborated this concept. In later sixties, this concept slowly started losing its credibility. "Functionalism starts with a premise that "all aspects of a society - institutions, roles, norms, etc. - serve a purpose and that all are indispensable for the long term survival of the society."(50, New Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 5, 15th edition)

Like the evolutionaries, they also viewed societies as organisms. Like organisms, society is composed of interdependent parts that exist outside individual and can not be reduced to its individual components. However, in sociology, the term function refers to the cultural or social phenomena which have a positive function and, therefore, it is inevitable. As we shall see later.

family is considered to be a social system, which perform the positive function, such as economic, education etc.

The critical Functionalism developed by R. K. Merton acknowledges distinctive functions, namely “manifest function”, “latent function”. The review of Indian literature will clearly reflect the above mentioned theoretical development in sociology and social anthropology.

IV.I.3 Diffusionism

Diffusionism holds the view ‘customs, beliefs, tools, techniques, folktales, ornaments, and so on, may diffuse from one people or region to another. To be sure, a cultural trait must offer some advantage, utility or pleasure, to be sought and accepted by a people.’(928: New Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. 5, 15th edition). In the context of social organizations such as family, clan etc. this view holds that basic features of social structure may be diffused from one society to another. Geographical and physical barrier can have a significant impact on the diffusional change. The degree of these barriers is proportional to the degree of change. In this chapter, I shall try to demonstrate how some studies are preoccupied with the explanation of the spread of education, industrialization etc. due to the western impact.

In the above analysis, I briefly describe some basic concepts that have been used in family research. However, we shall try to show that these concepts have failed to use “gender” as a category in family research. Therefore, gender inequality in India can be adequately grasped by looking at Indian feminist writing, which will be our subject of discussion in the next chapter.

II

Western Writings on Family and Kinship

The concepts that we dealt with in the previous section had emerged largely in the writings of the western scholars. In sociology and social anthropology, family researches were mainly focussed on the explanation of the functions of the family and its inevitability. In the later section, we shall see how far these writings influenced Indian Scholars.

IV.II.1 Talcott Parsons

As an American sociologist and structural functionalist, Parsons attempts to analyze family from the structural functional point of view. According to him, family research should be concerned with the explanation of the comparative structure.

By critically evaluating anthropological studies, he states that their excessive reliability on a single program of field work prevented them from the adequate understanding of the structure of the family in large societies, and thus, the materials supplied by them emerged from their common sensical experience that results in, what he calls, the “dubious scientific standing”. According to Parsons, the American family can not be characterized as an “open multilineal conjugal system”. He states that this conjugal family unit of the parents and children is one of the basic significant kinship units in the social system. He writes:

Ours then is a “conjugal” system in that it is made up *exclusively* of interlocking conjugal families. The principle of structural relation of these families is founded on the fact that, as a consequence of the incest taboo, *ego* is always in the structurally normal case a member not of one but of two conjugal families, those which, Warner usefully distinguishes as the “family of orientation”, into which he is born as a child, and the “family of procreation”, which is founded by his marriage. (Parsons 1949:180).

This passage brings out two important factors; firstly his family analysis assumes that the existing familial and kinship esteem to be necessarily patrilineal and patriarchal one. Secondly, as we shall see later, preoccupation with patrilineality was largely adopted by Indian scholars as well, and thus, even in their writings of matrilineal kinship structure they further seek patrilineal elements.

He further states that the American kinship system has to be treated as “a multilineal system” rather than an “unilineal” or bilineal” system. As he puts it:

In the first place, the importance of the isolated conjugal family is brought out by the fact that it is the normal “household” unit. This means it is the unit of residence and the unit whose members as a matter of course pool a common basis of economic support, especially with us, money income. (Parsons 1949:183).

Given this definition, he argues that inheritance of property through patrilineal descent group is more common among the elite class and thus kinship ties are very strong, whereas, among the lower class, the instability of marriage gives rise to the “mother-centered” type of family structure. He also adds that the focal American type of kinship structure is considered to be this

kinship unit. The review of Indian literature will bring out the same trend and thus, I shall try to demonstrate to what extent structural functional elements can be uncovered from their writings.

According to Parsons, despite the instability of marriage and change in the structure of the family, it plays some vital functions, which are indispensable for the survival of the social system. As he puts it,

In spite of divorces and related phenomena, Americans recently have been marrying on an unprecedented scale. They have been having children, not on an unprecedented scale, but on one which, by contrast with somewhat earlier trends, is unlikely to be without significance. Third, they have been establishing homes for themselves as family units on a very large scale. (Parsons 1955:99)

Parsons shifts his attention towards the functions of the family. According to him, "procreation" and "child care" are the primary functions of the family. It also performs economic and religious functions. In his view certain functions of the traditional kinship system are now taken over by the other institutions such as state, school etc. However, his emphasis to the functions of the nuclear family becomes more evident when he writes:

The process by which non-kinship units become of prime importance in a social structure, inevitably entails "loss of function" on the part of some or even all the kinship units. In the processes of social evolution, there have been many stages by which this process has gone on, and many different directions in which it has worked out. Our suggestion is, in this perspective, that what has recently been happening to the American family constitutes part of one of these stages of a process of differentiation. This process has involved a further step in the reduction of the importance in our society of kinship units other than the nuclear family. (Parsons 1955:100)

The above analysis clearly reveals his preoccupation with the positive functions of the family. However, I shall see to what extent these positive functions can be negative for women and to what extent such over emphasis neglects gender inequality. We shall also try to demonstrate that criticism to Parsonian theory equally applies to many of the Indian scholars in family research. However, let me further explore functionalist elements in family research.

IV.II.2 Carle C. Zimmerman

Zimmerman starts with the premise that the ultimate aim of family sociology is to describe the husband wife relationship which also covers other aspects such as parent-child relationship, siblings and siblings etc. He writes,

At the beginning we may describe the typical ideal world pattern of marriage as that of a permanent unity during life-time between one man and one woman. The issue from this.

and collateral persons involved, become engulfed gradually into a social system stemming from the nature of this basic unity. (Zimmerman 1959:106)

Zimmerman assumes that family formed out of one spouse is the common form in the Western society. As we shall later see that the Indian scholars also have largely adopted this proposition. According to Zimmerman, the family is a cultural instrument. It is a primary social institution in learning and motivating the child. According to him, family is a basic social unit that unites its members. To put it in his own words,

The family is an institution which unites two human needs - generic disjunctive nature and culture. It is not inherent in nature but in the combination of nature and the civilization process. This conception of the family enables us to understand many sociological problems not clear beforehand. (Zimmerman 1959:109)

Though he does not use gender as a category in his analysis, one can infer from the above quoted passage that gender inequality has to be traced back to the familial unit. He further attempts to explain family as the private & public social system. The private aspect of the family describes the generic disjunctive cause whereas the public describes cultural needs that are essential to man. The co-existence of these two causes is the necessary pre-condition for the survival of the family. Given this condition, he classifies families into three types, namely:

1. The trustee
2. The domestic
3. The automastic

The trustee form emphasizes the cultural responsibility of the family, whereas the automastic form reinforces the generic disjunctive property. In his view, the domestic form is the combination of these two which unites the generic disjunctive cause with that of the trustee form. The functional elements in his thought become more evident when he writes, 'Domestic family is its most prevalent form because it balances the causal forces in an equilibrium' (Zimmerman, 1959:110).

In the next chapter, we shall analyze the problems in considering domestic group as the equilibrium. Such assumption carries our analysis far away from the understanding of the gender inequality. According to him, theories of family also should explain its changing nature and its relations with the cultural development. He further states that the most primitive form of family is the trustee. He correlates the growth of culture with that of the familial change. In his view, the

change from trustee to the automastic form is cyclical and thus, the evolutionary perspective in this theory becomes more evident.

A given social system, barring new disturbances, always moves towards a harmonious integration of its parts. To be specific a strong culture requires a strong and well-working family system. If you get a strong culture with great demands upon it, and you find its family in anarchy, as ours apparently now is in many aspects, integration of a logical meaningful nature has to be achieved. This means that either the family system has to be clarified or the culture has to give up its great aims. Thus the logical meaningful needs for integration of a civilization are causal influences in change. Basic finite causation is one of relation between civilization and family order at these extreme periods of a cycle. No matter what is done, in the long run the basic civilization – question is that of the family. The inner disease has to be stopped at its source (: Zimmerman 1959:4).

Zimmerman distinguishes three kinds of changes in family research, namely “the constant lineal”, “the constant cyclical”, and the family dependent theories of change. The constant lineal theory draws its inspiration from the 19th century’s evolutionists. This theory holds that with the development of the civilization family is also becoming highly complex and “structurally differentiated” institution. These differentiated structures serve distinctive functions.

The cyclical theory is prevalent in the writings of Spengler. According to this theory, family is always moving towards an inexorable decay.

The dependency theory argues that all non-material cultures are dependent on the material culture. It draws its inspiration from the writings of Karl Marx. However, Zimmerman negates the dependency theory in family research.

The above analysis clearly brings out the elements of functionalism and evolutionism in the writings of the scholars whom we have examined. More significantly Parsonian and Zimmerman’s theories do not use gender as a category in family research. In the context of this, it is significant to note that the concepts, perspectives and analytical tools etc. themselves are the reflections of the male bias. (It will be dealt with in the final section of the chapter) With these orientations, let us now review the Indian writings on family.

Family Research in India

In the previous section we have briefly reviewed the western writings on family. As I mentioned earlier, western writings had a significant impact on the family research in India. In India, family research can not be strictly demarcated from the kinship system. Therefore, it is essential to begin this section with kinship analysis.

IV.III.1 Irawati Karve

Anthropological studies in India conducted in late 19th and the early 20th centuries treated Indian kinship system as a homogenous category. However, Irawati Karve, through her extensive field work, acknowledges for the first time, the heterogeneous characteristics of the Indian Kinship system. She traces back the nature of Indian kinship structure to the Sanskrit literature. According to Karve, the earlier kinship structure can be adequately grasped by looking at the religious stories & Puranas. Like the other anthropologists, she also explores the meanings given to the kinship terminologists. She states that the term used for 'parents' connotes affectionate relationship with their children. The meaning given to the word 'girl' connotes the 'virgin'. The term 'pati' is used in Yajurveda to denote husband and his dominant role in a family. It also shows that he is the protector or the feeder. The later Vedic literature considers him as master. She further states that Vedic literature construes the patrilineal marriage pattern. Thus, the existing patrilineal marriage pattern is rooted in the Vedic period. As she puts it,

In the earliest literature we find separate sets of terms for relatives belonging to the family of birth and for those belonging to the family joined by the bond of marriage. There are distinct and separate terms for three generations; the other terms are derived from these. The terms seem to have been used in a classificatory sense. This is an inference based on the references made to sexual relations between brothers and sisters. "Brother" might mean cousin and "father" might mean uncle. Apparently marriages were "arranged" between families belonging to different localities and the bride and the groom, and also their families, were "strangers". This together with the rather derogatory remarks about the daughter's husband and the wife's brother show that the attitude towards affinal relations was ambivalent and could range from the friendly to the inimical. There was a relation of avoidance between a man and his son's wife. There was a relation of extreme familiarity between a woman and her husband's younger brother ending in marriage in case she became a widow (Karve 1953: 36).

The above quoted passage not only brings out the patrilineal marital norms and values but also brings out the existence of the junior levirate in case a married woman becomes widow. Karve further attempts to analyze these practices in the contemporary society.

Irawati Karve states that the Indian kinship system can be divided into four major zones on the basis of the linguistic regions. She believes that since a large number of people are illiterates, the linguistic tradition might have been orally transmitted. Therefore, a comparative study of kinship structure is indispensable for the understanding of the Indian kinship organization. These four zones are:

- (i) The Northern Zone
- (ii) The Southern Zone
- (iii) The Central Zone
- (iv) The Eastern Zone

The Northern Zone

The Northern Zone consists of the hot land, Hindi belt region such as Sindhu, Punjab etc. According to her, people of this region follow the "gotra" system. Gotras of the kshatriyas and the brahmins have been largely adapted by other caste groups. However, only the brahmin caste possesses elaborate gotra system. According to Karve, many lower caste people including the primitive tribes also have gotra system. In the modern times, it is becoming increasingly difficult to adapt the rituals, beliefs and practices of the brahmins. Therefore, people are adapting Kshatriya status. This argument also clearly reveals Karve's preoccupation with the concept of assimilation. According to Karve, kinship terms are mostly derived from the old Sanskrit literature. Therefore, marriage regulations are also based on the consanguinity. She further attempts to explain kinship structure through marriage rules. According to Karve, village exogamy is more prevalent in another zone. A person should not marry within his patriclan or the matriclan. This rule and the prohibition of cross-cousin marriage is further strengthened by the village exogamy. Through the analysis of marriage practice, she demonstrates that the northern zone is predominantly patrilineal, patrilocal and the patriarchal one. Patrilineal kinship structure also imposes distinctive behaviour for bride and daughter.

Karve further writes,

The north has separate words for 'daughters' and 'brides' in each regional language, with a double standard of behaviour and sometimes of morality for each category. This custom

of local exogamy divides the women of a local group into two sharp divisions: the 'daughters' of the village and the 'brides' of the village. The daughters of different local families are very friendly with each other and enjoy each other's company whenever they come back to the village from their father-in-laws' houses. They all constitute a sort of a spy service to watch the behaviour of the 'brides'. Folk literature singles out certain pairs of relations as natural enemies. *Nanand-bhojai* i.e. a woman and her husband's sister is one such pair. *Sas-bahu* i.e. a woman and her husband's mother is another *Nanand* (husband's sister) is the daughter of a house. *Bhojai* (brother's wife) is the bride. The *nanand* has to leave the house in which she was born and finds that a complete stranger takes her place in it. *Sas* is the mother-in-law, the ruler of the joint family. *Bahu* is the young daughter-in-law. Though both are brides, i.e. women who have come into the family through marriage, the *sas* being the mother has established certain rights. The *bahu* is a stranger, who is the present slave and the future mistress. The rivalry between *sas* and *bahu* is the rivalry of two generations of women between whom, in the course of time, power is transferred from the old to the young. All the girls of the husband's village watch over the 'brides' and report their smallest gesture to their mothers, who are of course the mothers-in-law of the young brides. There is hardly a song which does not talk of the ever wakeful *sas* and *nanand* who would wake up at night and interfere even if the bride goes to her own husband (Karve 1953:129 -130).

Though she does not use gender as a category, this passage brings out the gendered nature of the patrilineality that even divides the women, She further states that though the mother-in-law at one stage was brought to the house as a bride, because of her authority, she establishes her rights over her daughter-in-law. In spite of her preoccupation with the kinship terminologies and their practices. Karve acknowledges the unequal relationship within the domain of the family. This fact can further be coloured by the analysis of the source of data. As we have seen, the existing patrilineal structure can be traced back to the earlier literature. However, gender inequality is clearly reflected even in such literatures. As she puts it:

In the northern and central zones as also in parts of the southern zone there is a vast amount of song and story literature transferred from generation to generation by oral tradition. This folk-literature is sharply divided into men's literature and women's literature while men-writers dominate the written literature of the modern Indian languages; the oral tradition is rich in women's songs. In these songs are preserved to us the thoughts and feelings of women in different types of families, especially those living in the northern type of patti-family. For any student wishing to understand the organization of the Indian family and the stresses and strains inherent in it, a study of this material and a study of proverbs is indispensable'. (Karve 1953:131)

She further analyzes the status of widow in this zone. According to Karve, widow remarriage can be distinguished from the first marriage by rituals, ceremonies etc. Widow remarriage is more common among the lower castes. However, by adapting Sanskrit norms, they are gradually prohibiting widow-remarriage. As we shall see later, the Indian scholars have largely accepted

this view. It would be interesting to note that Talcott Parsons also equates the unstable form of marriage and the lower class. Through this analysis, Irawati Karve demonstrates that the northern family and the kinship organizations are the continuation of the ancient system with slight modification and it is patrilineal patrilocal.

Sothern Zone

According to Karve, southern zone consists of Karnatka where Kannad is spoken, Kerala where Malyalam is spoken, Tamilnadu where both language and people are Tamil, and Andhra Pradesh where Telugu is spoken. Though this zone is predominantly patrilineal and patrilocal, certain regions have matrilineal and matrilocal kinship structure. Some regions possess both the elements. Southern zone is also divided into exogamous clans, which are significantly different from that of the northern zone. In contrast to north, the southern zone has exogamous clan, which falls within the endogamous caste groups. Most significantly these clans not only have an important impact on marriage practice but also differentiates the village settlement of the south from that of the north. In the southern zone reciprocal marriage is widely practiced, according to which if one chooses a bride from clan B, it is obligatory for him or his clan to give a girl to that clan in the next generation. Therefore, in this zone the need for taking a bride from a new clan arises only when these obligations are fulfilled. Irawati Karve, further examines the preferential form of marriage. She distinguishes three kinds of preferential marriages. They are:

- A man's marriage with his elder sister's daughter.
- A man's marriage with his father's sister's daughter.
- A man's marriage with the daughter of his maternal uncle.

There are some prevailing taboos in this zone.

- A man is prohibited from marrying the daughter of his youngest sister.
- Both junior and senior levirate is also prohibited.
- One can not marry mother's sister's daughter and father's brother's daughter.

The matrilineal families of this zone (Tharavads of Nayers) practice polyandrous marriage. She further compares Northern and the Southern kinship organizations. She also acknowledges the existing relative autonomy of women in the southern zone. As she puts it,

In the north the women's sphere is much more isolated from that of the men than in the south and this is due to the fact that the family is not only patrilineally oriented but dominated by the patri-kin and where girls are always given in marriage to people with whom they are not acquainted. The southern patrilineal families on the other hand prefer marriages of cousins so that the orientation is not entirely patrilocal. (Karve 1953:137)

Methodologically, it is significant to note that the relative autonomy of women in the southern zone is also buttressed by her continuous relation with her parents. However, in my view it can divert our attention from the analysis of the construction of gender-roles within the matrilineal and matrilocal families. This point will be further elaborated in the next chapter.

Central Zone

The central zone comprises Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, Gujarat etc. According to Karve, this zone has more affinity to the north rather than south. This can be attributed to the languages of this region and their close link with Sanskrit and Hindi. In spite of its heterogeneous character this zone has some common features.

- Cross-cousin marriage is widely practiced in this zone.
- Like northern zone this zone is also ramified into exogamous clans.
- These clans among some caste groups are arranged in a hypergamous hierarchical order. According to which a boy can marry a girl from hierarchically lower clans, but it is prohibited for girls. However, she also asserts that the combinations and permutations of above mentioned characters are possible in this zone.

She further states that in contrast to Northern Brahmins, the brahmins of the central zone practice cross-cousin marriage. But according to Karve, Magharashtra, in contrast to Gujarat and Rajasthan, is more inclined towards southern zone. In her view, the central zone is historically significant for its cultural synchritism between Northern and the Southern zone. This argument is further reinforced by the existence of cross-cousin marriages in some regions and its prohibition in others. According to her the Magharashtrians, like the southern people also name their clans by animals and inanimate objects. Each clan has the family name called "Devaka" and inter marriage is prohibited within a particular "Devaka". Through her extensive studies, she demonstrates that the central zone is the synthesis of the northern and the southern zone.

The Eastern Zone

The people of this zone belong to Austo-Asiatic group. According to Karve, the languages of this zone have their affinity with that of south-east-Asian countries. Different tribes of this zone are scattered around and therefore, it is extremely difficult to consider them as a homogenous group. She also analyzes their kinship structure through religious texts and puranas. In order to understand the social life of Austo-Asiatic people, one has to rely upon tribal regions and puranas. It is significant to note that tribal religion and related rituals, practices etc are being orally transmitted from one generation to another. Therefore, it can be adequately grasped only by mastering their language, which is again, not an easy task for an outsider.

Irawati Karve further analyzes kinship organization of the Mundari tribes. She states that all the people speaking Mundari language have patrilineal and patrifocal families. As long as the mother's brother or the father's sister is alive, both fraternal and maternal cross-cousin marriage is prohibited. Thus, it becomes a rare event. It is significant to note that this partial taboo on cross-cousin marriage distinguishes Mundari speaking tribes from that of the patrilineal families of the southern zone. Mundari speaking people are ramified into the exogamous clans. After marriage, the couples establish separate households. However, this nuclear family is distinct from that of the nuclear families of the urban society under the ground that the former establishes nuclear family for the sake of job opportunities or controversies in a joint household etc, whereas the latter tend to preserve their kinship ties.

In contrast to the Mundari speaking tribes, *Khasis* of Meghalaya have matrilineal kinship organization. However, their kinship structure is significantly different from that of the Nayar's of Kerala. As Karve puts it:

We have seen that the Nayars have a matrilineal joint family where the husbands of the women are occasional visitors only. Among the *Khasis* also there is a matrilineal joint family with common worship and a common graveyard for members of the family, but the husband and wife live together in a small house of their own. The husband lives for a time with the wife's people but after the birth of a child or two the married pair go to live in a separate house erected by the man. This house and the land belong to the man if he has acquired them by his own labour. He can give them away to whom he wills, but on his death, if he dies without making a gift of it while living, all his property passes ordinarily to his mother. The widow may get a half if she does not marry again. If he has

no mother then it goes to his youngest sister. If he has no female relatives on the mother's side it goes to his youngest daughter. (Karve, 1953:327 - 328)

The above quoted passage re-emphasizes the relative autonomy of women in a matrilineal society. However, in the next chapter we shall examine how patriarchy functions within the domain of the matrilineal kinship structure.

In the foregoing analysis I have attempted to analyze the heterogeneous characteristics of Indian kinship organizations as described by Irawati Karve. It is significant to note that Karve's preoccupation with the description of kinship structure might have prevented her from using gender as a category in her analysis. This can also be attributed to the elements of the structural functional theory in her writings. The inadequacy of structural functionalism will be dealt with in the final section. Let us now compare and contrast North Indian and South Indian kinship structure by taking Louis Dumont as a starting point.

IV.III.2 Louis Dumont

Louis Dumont compares and contrasts North Indian kinship structure with that of South India. He argues that in spite of the differences, South Indian kinship system is also patrilineal in nature. He states that among the Sarjupur Brahmins of UP, the wife givers enjoy comparatively lower status than that of the wife-takers. They also prohibit patrilateral cross-cousin marriage as well. However, among the South Indian brahmins, there is a partial taboo on patrilateral and matrilineal cross-cousin marriage. He further states that in both the kinship systems, hypogamous marriage is common among the higher castes. In fact some of them even believe that such marriages are meant for the rich people or the upper caste. However, he acknowledges a significant methodological problem when he writes:

Given the present state of knowledge, it is certainly difficult to generalize from a localized study to a wider region. Yet we can recall and, in the light of our findings, discuss some general features. In the first place, let us not forget that a clear differentiation between male and female children regarding the transmission of assets is embedded in traditional Hindu law. (Dumont, 1993:106)

In my view, comparative perspective and mere description of kinship terminology is inadequate to understand gender inequality. In the following section let us further explore, kinship structure through religious texts as described by G.S.Ghurye.

IV.III.3 G.S.Ghurye

Ghurye analyzed family and kinship structure of the Indo-European culture by looking at its kinship terminologies. According to him, the Indo-European kinship terminologies can be categorized into two:

1. The Consanguinal
2. The Affinal

The Consanguinal Relatives

The consanguinal relatives are connected through blood while the affinal relatives are interlinked with consanguinal relatives through marriage. Let us briefly describe them.

Ghurye tries to articulate how the kinship terms themselves are the reflection of the existing patrilineal structure. More significantly, his analysis always revolves around men, no matter whether father or husband. This becomes more evident when he writes:

Whether the husband was the master of his wife, or was her supporter, or her protector, or all the three in one, it is instructive to note that the various sub-families of the Indo-European languages group have stressed in their nomenclature of this relative either the one or the other aspect. Sanskrit *pati*, husband, is translated to mean master and has its cognate in Old Greek *posis* and Lithuanian *patis*. Most Sanskrit-inspired Indo-Aryan languages have this word or some other equivalent as an alternative term for this relative. Latin has a general term meaning man merely. Other Indo-European languages have, too, followed suit. And the Old Greek alternative term *aner* has also the same connotation, like Sanskrit *nara* which means man in general. *Bhartri*, the Sanskrit alternative term for husband, meaning supporter, is only represented in the Indo-Aryan languages, some of which in addition have a new term meaning a bridegroom (Ghurye 1955: 19).

This passage clearly brings out his explanation of only the man-centered patrilineality. He further explores this argument by looking at the meanings given to the word 'wife'. The term "wife", in almost all the European languages, denotes "the married one". However, he states that the word in the later Vedic period emphasized the relative autonomy of women. The later Vedic texts also acknowledged the role of husband's mother in bringing the bride to the home. In marriage rituals among the contemporary brahmins, husband's mother plays an important role in bringing the bride to the home. Not only does she receive to introduce her to the household, but also, she has to take her on her lap as an accepted member of the family. He further states that even the term "father", in different languages refers to "the protector" or "the master". Thus, the author demonstrates that the earlier Indo-European society might have been patrilineal, patrilocal, and the patriarchal one. However, we shall argue later that the dominant perspective in the 19th

century (i.e. evolutionary theories) some of which within the paradigm of the Marxism attempted to demonstrate the existence of matrilineality before patrilineality, which is also a source of inspiration for the feminist scholars of the late 20th century.

The Affinal Relatives

As we have mentioned, affinal relatives are connected by marriage. According to Ghurye. In almost all the Indo-European languages, affinal terms are used to connect the bride with the bridegroom. These terms also bind both the families together. In Sanskrit, the term "Sambandhin" denotes "the one who is bound or connected with oneself through marital relations". In Hindi, it refers to the persons whose sons or daughters are connected through marriage. He further writes,

In almost all the Indo-European languages, the terms for these relatives have a primitive Indo-European *suo* base. At least in some of the languages the parents of the bride and the bridegroom are designated only through a general term showing 'connexion', 'binding'. In Sanskrit it is *sambandhin*, one who is bound or connected (with oneself). *Sambandhins*, or *sandhis* as they are called in Hindi, are persons who are connected (through marriage). The Greek word, *pentheros*, which is the only term for wife's father and is an alternative term for husband's father, is cognate with the Sanskrit word that can be derived from the root *bandh*, to bind. *Pentheros*, thus, generically means the same thing as Sanskrit *sambandhin*, one who is connected (by marriage). It is probable that in primitive Indo-European times the term for one's consort's parents was one with only a generic import, and that in actual address the parental terms were employed. Transition from parental terms to terms traceable to a base which means one's own is intelligible in a social organization where marriage not only united the bride and the bridegroom into a couple, not only placed the bride as a member of the bridegroom's family, but also brought their families together and accorded a definite status to the bridegroom in the reckoning of the bride's family. (Ghurye 1955:36)

Thus, through his analysis, Ghurye contests the existence of matrilineal societies and their related practices such as cross-cousin marriage, inheritance of property through female lines etc. He further explores his argument by analyzing Sanskrit literature.

IV.III.3 Indian Kinship Structure And The Sanskrit Literature

According to Ghurye, kinship structure of the Vedic period can be adequately grasped by looking at religious prayers, rituals, beliefs, practices etc. By analyzing the earlier Vedic literature, he argues that people of that period practiced ancestral worship. Those ancestral Gods were communal, therefore, such worship clearly represented the community as a whole. In this context, it is significant to note that Emile Durkheim was one of the founding fathers of sociology who had emphasized this point in his "The Elementary Forms Of Religious Life". It

also clearly brings out the existence of functionalist elements in Ghurye's analysis. He further analyses the kinship structure of the early Vedic period. He tries to demonstrate the existence of joint family in that period. He writes.

In one of the oldest Upanishads a special form, never to be met with again or elsewhere, of the term *pautra* designates a great-grandson. 'Janasruti *pautrayana*' is described as having been a far-famed donor and feeder. Pautrayana, as commentators have explained, means son's grandson, and Janasruti means a descendant of Janasruta. In the passage it is clear that it was thought adequate to specify a well-known donor without actually naming him as the great-grandson of his famous great-grandfather. The Vedic family must, therefore, be construed to have been a working unit of four generations. (Ghurye 1955:47&48)

Ghurye further analyzes the existence of different relations in the early Vedic period. He states that there are evidences to suggest the existence of avoidance relationship between the father-in-law and the daughter-in-law. Though the daughter-in-law is initially expected to show respectable attitude towards her father-in-law, the power is gradually transformed to her so that the newly brought bride is completely incorporated into her husband's patrikin. According to Ghurye, a woman's brother also appears as her protector. Therefore, the absence of him is considered to be unfortunate. He plays a predominant role even when his parents are alive. In Rig Veda, there are evidences to understand brother's role in performing marriage rituals. As he puts it,

In contemporary orthodox Brahmanic marriage ceremonies the bride's brother has to discharge the function of offering the parched grain to the bridegroom to be used as oblations to the nuptial fire. How ancient that practice is we do not exactly know. It is recorded in the early ritual of the *Grihya Sutras*, about the fifth century B.C. In *Apastamba Grihya Sutra*, and it would appear in other *Sutras* too, it is stated as the opinion of some that the parched grain to be offered by the bride, and not by the bridegroom, as an oblation is put into her hands by her brother. (Ghurye 1955:50)

Like Irawati Karve, Ghurye also acknowledges the conflicting interests between the bride and the daughter. By drawing examples from Manu, he argues that by the end of the second century, the worship of the forefathers had declined. Therefore, father's worship is equated with the worship of God. He also asserts the fact that it is ambiguous to believe that these practices were prevalent among all sections of the Vedic and the later Vedic people. However, rituals and practices as prescribed by Manu were prevalent at least among the Brahmanical caste.

He further explores this ancestral worship through epics and puranas. In ramayana, the younger son of Dasaratha, while returning from his mother's residence notices not only the statues of his forefathers, but also his immediate father. Thus, he tries to articulate the existence of immediate father's worship. He tries to inter-relate these ancestral worships with the inheritance of property. The Vedic texts give a specific emphasis to the inheritance of property through the patrilineal decent group upto four generations. According to Ghurye, these inheritance laws are strictly agnostic. He further states that the property is always transferred from the grand father to the grand son. According to him, patrilineal kinship structure acknowledges agnatic relatives belonging to seven generations as the inheritors of property. In the absence of agnatic relatives, property revolves around cognitive relatives.

The foregoing analysis clearly brings out Ghurye's interest in analyzing men's role in a patrilineal society and the women's absorption into the patrikin of the men. So far I have analyzed some anthropological theories in understanding the Indian Kinship and the family structure. Needless to say that the element of traditional functionalism in these theories does not acknowledge gender inequality as a subject of discussion. In the following section, I intent to explore further, whether the studies on Indian families make any significant departure from these perspectives or they reflect merely the same ideas.

IV

The Transition from Kinship Analysis to the Family

In the foregoing analysis, I have examined kinship terms, their relatives, their practices, and their existence in religious texts and so on. Thus, I sought to demonstrate that most of the western as well as Indian scholars were preoccupied with the concept of patrilineality. Its impact in the family analysis can be felt more clearly as one progresses. In simple terms family can be defined as, "a group of persons united by the ties of marriage, blood or adoption, constituting a single household, interacting with each other in their respective social positions of husband and wife, mother and father, son and daughter, brother and sister, who share, create and maintain a common culture". (Encyclopedia Britannica, pp.673, Vol. 5 .15th edition.)

The above definition clearly indicates the functionalist elements in family research. It is significant to note that this definition while acknowledging family as the sight of interaction

between husband and wife, father and mother etc., it does not explore to what extent these roles are socially constructed and thus, the men-folk is considered to be dominant than that of their counterparts.

Given this basic definition, the functionalists start with the basic assumption that family performs some universal functions that are indispensable for the survival of the society. As stated earlier Parsons (1955) argues that two such functions are inevitable, namely, the educative and the stabilization of the human personality. In this section, we shall see how far these preconceived notions have made its impact felt in the writings of the Indian scholars.

IV.IV.1 K. M. Kapadia

In social research, changing nature of the family is analyzed by correlating it with external changes such as- educational development, urbanization, industrialization etc. Much like Parsons, Kapadia also argues that these changes also put the family at transition.

According to him, the demand for an educated woman as a marriage partner is also one of the primary function for the transition of the family. Therefore in his view the spread of education among the women is mainly to fulfil the basic needs of men rather than their self-development. Considering these assumptions he conducted a study among the students of matric and prematric classes in a town of Navsari taluq. He correlates the changes in the joint family with the above mentioned external changes. He writes,

...family to be joint the members of which are related to one another by mutual rights and obligations. The income of all the members is generally pooled together and property is held in common and controlled by the head of the family. The members may be related lineally or collaterally. (Kapadia 1954:74)

It is significant to note that this definition encompasses much of Parsonian definition of the kin-group. He further states that a family is nuclear if it is composed of a person, his wife and their children, married or unmarried. These categories reveal that he is more interested in defining the family on similar lines with Parsons. Given these definitions, he attempts to distinguish the joint family from that of the nuclear family by using the structural functional approach.

The joint family thus differs from the nuclear family both in structure and function. From the structural point of view it has greater generation depth (3 or even more) than the nuclear family which holds together only two generations. On the functional basis, the residential unit of a person, his wife and their children do not necessarily constitute a nuclear family, though it has been so categorized by census authorities. (Kapadia, 1954:74)

Thus he argues that even a structurally nuclear family is not necessarily be nuclear family, but rather, it can be functionally joint family. As I shall see later, this position emerged due to his bias and inclination towards the joint family that is also a dominant form among the upper stratum of society. He also introduces another type of family that is in transitional stage. This residential unity is not in any way related to the parental family and thus it appeared as a nuclear family. However, these family members have some obligation towards their relatives. Therefore, in his view, categorizing such families into these two, will divert our attention from some of the existing families that are neither nuclear nor joint.

It is significant to bear in mind that the above analysis reveals the existence of evolutionists as well as structural functional perspective in Kapadia's writings. He further contests the dichotomy of joint and nuclear family led by correlating it with the rural and the urban French. In continuation to the existence of the functionally joint family in urban area, he argues that urbanization has no serious impact on the family structure.

Through his survey he finds that the eldest male member of the family has the absolute authority which is not questioned by his respondents. Among them the younger generation's acceptance to bear authority further strengthens the emotional needs and dependency. In my view, it is questionable whether the male head exercises his authority towards both men and women equally. The answer to this question is highly ambiguous.

In earlier studies at least some scholars acknowledged conflicts between brothers, mother-in-law and daughter-in-law, daughter and bride etc. Though Kapadia considers these factors, he treats family as a functionally integrated group. As he puts it,

The traditional roles and duties persist without much evident conflict, probably because the elders seek to maintain their positions of status in the family not, as they did in the past, by awe and authority but by adapting their discipline to satisfy the needs and aspirations of their wards. The stresses and strains between two generations do exist but they are limited in extent, mild in character and temporary in duration. (Kapadia 1954:92)

It is significant to note that Parsons also takes the similar position regarding with deviance and conflict within the domain of family. Like Parsons, Kapadia also argues that the conflicts between husband and wife are less serious and temporary in duration. Even the conflict between mother-in-law and daughter-in-law in his view arises only when domestic works are unevenly distributed. To be more precise, the conflict is oriented towards the conventions. Therefore, it is not ideologically oriented and thus it has fewer consequences in any family.

Another source of conflict is the employment of women. He introduces two functional alternatives in the light of such conflicts.

- Controlling the birth rate and minimizing the number of children
- Leaving their children under the in charge of some private institutions.

In the context of such arguments, parsons states that sacrifice of women's employment minimizes the conflicting interests and thus it promotes solidarity within the family. Kapadia's view and its orientation to Parsonian theory shows the existing gender bias within the paradigm of functionalism which is our subject of discussion in the final section of this chapter.

Even while considering status of women, Kapadia's analysis revolves around men. This becomes more evident when he states that 'the status of woman is defined here by considering the privileges enjoyed by the husband and the obligations imposed upon the wife in their marital relationships' (Kapadia, 1954:141). This definition clearly reveals his bias in analyzing the status of woman within the joint family. We shall have occasions to argue that a researcher no matter whether male or female ventures in to the field with different kinds of male bias which has a significant impact in the formulation of his or her own theory. Kapadia further writes,

There has been an awakening that women are not born to be confined to the homes. Even when maternity and house management are considered as the primary duties of women, it is acknowledged that they should be engaged in some kind of social service. That is the main direction of change of attitudes towards women. Even when we accept the fact that women are fitted to be mothers, and that women's obligations to be mothers and wives are necessary for the healthy upkeep of society, we can not help recording that the recognition of woman as an individual with her own rights and self-imposed obligations, (of course, in conformity with the bounds of society) has not yet sufficiently dawned. (Kapadia 1954:157)

The above quoted passage uncovers his theoretical position. In the light of this, he shifts his attention towards the functions of the joint family. According to him, joint family performs the following functions:

- Economic burden is shared.
- It is the only arrangement of social security.
- It cultivates certain desirable qualities.

His functions of the joint family are also grounded in Parsonian theory. Given these basic functions he only shifts his attention towards the structure of the joint family. According to him, structure of the joint family includes:

- The components of the family
- The existing relationships between its constituent members
- The size of the family

Given these criteria, he further states,

The joint family implies common kitchen, common residence, common purse, common property, common worship and common social functions. By common social functions is implied that for all social functions family is treated as a person, and all social functions are attended by a representative of the family, more often the head of the family. The strength of the joint family lies in its solidarity which is expressed by the degree of sharing in common these various functions and the extension of the circle of relationships. (Kapadia 1956:180)

This passage clearly brings out functionalist elements in Kapadia's thoughts. Given this basic definition he states that though the small families are among all communities, larger communities are still prevalent irrespective of community or caste differences. Therefore, such families functionally remain as joint families, in spite of its structural change. 'From the structural point of view, a large number of the families still maintain the original form in that sharing in common is still pursued in residence, kitchen, purse, property and social functions' (Kapadia 1956:188).

According to Kapadia, the analysis of any institutional change should be taken into account.

- The attitudinal change
- The structural change
- The ideological change

Given these conditions he states that the impact of western thought resulted in the attitudinal and structural change. However, the ideological element of joint family remained unchanged. It would be interesting to note that this notion emerged from the concept of cultural diffusion. However, his bias towards joint family might have prevented him from extending it to its ideological elements. He asserts the fact that the investigation can reveal the nature and direction of familial change. However, in the next chapter, we shall try to demonstrate how the patriarchy and its ideological apparatus have been imposed upon some matrilineal communities where the joint family (Tharavads of Nayars) and the relative autonomy of women are losing their credibility. We shall also argue that theories on family, marriage and kinship in India largely emerged from the male bias. However, before looking at such biases, I shall now further explore existing theories based on functionalism in family research.

IV.IV.2 M. S. Gore

Gore's study on family, like that of the other functionalists' revolves around a man's relationship with his mother and his wife. Through his study he argues that a man's relationship with his mother and his inclination towards such relationships indicates the existence of traditional values in his thoughts. He also states that in the modern society, this trend is changing. Through his study he demonstrates that majority of the respondents admitted their closeness to both mothers and wives. According to him, this trend indicates a moderate change in the attitude of men. It has to be noted that his general assumption (if a man is closer to his mother, he necessarily has to be distant from his wife and vice-versa) shows his male bias, which is an indication of how a male bias can shape one's research experience.

He further tries to negate the general assumption of the correlation of urbanization and the change in the human relationships. He states that the majority of his respondents are reluctant to give primacy to one of these relationships. He further adds that same trend can be observed by correlating education and change. When Gore examines men's response to these relations and their changing trends, he does not perceive any bias involving in it. However, while analyzing women's response his attention shifts towards their bias. This becomes more evident when he writes.

The image that a wife carries of her husband's closeness to his mother and to herself is very different from his own image of these relationships. Assuming that the man and the woman are both giving candid replies, it would appear that a large proportion of the two groups live in two different worlds. The most likely explanation is that wives perceive the situation with a bias. (Gore 1962:98-99)

He further states that in an ideal joint family the wife has to make a greater emotional investment than her husband. As a stranger, it is the sole responsibility of a married woman to depend upon her husband. According to Gore, the only comparable significant relationship of a woman in her conjugal family is her relationship with her children.

Gore through his research attempts to confirm the important general assumption that the sole responsibility of the married woman is to be wife and mother. Needless to point out that this is a general assumption that emerged from the male bias that a married woman should be confined only to the domestic life. This point is further buttressed by the concept of "ideal joint family". Different kinds of male biases will be elaborated in the later section. In the foregoing sections, we have examined the Indian and the Western writings and families of which some of them are preoccupied with structural functional approach. While others in following sections, we shall see, are not claiming themselves to be structurally functionalists, but such elements are very much prevalent in these writings.

IV.IV.3 A. M. Shah

A. M. Shah conducted a study in a Gujarat village called Radhavanaj. Through his study, he analyses the household dimension of family in India. He starts with the premise that the concept of household is significantly different from that of the family. Other than common residence, sharing common kitchen etc., the family also includes wider kin groups. On the other hand, in a household, people sharing common residence, kitchen etc. do not necessarily form a family. According to Shah, household can be divided into two namely:

- The simple household
- The complex household

According to him, there are six major compositions in the structure of household. They are:

- Household composed of husband, wife and married or unmarried children
- Husband and wife

- Father and unmarried children
- Mother and unmarried children
- Unmarried brothers and sisters
- A single man or woman

According to Shah, the household should include even servants despite the fact that they are not treated equally because of their inferior status in the social hierarchy. He further states that the new arrival of the bride in a patrilineal kinship structure has an enormous impact on the structure of the household. As he puts it,

While the female patrilineal descendants of male ancestor go away to live with their husbands, the male patrilineal descendants and their wives should live together. The wives should be so completely incorporated into their husband's kin group that they should not be divorced, and even after their husband's death they should stay on in the same household. Unmarried children should be with their parents. In the event of the divorce or death of their mother, they should stay with their father or his male patrikin'. (Shah 1973:16)

Thus, he clearly indicates that the household should necessarily be a male headed patrikin. According to Shah, the complex household is found when two or more sons migrate from the village but still maintain their ties with the patrikin. A.M.Shah calls it "an integrated group". Like K.M.Kapadia, he also argues that the joint and the nuclear households are not confined only to the rural and the urban fringe. But, rather, he calls Kapadia's "functionally joint family" as an "integrated group".

He states that if the two or more married brothers live together, then the potentiality of conflict persists. The intensity of this conflicting interest increases especially among their wives. If the high intensity of the conflict reaches its peak then the property is separated among them, and thus, each one of them establishes a separate household. Despite these separations, their kinship ties are not completely broken down. As Shah observes,

When brothers live in separate households it does not mean that they sever all other social relationships. Household separation obviously involves partition of almost all the movable property, such as jewellery, pots and pans, mattresses, furniture, and other household equipment. In most cases it is also accompanied by partition of immovable property, but this need not always be so. Brothers may continue to own land and buildings jointly, and may even cultivate land or carry on some commercial or productive enterprise jointly. In this regard it is necessary to distinguish between various forms of

immovable property, such as ancestral and self-acquired, corporeal and incorporeal (e.g., *jajmani* rights), dry land and wet land, cultivable land and uncultivable land, sentimentally and ritually important ancestral fields, land under special tenures, and expensive agricultural equipment, such as a well, particularly a well with irrigation devices, a diesel or electric pump, a storehouse, a cart, and so on. Brothers may partition property of only some kinds, but remain joint with reference to others; that is, they may partition different items of property at different times'. (Shah 1973:30)

In the light of this passage, it would be interesting to note that Shah's preoccupation with the male-headed patrilineal household structure does not even allow him to think of any female headed household. As we shall see later, this is how male bias can be incorporated into the sociology of knowledge. He goes on arguing that in a household composed of father and son, the father is the head. However, in a household composed of widowed mother and her son, she just appears as an agency through which the household responsibilities are gradually transferred to her son.

He further states that the patrilineal norms and values are reflected even in the exchange of gifts between the wife givers and the wife takers. According to him, the families of the wife givers can offer any gift to the bride's conjugal family. However, they do not receive anything from such a household. In fact, some of them do not even drink water from her household. These practices are grounded in the patrilineal belief that receiving that anything from the wife takers' family will lower the status of the wife givers.

Therefore, like Irawati Karve, he also argues that the status of the wife takers' family is higher than that of the wife givers. He further states that the father son household is the predominant form in the Radwanaj. However, the father-daughter household is a rare phenomenon, and even if it exists, then the father is left alone after his daughter's marriage. This argument further reinforces that patrilineal norm of a father staying away from her married daughter.

Shah emphasizes the need for incorporating caste in analyzing a particular household structure. However he asserts the fact that the kinship structure may have distinctive characteristics within a single caste if it is widely dispersed. Through his study, he states that, the status of a particular caste can be correlated with its household composition. He argues that the untouchables tend to have simple households, whereas the higher castes have complex households. However, he is

also aware of the simple polarization of the caste groups into higher and lower castes. He states that the same caste can be internally differentiated. Thus, its household composition can discord from one region to another.

According to Shah, among the lower castes, the less prevalence of joint families or the complex household can be attributed to what he calls “the lower caste syndrome”. It includes:

- Divorce or remarriage of a divorced woman
- Little, if any of landed property
- Filthy unevenly constructed houses etc.

It is significant to note that theoretically this argument can be traced back to Parsonian functionalism. In another article “Parameters of family policy in India (1989)”, he briefly looks at the states’ policy towards the family. He states that in spite of the legislative reforms, British rulers could not extend their legislation to the family. In India, the state attempted to intervene in family laws only in the 20th century. As we know, the critics of family planning often point out the absence of the human face. However, Shah traces back drawbacks of the state policy to the existing patrilineal structure. According to him, women’s low status can be situated to the existing patrilineal norms only. He also acknowledges the fact that in a multilingual and ethnic society, it is becoming increasingly difficult for the state to introduce any common code for the family. The household of the traditional family is patrilineal and thus is widespread in India.

He further argues that traditionally the care of the aged has been the concern of the family. However, in the contemporary society this is being increasingly called into question. In an attempt to solve this problem, he further states that the traditional kinship bonds must be strengthened in order to care for the old, aged groups. According to him, the state while valuing the isolated individual families has not given an adequate emphasis to the equality between men and women.

It is necessary to have a basic research on family at large which takes a comprehensive view of the interrelations between different structures of the families, interrelations between families and other structures and other institutions in different sections of the societies, and in different sections of the country, which will give a methodological tool to understand Indian family.

Despite his plea for the methodological revivalism, he himself fell back on the very trap that he wished to avoid. Shah used many concepts and methodological tools which neglects gender aspect. Nevertheless, this significant departure of a conventionally oriented scholar clearly reveals that it is increasingly difficult to neglect gender inequality in family research.

IV.IV. 4 Andre Beteille (1991)

Beteille starts with the premise that some kind of inequality is indispensable for the smooth functioning of the society. Family also plays an important role, if not a decisive role in reproducing social structure including the structure of inequality. This argument clearly reveals that family research can not and should not be conducted in isolation from other social institutions such as caste, class etc. He argues that in the modern society, family, like caste, also transmits inequality from one generation to another.

By neglecting the evolutionary theories of the family, he demonstrates that family takes a variety of forms in different societies. Like Parsons, he also asserts the universal presence of the nuclear family. In a recent study of the “personality formation among Hindus” takes for granted the universal existence of the extended family in all strata of the society. However, Beteille takes up a different position when he writes:

A recent influential study of personality formation among Hindus (Kakar 1978) takes for granted the universal presence of the extended family in all strata of society. This is plainly misleading. Nuclear families outnumber extended ones in many social settings (Narain 1975). It is of course true that the same individual might live in both types of family during different phases of his life. Moreover, grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins continue to play an important part in the individual's development, whether from within or outside the family, in all sections of Indian society. Nevertheless, we should not discount the importance of the nuclear family in the service class in large metropolitan cities (Beteille 1989:437).

Like Parsons, he also argues that family, in future, is less likely to lose its credibility, but rather, it is becoming more strong. According to Beteille, each family has a stock of “cultural capital”. This capital is significantly different from the material capital. Cultural capital is “comprising of its command over knowledge, skills, tastes etc. that are a part of its distinctive way of life.”(Beteille.1991) In his view, cultural or the social capital unlike the material capital is not reproduced within a shorter period. According to Beteille, the social capital is “in the form of

networks of relationships, partly acquired from the past and partly constructed through the initiative of its members.” (Beteille 1991:16)

In his view, it would be premature to conclude that familial disadvantage partly emerged from the cultural capital can not be overcome. According to Beteille, modern educational system creates a platform for an individual to overcome his or her familial disadvantage.

He goes on arguing that despite the conservative attitude of parents towards marriage, modern Indian family is undergoing a process of, what he calls, “nuclearisation” (the husband and wife acquiring a sharper identity within the wider kin group). According to Beteille, schools have also been a mediating institution between family and modern occupational system and thus, play a major role in the reproduction of inequality. He states that middle class parents have started increasingly sharing the responsibility of schools in educating their children and thus, the cultural capital of the family is significant in motivating the child. He also compares and contrasts family and caste in understanding the inequality. In the traditional society caste was not only an agent of social placements, but also an agent of social control.

However, in the modern society, caste plays what he calls “passive role” at least among the service class. The family in the modern society has substantiated this active role of caste. However, by neglecting the active role of the caste and emphasizing the active role family, he reintroduces Parsonian idea of the inevitability of the family. He further writes,

Modern Hindus, whether of a secular persuasion or not are no longer committed to caste, as Hindus were in the past, but that they continue to be committed to the family. This is not to say that the Hindu undivided family is not changing or that it will not change further. It is obvious that many modern Hindus find it possible to visualize their society in the future without the Hindu caste system; it is difficult to say how many of them are able to visualize it without the Hindu family (Beteille, 1991:22).

Though he acknowledges the changing nature of the family structure, he does not foresee any radical change. It is significant to note that he also does not address to the problem of gender inequality within the domain of the family.

IV.IV.5 Critical Functionalism

Functionalism in the 20th century was trying to break the traditional functionalist paradigm. By drawing inspiration from Robert K. Merton, critical functionalism incorporates gender and class.

This theory also analyses the dysfunctional and the nonfunctional aspects of a particular social system. It stands as a powerful critique to the traditional functionalist paradigm. In the context of the family in India, we are aware of the fact that most of the studies were preoccupied with the dichotomy of joint family versus nuclear family. Critical functionalism, in my view, also adds to this debate. The traditional theories also gave a specific emphasis to the structurally nuclear, functionally joint family. However, the critics within the domain of functionalism analyze the changing nature of such analysis.

Sudha Kaledate argues that any social institution which is exposed to the external forces such as urbanization, industrialization etc. is bound to be changed. However, when she talks about the industrialization, she describes the change only within the paradigm of functionalism. She states that women's participation in the labour force largely improved their status. As we shall see, this optimism in any society has to be critically analyzed so that the existing gender inequality can be adequately grasped. She further states that K.M.Kapadia and others fail to give proper recognition to the concept of cultural lag. Nimkoff further argues that they also fail to realize the fact that social situation may be temporary or transitional, and may undergo further change according to time and space. Thus, it may even result in radical transformation. However, their inclination towards the functionalism is expressed, in their fundamental argument that social disorganization is the first stage in the reorganization. Therefore, despite their acknowledgement of social change, their preoccupation with restoration of order and stability is more evident. It is significant to note that critical functionalism, despite its belief in order and stability had opened the traditional functional analysis to the critical evaluation.

The above analysis clearly brings out the inadequacy of conventional theories in general and structural functional school in particular in understanding gender inequality. Let us now further explore this argument in the next section.

V.

The Inadequacy of Structural Functional School in Understanding Gender Inequality

In the previous sections, we have reviewed the extent literature of western as well as Indian scholars on family. At the end of it we are in a position to argue that most of these studies do not

give adequate emphasis to gender inequality within the domain of family. It is interesting to note that courses on family in many well established universities either neglects or summarily dismisses the gender dimension by categorizing it as ideological. Patricia Oberoi (1993) argues that family studies in India fail to address that family studies in India fail to address some crucial issues regarding the gender. As she puts it,

For every post-graduate student in an Indian classroom is aware that marriage partners are being urgently sought for them by their friends and relations; that a mature girl's reputation and virginity are subjects of constant scrutiny and public comment; that their chances in the marriage 'market' have already been decided by their academic choices; that a male student's success in the competitive examinations will entitle him to a dowry of several hundreds of thousands of rupees; that in any case the final clinching of a marriage deal will involve material trade-offs of considerable dimensions; that wife-givers in these arrangements will be expected to pay ritual respect and substantial periodic prestations to their wife-takers; and that for women it will often mean a traumatic rupture of primary kin relations and a difficult process of subordinate status in a family of strangers. Nobody really expects adolescent crushes and affairs of the heart will lead through courtship to marriage, despite the celebration of romance in popular media. In fact, romance has only dubious legitimacy, marriage, quite clearly, some other function. We have here a situation which is fraught with anxiety. And as the study of kinship and family impinges on these sensitive issues and intrudes into the domain of the private, the classroom is apt to become a site of struggle: between teacher and students; between boys and girls; between activists and academics; between and practicalities; between defiance and conformity. At moment, ideals may be put to the test, and hypocrisy laid bare. It is, as my students often tell me, a 'bad scene'! Very few of the papers in this collection directly address themselves to the experiential problems of Indian family life, and the impractical politics of contemporary Indian kinship and marriage have just alluded to. But they do, I believe, provide the academic language and framework-concepts, terminology and comparative reference- whereby these issues may be approached and made speakable. It is important, I think, that this should be done. (Oberoi 1993:2&3)

In the light of this passage, a crucial point to be noted is that these problems lie in the perspectives of the scholars themselves. Throughout this chapter, we argued that studies conducted in sociology on social anthropology were based on the dominant perspectives, such as evolutionism, functionalism, diffusionism etc. these perspectives fail to address to the existing gender inequality in the family. We have also analyzed how the perspectives of the west made their impact felt on the writings of the Indian scholars. In the light of this, it is significant to pose the following questions. Is it correct to say that family research can not be conducted in isolation from these conventional perspectives? Why did large number of studies by the Indian, as well as Western scholars on family are reluctant to use gender as a category? Is it true that this is largely due to the existing male

bias in a discipline? Can we say that these male bias in a discipline? Can we say that these male biases can be eliminated to a considerable extent if studies are conducted by the female scholars. In order to understand these questions we have to look into the writings of some scholars who used gender as a category in family research. It is significant to note that in spite of the absence of gender category these studies were always centered around the day to day activities, marriage practice, beliefs, rituals etc. of the women. As Henrietta Moore puts it,

Women were not ignored in traditional anthropology. At the level of observation in field work, the behaviour of women has of course, like that of men has been exhaustively quoted. their marriages, their economic activities, their rites and rest (Ardiner 1995). Women have always been present in ethnographic account primarily because of the traditional anthropological concern with kinship and marriage. The main problem, therefore is not of empirical study, but that of representation of women. (Moore 1988: 1)

Therefore, it shows that the same reality can be approached through different angles, of which some can neglect the inevitable categories in the reality, which is subject to observation. The feminist critics questioned methods used in social research. One of the major cause for the neglect of gender perspective is the male bias. Moore states that the existing male bias can prevent researchers from addressing the problem relate with women. Moore identifies three layers of male bias in social research.

Firstly, a researcher ventures to the field with a view that men are easily accessible to the observation than women and information and knowledge is also controlled by them. Secondly, the bias is inherent in the society itself, which is subjective to study, and thus, it is believed that women are subordinate to men. Thirdly, if the researcher belongs to a particular society where the relationship between men and women are asymmetrical then, he/she may also perceive other cultures with the same assumption. The third bias is more applicable to the Indian studies. In the light of this analysis, can we say that critical functionalism makes a significant departure? The answer, we found, is negative. Can we say that this problem can largely be overcome if the male researchers are substituted by the female scholars, we do not find any significant change in their theories. Given these circumstances, it is obvious to penetrate into theories, i.e. structural – functionalism to find an answer.

Henerietta Moore further states that the existing concepts, perspectives, analytical methods had emerged out of the male bias of the western society. No wonder the gender category is absent in these researches. As I mentioned earlier, the critical functionalists tend to incorporate gender on class in family analysis. Robert Park's important work called "The Engendered Leisure", introduces gender on class into the functional theories. He argues that the relationship between boys and girls as far as leisure is concerned is patriarchal than required. Though he introduces gender analysis, he calls for more diverged approaches in analyzing the social reality. However, as learning states that his theory acknowledges the inability of the functionalism to understand class and gender inequality. It does not go beyond the functional paradigm, and thus, it fails to give any alternative. Therefore, in critical theory, gender analysis remains only at rudimentary level and does not adequately explore many issues. Now we are in a position to claim that structural, functional approach, especially, in family research is inadequate to understand gender inequality. In order to group many issues in family and the gender politics, it is inevitable to use gender as a category in social research. Therefore, it would be significant to review some literatures that used "gender" as a category within the domain of the family research. In most of the feminist writings, the concept of patriarchy is the central focus. Therefore, in the next chapter, let us analyze this concept, it's development, and it's contributions to the social research.

CHAPTER - 5

**INDIAN FEMINIST WRITINGS AND
PATRIARCHY**

Introduction

The women's question has been largely neglected in sociology and social anthropology. However, the emergence of the feminist movements in the west in the sixties and academic interrogations since the seventies, challenged many of the conventional theoretical claims, and thus with their intervention, it has become increasingly difficult for the social researchers to ignore gender questions. These arguments have been illustrated in previous chapters through the literature survey of feminist writings of the west. More significantly, the feminist literature of the west emerged largely in response to the demands of the middle class white feminists. Therefore, not surprisingly, they concentrated on the existing gender inequality of the middle class women, in and around family.

In the previous chapter, by analyzing the feminist writings of the west, it was sought to demonstrate that the concept of patriarchy could not be understood through a monocausal explanation. By analyzing the heterogeneous characteristics of their writings, important features of different theoretical perspectives have been acknowledged. In the context of the Indian society, the what has been termed as the second phase of the women's movement also emerged more or less in the same historical period. Though, one can not rule out the impact of the theoretical developments of the west on Indian writings, it would be precocious to consider that Indian feminists have not made their original contribution. Unlike the west, Indian feminist analysis revolves around the problem of development, social reforms and its failure in emphasizing the deep-rooted structural gender inequalities, etc. Methodologically, it is significant to note that the Indian feminist scholars used distinct perspectives within the domain of feminism on different occasions to uncover the gender relations. Therefore, it is formidable to categorize Indian feminist writings on similar lines with the west. Indian feminist analysis attempts to conceptualize patriarchy by looking at the microstructures, such as the family, household, the kinship structure etc. They also inter link these structural elements with the other structural and the cultural variations such as the caste, community state, not only to demonstrate the heterogeneous characteristics of Indian patriarchy, but also to uncover the cross cultural patriarchal structure. Therefore, the concept of patriarchy in the Indian feminist writings can be adequately grasped, only by looking at their analysis of these structural elements.

In contrast to the west, Indian feminist writings on family give specific emphasis to some critical areas, such as the gender relations within the domain of the wider kinship structure, management of female sexuality, marital relations, and its impact on women, gender inequality in food sharing, health care, their relations with the household property, etc. Since the household is the family, household and kinship structure, I shall analyze in the first section, the feminist understanding of patriarchy within the domain of the household, family and the kinship structure. More significantly, the gender inequality within the household can not be analyzed in isolation from the other structural and cultural variations. The external cultural and the structural variations have an enormous impact on the gender relations of the household and family. Therefore, in the second section, I shall look at the concept of patriarchy, by inter linking with three of the external structural elements, namely, caste, community and the state.

I

Gender, kinship, and family

Gender relations are constructed through a wide variety of cultural and structural institutions. By looking at various anthropological and sociological writings, I have analyzed in Chapter four, the conventional theories of the kinship system, and thus I sought to demonstrate that these studies in most cases, did not use gender as a category, and thus neglected its inter related concepts and issues. Therefore, feminist intervention has become inevitable to look at the role of kinship ideology in constructing, and strengthening the gender role. In the context of this, it is indispensable to grasp the distinction between the feminist understanding of the kinship structure and the conventional approaches.

I already pointed out that the conventional theories of family and kinship concentrated on its terminologies, and its usage's, in day today activities. Some of the Indian writers traced back the kinship structure to the Vedic literature's, and thus advocated for the universal existence of the patrilineal, patrilocal, and patriarchal kinship structure. I also looked at the acknowledgement of the heterogeneous characteristics of the Indian kinship structure, in some of the anthropological writings. However, the feminist analysis makes a significant departure from these studies, in many ways. Unlike the conventional theories, feminist analysis attempts to uncover the role of patriarchal ideology in constructing the gender role, within the domain of family and the kinship

system. It also looks at the power relations and thus traces back the sexual asymmetry to the existing kinship norms and values. More significantly, the feminist analysis analyzes the role of kinship ideology in the allocation of material and the nonmaterial resources within the domain of the family, and household.

V.I.1 Kinship system

Feminist understanding of the kinship system, starts with the premise that gender role is constructed within the wider kin group, and thus both men and women are turned into the gendered subjects, by which they are considered as indispensable for the social reproduction. In the Chapter three, I briefly analyzed the distinction between the patrilineal and matrilineal kinship ideology. In the context of the feminist analysis, the ideological element of the kinship system is the major analytical tool in understanding the patriarchal structure, within the domain of the family. Dube (1997) analyzes the role of kinship system in understanding the sexual asymmetry, in and around family. She writes,

The very notion of entitlement – whether to membership of a family, to access to strategic resources, to food and nutrition, to health care, to education, or to authority and decision-making – cannot be understood without accepting that the kinship system to a large degree provides the language for it and gives it legitimacy. A proper analysis of the ideology of the family is not possible without going into various aspects of the kinship system. Because many of them may not be clearly spelt out, it is necessary to search for the ideas and assumptions underlying the behaviour of people. (Dube 1997: 5-6)

More significantly, feminist scholars see the patrilineal procreative ideology in various ethnographic studies itself. "Anthropologists studying primitive societies have had a long-standing interest in indigenous theories of procreation -- what are often called 'descent' or 'procreative ideologies' in anthropological parlance -- linked, in particular, to the functioning of unilineal descent groups and justifying the rights and duties associated with membership in such groups." Uberoi (2000: 22) More significantly, the procreative ideology draws its inspiration from religious texts, and *Puranas*. Dube (1986) traces back the procreative ideology to the Vedic texts. According to her, in most parts of patrilineal India, the procreative ideology is expressed by the metaphorical use of term, the 'seed and earth'. The seed symbolizes the father's contribution and the field represents the part of the mother. According to the patrilineal procreative ideology, the man provides the seed, which is the essence of the human creation. Since the seed is also closely related with the blood, the child shares its blood and identity with father. As Dube puts it.

This seed is contained in the semen, which is said to bear a relationship with blood. Nutrition creates blood, and semen, it is believed, derives from the blood. The quantum of semen, according to traditional belief, bears a proportion to the total volume of blood in the male body. The child, thus, shares its blood with its father. A male child has the potential of being the transmitter of the same blood to the next generation: in other words, of continuing the blood line. Male agnastic kin are known as 'sharers'-those who share common blood and are co-sharers in property or sources of livelihood. (Dube 1986: 21)

According to the patrilineal kinship ideology, a female can not transmit blood from one generation to other. Therefore, a female has eventually to join a man of another bloodline and produce children for him. This notion justifies the heterosexual marital relations and thus both men and women are asymmetrically placed in the patrilineal procreative ideology. More significantly, customary practices and legal codes drew their inspiration from this ideological apparatus, and therefore, not surprisingly, they have been practised for centuries, without much change.

It should be noted that the procreative ideology draws its inspirations from the ancient as well as later Sanskrit texts. Therefore, according to these texts, the main purpose of marriage was seen as the creation of offspring, with a distinct emphasis on male progeny. This point can be very much observed in the writings of *Mahabharatha*. "In *Mahabharatha* there are references to bringing a substitute for the husband to contribute his seed for the sake of obtaining progeny. The *Smritis* also contain suggestions regarding arrangement of a substitute for the husband (in the event of his being dead, important, or an invalid) from among his brothers, lineage mates, or clan (*gotra*) mates whose seed was considered acceptable in those days." (Dube 1986:24)

The opposition between the seed and the earth can also be found in the Hindu law books, particularly with reference to the norms and rules regarding mixed marriages (between varnas and between castes) and the status of offspring of mixed unions. The Hindu legal code, while approving hypergamy, strongly disapproves hypogamous marriages. Tambiah (1973) illustrates this, when he writes, "For, superior seed can fall on the inferior field but inferior seed cannot be allowed to fall on the superior field (quoted in Dube 1986: 25).

In the light of this, it should be noted that the male domination in a class society is expressed in terms of the control of the female sexuality by the propertied class and dominant sections. Dube also acknowledges the need for the analysis of the specific forms of the procreative ideologies, which can vary, according to the cultural and the structural variations.

In contrast to the patrilineal procreative ideology, the matrilineal procreative ideology gives centrality to the mother. According to the matrilineal procreative ideology, the blood links

continue in the female line. In the Chapter three, I have illustrated this by looking at the kinship ideology of the *Khasis* of the Meghalaya. Matrilineal procreative ideology endorses the mother child bond, by tracing it back to the relationship between the foetus and the mother. As Dube notes,

That the foetus derives its sustenance from the mother is an obvious fact and the child's physical closeness to and dependence on the mother during pre-natal and post-natal phases is not only recognized but played up. Expressions such as 'a lump produced from my womb', 'a lump of flesh and bones', 'a piece of my body', 'connected with my insides or intestines', and 'nurtured with my blood' may often be used by the mother to assert the close physical relationship with the child in emotional terms. Breast milk is considered as a substance derived from blood. When it comes to the use of blood as a substance that imparts identity to the child and determines its group placement, however, it is firmly believed that the child gets its blood from the father and shares it with its agnatic kin. (Dube 1986: 33-34)

As I shall argue in the next section, religious groups and communities attempt to transfigure the procreative ideology of the religious texts, and *Puranas* to the contemporary society. In the light of this analysis, it should be noted that the sexual division of labour within the domain of the kinship system, draws its inspiration from these ideological elements. It would be interesting to note that both men and women are socialized in conformity with the kinship ideology, which construct, and preserves the gender relations in general, and gender inequality or sexual asymmetry, in particular. Gough (1993) through her account of the Thanjavoor district, analyzes the manner in which kinship norms and values are inculcated in both men and women. To certain extent, the father plays a predominant role in socializing the child, according to the patrilineal norms and values. She further distinguishes the socialization of men from that of women. According to her, in a patrilineal society, the father claims his authority over his son, from his childhood. This is reflected in terms of the son's deprivation of his intimacy with his mother. "Very early, a father claims his son as the special object of his care, and typically tends to show jealousy of the attachment between the child and his mother." (Gough 1993: 158)

It should also be noted that the father's claim over his male child and a serious of attempt to segregate him from his mother is more common among the Tamil Brahmin community, which is predominantly patrilineal, patrilocal, and patriarchal in nature. Among the Tamil Brahmins, a girl child is regarded as more impure than boy. Unlike male child, a female child from the beginning

is prepared for marriage and thus her socialization differs from the socialization of the male child. As Gough puts it,

A girl child, like a boy, is usually pampered and indulged by both parents, especially by her father. But like a boy before initiation, a girl acquires no social personality until her marriage: she is regarded as an appendage of her father. She does not observe ritual pollution, and no offerings are performed if she dies. At marriage, which formerly took place before puberty but now occurs about the age of fifteen, a girl is transferred as a personal gift, called the 'gift of a virgin', by her father to her husband. This gift of a virgin daughter is said to shrieve her father of the sin of begetting and to transfer it to his son-in-law. For this reason, it is said that to marry a girl is an act of benevolence toward her father. It is performed with ostentatious condescension, and today requires that the bride's father make a heavy cash payment to the bridegroom and meet all the expenses of an elaborate ceremony. At marriage a woman legally becomes a member of her husband's clan, patrilineal group and extended family, from the last of which she may claim maintenance until her death. (Gough 1993: 166-167)

In the context of this passage, it should be noted that though these theoretical assumptions are drawn from a particular community, this can be observed in various patrilineal communities, with slight modification. As I shall analyze later, in patrilineal societies, through socialization, it's norms and values are inculcated on women, which is also the manifestation of the existing gender bias of the society, and it is reflected in the allocation of food, nutrition, medical care and the other resources. In contrast to this, the matrilineal kinship ideology does not concentrate on preparing a woman for marriage. Though the centrality is given to a woman's role as mothers and nurturers, their marriage does not imply the loss of their membership in their natal kin group. The ideological differences between the two groups have been already analyzed. Given this theoretical background, feminist analysis of the kinship system shifts towards the indicators of women's status such as the marriage, the degree of the control of the female sexuality, etc.

Social anthropologists extensively analyzed the marriage and its role in preserving the kinship system. However, feminist scholars have attempted to uncover the marriage its rituals, and its inter relations with the control of the female sexuality. I have already analyzed the manner in which the procreative ideology constructs female sexuality. Such ideological apparatus is justified through marriage rituals and practices. "Both men and women are deemed to achieve the social status of adults only upon marriage. Among Hindus, marriage sacrileges and sanctifies female sexuality, while Islam wholly disapproves of sex outside marriage. Since sex is viewed as a natural craving of human beings, marriage is visualized as an event that is a necessary part of life, particularly for women." (Dube 1997: 109) Among the Hindus, marriage is looked up on the necessary institution to manage female sexuality. More significantly, a woman's role as both as

mother and wife is justified only through her marital alliance with her husband. In the South Asia, a woman's first marriage is distinguished from that of her subsequent marriage. As Dube puts it,

In Hindu South Asia, a woman may be married with full rites only once, and the status of subsequent marriages is not equal to that of the first marriage. A man, on the other hand, can marry with full rites any number of times, provided that the bride has not been married before and is technically a virgin. The desirability of marriage for girls is expressed in many ways by Hindus. Blessings for a male commonly ask for a long life, those for a female ask that she get a good husband. A number of *vratas* - the observance of fasting and of prayer rituals - are recommended to girls to ensure that they obtain good husbands resembling the deities Shiva and Vishnu. (Dube 1997: 112-113)

This passage signifies the fact that marriage and its ideological elements are always scented around the notion of female sexuality, and thus its primary function is to manage, and control it. In contrast to the male sexuality, female sexuality is considered as dangerous and thus society, through institutionalized norms and values, attempts to regulate it. Another crucial point to be noted is that different cultural and the structural variations also play a predominant role in controlling the female sexuality. The impact of such factors will be discussed in the next section. In South Asia, the concern over the female sexuality is expressed through the seclusion of women. Dube (1997) compares and contrasts the seclusion of women among the south Asian communities with that of the South-East Asia. She states that among the patrilineal Muslim population of south Asia, the management of female sexuality is ensured through *purdah* system. "All over South Asia *purdah* among Muslims is justified by reference to Islam. Although interpretations of Quranic verses vary, and intellectuals and progressive and feminist elements argue that Islam does not prescribe seclusion for women, the common understanding is that *purdah* has religious sanction." (Dube 1997: 61)

In contrast to this, the matrilineal and the bilateral communities of South-East Asia, does not impose strict control on female sexuality, by strict segregation or seclusion. In these communities, women take part in economic activities outside the home and the homestead and interact with men. It also signifies the fact that the control on female sexuality is closely linked with their participation in the productive forces. Dube also locates the cause for these differences to the existing kinship ideology of the two regions. Dube further argues that *purdah* among Hindus is significantly different from that of the *purdah* of the Muslim population. Among Muslims, *purdah* clearly demarcates the women's spear from that of the men's spear. On the

other hand, *pardah* of the Hindus concentrates only on controlling female sexuality. The role of community and caste in controlling female sexuality will be briefly discussed in the next section. The analysis of kinship ideology brings out the existing relative gender equality in the matrilineal kin groups, in comparison with the patrilineal groups. In contrast to the conventional approach, feminist analysis, while acknowledging the relative gender equality of the matrilineality, questions the existing male authority. Nongbri (2000) analyzes the changing nature of the *Khasis* family, and its impact on women. The *Khasis* ideology gives a specific emphasis to women's domestic role and thus it shares similarities with patrilineal kinship structure. It also has an enormous impact on women's participation in public sphere. Though the right to inheritance lies with the youngest daughter of the *Khasis* family, the authority to control property is rested on men. *Khasis* ideology also considers men as superior to women. As Nongbri puts it,

The *Khasis* family occupies a rather unique position in the annals of history for the way in which authority within the household is divided between the dominant males belonging to two sides the family. Despite the centrality of women in the organisation of the clan (*kur*) and the lineage (*kpoh*), authority over the family does not lie with the mother but is shared between the mother's the father. Although the *Khasis* vests authority with brother, the father is not devoid of power. Given that marriage prescribes the co-residence of the conjugal pair, the father not only occupies an important place within the household, as the provider of the family, he also exercises considerable influence over children. Nongbri, (2000: 370)

She further argues that the changing nature of the matrilineal kinship structure is detrimental to the existing relative gender equality, within the matrilineal kin group. The state also attempts to impose patrilineal norms and values of the kinship structure. Such state's measures will be discussed in the next section. This analysis clearly brings out the role of kinship ideology in understanding the patriarchal structure, and its impact on family and the wider kin group. This analysis also sharply differs from the conventional approaches to the kinship structure, which hardly addressed to the problem of sexuality and the interconnected asymmetrical gender relations. In the following analysis, the impact of these ideological apparatus on family and household will be briefly analyzed.

V.I.2 Family and Household

In the earlier anthropological and sociological studies, both family and household were considered as gender neutral institutions, and thus the inter and the intra household gender inequality were absent. However, feminist scholars through their studies, explored the existing

gender inequality, within the domain of the household. I have already pointed out that the early anthropological and sociological theories on family were strongly grounded in the dichotomy of the extended family versus the nuclear family, or in case of India, the joint family versus the nuclear family. However, feminist scholars attempt to uncover pitfalls in such simple dichotomisation, and thus explore a wide variety of families in different social settings. "Moreover, the nuclear/joint dichotomy obscures the often significant empirical reality of single person families and non-parental families, of the different types of joint family, and of the frequent attachment to the household, nuclear or joint, of other kin." (Uberoi, 1993: 385)

Pauline Kolenda (1968) developed a new typology of family, and thus she distinguished 11 kinds of families, namely, nuclear; supplemented nuclear; sub-nuclear; single person; supplemented subnuclear; collateral joint; supplemented collateral joint; lineal joint; supplemented lineal joint; lineal-collateral joint; and supplemented lineal-collateral joint. She also contests the correlation between the joint family and the land ownership. Further she hypothesized that relatively high proportions of nuclear families could be found in a society, where women have relatively stronger bargaining power, by which she meant "right to legal divorce; the approval of widow remarriage; customary brideprice; greater economic and social support to the couple from the wife's natal family; a greater degree of uxorilocal residence; a higher child sex ratio in favour of females and higher levels of female education and of employment in modern occupations and services.." (Quoted in Uberoi 1993: 385)

Thus the feminist analysis introduced a wide variety of possibilities in analyzing family and the household. We can also observe a shift in their analysis from the wider kinship group to the specific household structure. Shah (1973) distinguished the household from that of the family and thus methodologically it was an important shift in the analysis of the family and the household. By analyzing his theoretical assumptions, I have pointed out that his preoccupation with the male-headed patrilineal household structure does not even allow him to think of any female headed household. In contrast to the dominant perspective, feminist scholars introduced a variety of household structures, by which the existence of the female-headed household has been acknowledged. For example, Kolenda, through her concept of the 'single person family', acknowledges the possibility of the existence of the widow headed family. More significantly, feminist's explanation of the household structure, gives a specific emphasis to the intra

household gender inequality, which can be observed by looking at the sexual division of labour within household, the allocation of food and nutrition, medical care, women's relations to their household property etc.

Feminist scholars attempt to uncover the patriarchal ideology of the family, by looking at its mythical expression. Mita Radhakrishnan, (1994) identifies the following myths, which play a predominant role in constructing the patriarchal structure within the domain of the family.

- Family is safe to live. Therefore, all the individual's needs will be taken care of in the family.
- In the light of the change in the familial structure, it is widely believed that joint family system was better than that of the nuclear family, and thus the breaking down of the joint family results in the emergence of the new social problems and the pressure on the order and the stability of the society.
- Family exists in the "private" arena, untouched by the "public" arena, which, it is assumed, is where society and state are situated. Therefore, the state can not intervene in the internal affair of the family.

Interestingly enough, social researches also revolve around these mythical ideas. Feminist scholars are seeking to deconstruct these myths, and thus to expose the existing domination and the subjugation of women within the domain of the family. Contrary to these myths, they argue that family is often unsafe for women. The inherent sexual violence in terms of wife battering and the other kinds of exploitation questions the benevolent nature of the family. More significantly, patriarchal ideology, through its mythical formation constantly reinforces women's domestic role and thus a specific emphasis is given to the sexual division of labour. "The love that women get within the family is far from unconditional -- it is dependent entirely on the services that women perform, from girlhood to death. Women's labour is exploited from birth to death within the family. Even old women, who have spent their lifetime caring for family members, are rarely allowed to retire from this role." (Radhakrishnan 1994:41)

By exposing the myths about the interrelations between the family and the state, feminists argue that the State is constantly reinforcing the gender inequality. The State's attitude towards the

gender inequality will be discussed in the next section. However, it is suffice to say at this juncture, that when the State wants, it treats the family as "private" and when it wants it enters the arena of the family. More significantly, these myths have serious implication for gender relations within the family. Further analysis will bring out the manner in which these mythical ideas reinforce unequal gender relations within the domain of family and household.

Looking at the allocation of different household resources one can approach the existing gender inequality in the family. As it has been mentioned, feminist scholars, through their extensive fieldwork, elaborated the role of family ideology in the allocation of nutrition, and other resources. Dube (1997) states that many of the factors, responsible for the differences in the quantity and quality of the food allocated to the female child can be traced back to the ideology of the family. As I have noted, a female child, in a patrilineal society, from her childhood is socialized to abdicate her tastes and the family constantly sanctions such behaviour. As she puts it,

Women and girls are not only the last to receive food, they also get less of it and of a lower quality. Expectations of self-denial are also given expression here. If a girl cries or shouts for food she is considered fussy, and is teased and taunted about her lack of self-restraint. When resources are scarce this discrimination can be acute, and girls may remain underfed and undernourished. Boys too may not have enough to eat, but girls are much worse off. (Dube 1997:137)

She further states that feminine role in the family is to provide food for others. Therefore, domestic tasks, related with this such as cooking and serving of food etc are considered to be the women's sphere, and thus in order to fulfill this, they are expected to undergo their tastes. More significantly, the literatures and the religious *Puranas* also justify this role. For example, [Thirukkural] a Tamil literature encourages women to eat last after serving their family members, and guests. Thus one can also uncover the role of literature in justifying women's role. The inevitable consequence is the lack of nutrition and undernourishment. This is also linked to the existing division of labour, the allocation of gender role, the notion of [seva] service, and more importantly, the a clear distinction between male and female children, in terms of their value.

Sen. (1993) argues that the existing gender inequality within the domain of family can be adequately grasped, only by looking at both the co-operative and the conflicting elements of the family and household. He notes that gender bias is reflected on women, differently on different

sections of the society. He compares the developed countries with that of the developing one, and thus he notes that in richer countries, the biases against women takes the form of less education, less satisfactory jobs, less decision making power, more boring and repetitive works etc. However, this does not result in giving lower capabilities to live a long life. However, in poorer countries, women's capabilities of survival and sustenance often show an anti-female bias. Through his studies in India, he shows three important resources namely, the food, education, and medical care that are crucially influenced by the factor of gender. In a study of children, below five years of age, in two villages in the Birbhum district of West Bengal in India... Namely, (Kuchli) and (Sahajapur), Sen and Sengupta find a sharp sex bias against girls in one of the villages (Kuchli) and a very mild one (statistically not very significant) in the other village (Sahajapur), only ten kilometers away from the first. They attribute the reason to the differences in terms of the public intervention. For example, in Kuchli the land reform policy has been much more successful, resulting in the fact that only 16 percent of children belong to the landless families, in contrast to 60 percent in Sahajapur. In Kuchli, the general level of nutrition among children is relatively high. However, the extent of sex biases is roughly the same in both the villages. Another reason can be the introduction of the direct feeding program in Kuchli among the scheduled tribes. They further note that the excessive illiteracy also contributes to the reinforcement of the existing sex bias. More significantly, lack of medical care for girls further aggravates the situation.

Feminist anthropologists trace back the gender bias in allocation of these resources to the kinship structure. Dube (1997) compares and contrast the south Asia with that of the Southeast Asia, and thus she uncovers the differences in the allocation of food and nutrition. She notes, "As "In India and in Pakistan, so in Bangladesh women function as the makers and distributors of food, practicing discrimination against themselves and their female children." (Dube, 1997:140) However, in Southeast Asia, where women's higher participation in the productive force is prevalent, they do not have to suffer from nutritious problems. "At socio-economic levels and in ethnic groups where women do considerable productive work or are effective wage-earners, and where the ideology of the husband as a distinctly superior god-like being is not operative, women and girls may not suffer from deprivations in matters of food much more than the males of the family." (Dube 1997:140

She also states that in south Asia, food is largely cooked inside home, and distributed by the eldest member of the family. However, in Southeast Asia, food may be purchased and eaten outside the home, and people are quite accustomed to eating from roadside stalls. Therefore, the notions of motherhood, and womanhood and their role in distributing and cooking food are largely minimized. In the light of this analysis, it should be noted that south Asia is predominantly patrilineal, patrilocal, and patriarchal in nature. In contrast to this, Southeast Asian countries are largely based on the matrilineal or bilateral kinship structure. This also brings out the role of kinship ideology in allocating various resources. Feminist scholars also attempt to look at gender relations by analyzing women's right to own private property.

Agarwal (1994) explores the correlation between the women's empowerment, and their right to own property. She analyzes the neglect of women's rights related with inheritance, and thus traces it back to the kinship structure. She writes:

Ethnographic information', although it is extremely fragmentary, consistently indicates that women in traditionally patrilineal communities of South Asia rarely realize the rights that contemporary laws have promised them. Custom still dominates practice. Hence the vast majority of women do not inherit landed property as daughters, most don't do so even as widows, and few women inherit, in other capacities. To the extent women inherit, it is usually under very restricted conditions. (Aggarwal 1994: 249)

She further states that even in a condition, where, a woman has to undergo both institutionalized, and non-institutionalized barriers to inherit property of her parents. In some communities, women are prohibited even from maintaining their self-acquired property. She rightly points out that the state legislative measures have been mostly beneficial for the women of the patrilineal societies, where as, it impinges negatively on the women of the matrilineal communities. The impact of state policies on the matrilineal communities will be explicated in the next section. However, it is significant to note that women's traditional right to inherit properties in the matrilineal societies is also gradually threatened by the state's measures.

Agarwal further distinguishes the ownership of property from that of the control of property. According to her, a woman's control over her land is determined by three characteristics, namely

- Her ability to retain title of the land which is either inherited, or the self-acquired one.
- Their ability to take decision to dispose their land.
- Their ability to determine the use of land including leasing it out to the tenants, or self managing it, and disposal of the products of that land.

Thus she argues that the legal rights in no way determine a woman's actual ownership of land.

She also discusses the possible obstructions, an agrarian woman has to undergo. An agrarian woman may be forced by her brothers or neighbors to dispose her property. Secondly, the land inherited by a woman may not be registered in her name but her brothers or sons can expropriate it. It is significant to note that the existence of excessive illiteracy among the rural women makes this more viable. Involving a woman in a court case is a common way of forcing her to mortgage or sell her share when legal expenses become unaffordable. In some cases, widowed women have to face the intimidation from their husband's relatives, which ultimately results in the disposal of their property. Agarwal states that these are not isolated incidences, but part of an overall pattern. Agarwal also acknowledges the higher intensity of the structural constraints on the lower class women. "Conditions of poverty can make it difficult for households to retain land. Although both sexes are affected by this, women (and especially women heads of households) are more likely to be forced to sell land in a crisis, given their greater economic vulnerability." (Agarwal 1994:294.)

She further states that a woman's property can also be expropriated by bribing the state authorities. According to her, though these practices have been observed among the agrarian women of the Bangladesh, it can be hypothetically generalized all over south Asia. Given this paradigm, she shifts her attention towards the ownership of property. Agarwal contests the ownership as the deciding factor in empowering women. She extracts the gendered nature of the legal formulation of such rights. She analyses this by comparing the men's ownership with that of the women. Men can dispose their property with out any one's concern. In contrast to this, women have to seek permission from their fathers, [in case of the unmarried women] their husbands. or their adult sons [incase of the widowed women.] This analysis shows us the fact that the ownership of property is significantly different from that of the control of property. The shift from rural to the urban society also expounds the correlation between the class and gender.

It is true that with the increase of women's participation in the industrial sector, the sexual division of labour. within the household has also under gone some transformation. However, the gendered nature of such development is more visible in the manner in which women were

employed in this sector. It is often argued that the increase of women's participation in the labor market has increased their material benefits, and thus the gender disparities have been reduced to a considerable extent. However, patriarchy takes a new form by which women's labor is expropriated by the institutionalized means. This becomes more evident, when Aggarwal writes:

In several studies it was noted that the demand was for young, unmarried, relatively educated women assumed to have the manual dexterity ('nimble fingers') and docility needed for the tedious, repetitive and monotonous nature of the work. Given the considerable gender disparity in wages, women could also be recruited at relatively low cost. Such employment, while enabling a greater improvement in the material well-being of the women and their families than possible in other available jobs, also involved long hours of work, low pay relative to men, easy retrenchment, little scope for skill acquisition to enable easy job shifts, unhealthy work conditions, and strict supervision. (Aggarwal 1988: 8.)

While analyzing the heterogeneous characteristics of the western feminist writings, we have noted that the liberal feminist look at the increase of women's participation in the productive forces as a positive factor, and in their view, with such development, the sexual division of labour within the household is under going greater transformation. However, Indian feminist writings do not content with these assumptions. They also look at the gendered nature of such development, and the manner in which patriarchy takes new form in modern industrial society. Through this analysis, It analyzes the concept of patriarchy in Indian feminist writings, by looking at their writings on kinship family and household. As I have noted that different cultural and the structural variations have an enormous impact on reinforcing the patriarchal structure. This point will be further elaborated in the next section.

II

Understanding patriarchy with other social structures

The examination of distinct perspectives, in various writings have questioned the simple generalization of the universal domination and subjugation of women, and thus emphasized the need for the incorporation of the cultural and the structural variations in grasping the important features of patriarchy. Consequently, I attempted to analyze the concept of patriarchy by tracing it back to the Indian kinship, family and the household structure. Thus I sought to uncover the fact that it would be precocious to treat Indian society as a homogeneous category not only for its geographical and cultural differences but also for the existence of distinctive structural constraints on women. Such analysis also questioned the simple universalization of the structural

domination. Given this background, it becomes inevitable to look at this concept by interconnecting it with the other social structures, such as caste, community, and the state. Since our analysis in this section is confined only to the Indian society, it would be extremely formidable to inter-link this concept with other social structures that are either absent, or less prevalent in India. Therefore, let us confine our analysis only to the structural elements, which are more prevalent in the Indian societies. It should also be noted that emphasis to the existing micro structural elements could be mistaken and categorized as the postmodern school of thought. However, our analysis in this section is contradictory to the postmodernism in the sense that it will not only uncover multiple forms of patriarchies in various social structures, but also will extract certain kinds of practices in society, which are common to most of these structural elements in subordinating women.

V.II.1 Grasping Patriarchy through the Indian Caste Structure

The impact of caste system can be seen in every aspect of the human life in India. Not surprisingly, this structural element has had an enormous impact on gender relations. Women have always been a major target in the reproduction of culture, tradition, religious beliefs etc. Not surprisingly, violation of the norms and values reinforced different standard of behavior for men and women, and thus treat women as the central object for the preservation of these institutions. (Leela Dube 1996) introduces three interrelated themes in analyzing the interconnection between the caste and gender. These themes are: -

- Occupational continuity and the Reproduction of caste
- Food and Rituals
- Marriage and Sexuality

She states that these themes play a predominant role in maintaining the caste hierarchy. She argues that despite the change in the occupational structure, women play a predominant role in maintaining the continuity between the traditional occupations. She further states that women's work is considered to be more significant among the service class. In some parts of the country, the service of laborer includes the service of both wife and husband. Dube further writes:

In situations of change, women often have to take on the responsibility for continuing caste-based occupations and maintaining the household. When men give up their traditional occupation on account of its low ritual status or inadequate returns the entire burden of occupational work often falls on the women. Many when migrate to towns leaving behind their families. Women continue their contribution in terms of services or

craft, but for want of male help they face the choice of losing their clientele or coping with a doubled work burden. (Dube 1996:5)

Thus she argues that women's contribution to occupational continuity is carried out within patriline-patrilineal and under the impositions and controls of caste. More significantly, women's experience of multifaceted housework becomes the basis for maintaining the household. Another way to institutionalize purity and pollution is through food. Food is a medium through which the exclusion of caste as a bounded entity, and interrelations with other castes is maintained by hierarchizing the food habits of on similar lines with caste. Dube further adds that women play a predominant role in maintaining the purity through food. As she puts it:

Foods are hierarchically classified in terms of intrinsic purity and impurity, vulnerability and resistance to pollution, and in terms of specific characteristics they embody –passion, anger, calm, strength, and spirituality. Foods then are substances that carry the capacity to affect and transform the person who consumes them. The responsibility for who eats what, where and when, falls upon women within the domestic space. Women's practices in relation to food play a critical role in the hierarchical ordering of castes. (Dube 1996:6)

Food also impinges on widows and thus changes their food habits by aborting certain items that are considered to be impure and thus consumption of those will reinforce passion and desire. Therefore, the control over food is, at once, the protection of women from the transgression of sexual norms and a safeguard against a breach of the boundaries of caste.

Dube also incorporates the concept of sexuality in explaining the women's status and the caste hierarchy. It is significant to note that the caste system itself is built up on the cultural difference between the male and the female sexuality. Biological differences between men and women are traced back to women's periodical pollution through menstruation and parturition. At the same time, she also draws our attention towards the caste system and the perception of pollution. According to her, the purity pollution difference between the men and women is more among the upper caste, than that of the lower caste.

Chakravarti analyzes the symbolic construction of the widowhood among the upper caste Hindus. She states that A widow is considered as socially dead, and thus many of the symbols, related with marriage and female sexuality are denied to her. As she puts it:

The widow is socially differentiated by a prescribed behavior, which she has at all costs to follow. Symbolic ideas of a cultural system are usually given social expression in ritualized patterns. The death of the husband (without whom the widow ceases to be a social entity) among the upper caste Hindus is ritually expressed through special ceremonies involving the marginalization of the erstwhile wife who, as a widow, is defined as socially dead. The rituals of widowhood

incorporated certain basic features, signifying symbolic rejection/deprivation of the widow's sexuality. (Chakarvarti 1998: 65)

Unlike the marital rituals, the rituals for the renunciation of widow are simple, and humiliating. One of such traumatic symbol is the tonsure. Tonsure is a symbol by which a widow's sexuality is controlled by the community. According to Chakarvarti, this practice is more prevalent among the Brahmin upper caste. In order to grasp the symbolic representation of the widowhood, she compares and contrasts the symbols of the widows, with that of the symbols, related with the wifehood. A woman is acknowledged as a person, only when she is incorporated in to her husband and then only she becomes a social being. Such woman is called as a fortunate woman and thus she along with her husband performs rituals, and procreates children. Symbols related with marriage reflect the centrality given to the female sexuality and reproduction.

The rituals at the time of marriage explicitly recognize the crucial place of procreation. This is evident in the brahmanical texts and anthropological analyses of the Hindu marriage ceremony repeat the centrality of reproduction in the rituals so evident in the Brahmanical texts. For example in the crucial haldi (turmeric) ceremony, which precedes the actual marriage rites, the bride is smeared with turmeric. According to informants, the effect of the turmeric application is that the body is heated up for sexual intercourse. The source of sexual energy which haldi is believed to create is located unambiguously in women in which sense they are perceived as active agents in the process of reproduction.' Further the colour most often associated with brides is red; red is the colour of vitality because of its connotation of blood. It is appropriate where something important and life giving is about to take place. The colour of the kumkuma (red mark on the forehead) and the sindoor (red powder applied by married women in the parting of the hair in certain parts of India) symbolizes the sexually active or sexually potent female. The bride's red sari and kumkuma together represent the fluids of creation, of life, female creative power and specifically the capacity to bear children. (Chakarvarti 1998: 67-68)

This passage also signifies the fact that marriage rituals are centered around female sexuality. It is significant to note that in the absence of a woman's husband, [either he is away, or he is dead] she is expected to forego all the rituals and practices, symbols which are meant for the married women. The widow must give up all ornaments, observe fasts, emaciate the body, and remain steadfastly loyal to her dead husband according to the texts. (Chakarvarti 1998:72) This

Symbolic system represents even in the dressing pattern of the widow. A widowed woman is expected to wear only a white garment, curb her senses and anger, and sleep on the ground. She compares and contrasts the notion of widowhood of the upper caste Hindus with that of the non-Brahmin lower caste. By sighting a case study of the Havik Brahmins of south India, she

states that the concept of widowhood in the Brahminical patriarchy is closely linked with their material condition. She further states that the Havik Brahmin women do not labour outside their household, and thus the dependence on the male members of the family ensures the complete patriarchal authority over women in general, and widows in particular. The role of material condition in determining widow's status will become clear, if the Havik Brahmin widows are compared with the widows of the lower caste, who mostly labour outside their home, as agricultural labourers.

Among the Havik Brahmins, it is commonly believed that widows are the important source of pollution and therefore, for men, their ritual defilement is the major concern. Even the contact with such women causes more pollution than that of the contact with the untouchable castes. They also consider in general, female sexuality as dangerous one, and therefore, in their belief, it must be strictly segregated from men. "At a more general level, all women are inherently dangerous 'because they are sexually passionate and demanding; as temptresses of the flesh they sap male vitality and stand between Brahmana men and their salvation goals.'" (Chakarvarti, 1998:80&81) This belief is further reinforced in case of widows. They are most feared among women, and therefore, sight of a widow itself is inauspicious, and thus they are prohibited from participating in many of the important auspicious rituals and practices. More significantly, this theme of fear is also justified through religious mythologies. As Chakarvarti puts it,

Further in the system of religious beliefs, while all female deities are in general more dangerous and malicious than their male counterparts, Mariamma, the goddess of smallpox and the deity who has the highest malevolence potential, is in local mythology represented as a Brahman widow. It is of utmost significance that, according to the narrative she slew her husband in a fit of rage when she discovered that she had been deceived by him. Mariamma thus became a widow by murdering her own husband. This is clearly linked to a deeply held belief in Brahmanical society that should a husband predecease his wife, it is somehow, in some mystical way, the wife's fault. The belief in poisoning by widows is thus part of a more complex constellation of ideas around the theme of fear of women but, particularly widows. (Chakarvarti, 1998:81)

She further traces these ideological elements to the condition of widows of the Havik Brahmins. I have already mentioned in the previous chapter that in patrilineal societies, both the descent, and the lineage runs through men. In case of the Havik Brahmins, this is expressed in terms of the absolute authority of the male members over females. In a Havik Brahmin's household, the bride is virtually married to her husband's patri-kin before puberty, and thus she is gradually

incorporated in to it in such a manner that she has to sacrifice her ties with the natal kin. This further aggravates widow's condition.

Widows must never remarry, whereas widowers are expected to remarry and often do. Since at marriage a woman is transferred from one patrilineage to another, her natal kinsmen have no jural control over how she is treated. A mistreated daughter-in-law (who as a bride occupies a low status and power position within her new house where the male kinsmen have a right to discipline her severely) should not complain to her natal kinsmen because this would only cause them grief about a situation over which they have no control. The only recourse she has is to bring dishonour upon her husband's family through suicide. It is not surprising then that all Havik families prefer to marry their daughters to less wealthy families in order to maximize their influence over their daughters' new social environment. (Chakarvarti 1998:81)

In contrast to the Havik Brahmins, the lower caste ideology does not dichotomize the widow verses the wife. Among the lower caste, widowhood is not pitiable, nor are widows regarded as particularly dangerous among the different categories of women. Widowhood is not marked by the kind of dramatic break in the life of woman as in high caste society; it is a different state but the structural opposition between the wife and the widow does not exist in non-Brahmanical society. (Chakarvarti 1998:83) More importantly, Among the Nonbrahmin lower caste, the post marital residence of the woman dependence on the individual economic conditions. Chakervarti also correlates this with their household structure. As she puts it,

Extended families are not glorified among the Sudras as they are among the Haviks. Among untouchables, the extended family is almost never found. Post-puberty marriages are the norm and divorce may be initiated by either party. Family authority is more equally divided between the husband and the wife; women earn and handle family finance. Menstrual taboos are less rigorous, and payment of a bride price frequent. Sudra and untouchable widows do not shave their heads, nor are they set apart by distinctive dress nor referred to as animals, nor excluded from auspicious ceremonies. (Chakarvarti 1998:83-84)

This passage clearly signifies the fact that the status of a widow is closely linked with her economic and the social condition. It is true that the lower caste women have some liberating features, which are completely absent in case of the women of the twice born upper caste. However, studies have shown that the existence of the female headed household among the untouchable women, is also accompanied with absolute poverty, in comparison with the male headed household of the lower caste, or even the female headed household of the upper caste. Therefore, the manner in which patriarchy constrains on women, varies according to the caste and the other social settings. In my view, if this fact is looked at from the perspective of the women of the deprived caste or class, it may unveil its distinct form of patriarchal oppression, which

otherwise, may be ignored. (Rege) emphasizes the need for the incorporation of the experiences of not only of the dominant class or caste, but also of the pedagogy of the oppressed to uncover the inter connection between the caste and gender oppression. She writes:

Privileges of the dominant class, caste, religion, region, race, its specificity by gender have to be fleshed out. Such exercises strive towards a dialogue in which the experience of Dalit women students are seen as relevant to understanding not only the situation of Dalit women, but also in grasping the situation of *savarna* women and indeed that of Dalit and *savarna* men. Our feminist pedagogy therefore have the complex task of analyzing caste from the standpoint of Dalit women and class from the standpoint of working-class women, *hindutva* from the standpoint of minorities and heterosexuality from the standpoint of lesbians. Recognizing multiple subjects of knowledge and history requires that all our subjectivities be transformed. Just as one 'becomes a feminist' one can learn to see the world from the perspectives rooted in experiences and lives that are not ours. This does not mean speaking 'as' or 'for' the marginalized but being aware of and taking cognizance of one's caste, class, ethnic and gender location in society. (Rege, 1995:225)

The above analysis clearly brings out the interconnection between caste and gender. It also has drawn our attention towards the heterogeneous characteristics of the caste system and its reflection in gender oppression. More significantly, even caste groups in most cases, function as a community whose role in conceptualizing patriarchy can not be ignored. At the same time, community also exceeds caste groups. Therefore, it becomes inevitable to look at the inter connection between the community and patriarchy.

V.II.2 Community and Patriarchy

Like caste, community also prescribes its own standard of behavior for both men and women. It is significant to note that community takes the shape on the bases of some common beliefs, practices, etc. In India, this term is used to denote till the religious and ethnic groups. Community is a medium through which the religious and the cultural norms are imposed on people. Therefore, it becomes inevitable to look at its role in reproducing patriarchy.

Past history have shown that women have been centrally implicated in the alignment of the communities and families. Since the community's control over female sexuality lies at the center of patriarchy, the female body becomes the pawn whenever there are crises in the social order. (Bagchi 1997.) Communities also inculcate some stereo types by which they ensure the control of female sexuality. For example, Hindu woman is distinguished from the Muslim woman by

using the concept of chastity. However, Indian scholars especially within the domain of postmodern school of thought, give a specific emphasis to the community and thus they plea for the revival of the traditional communities. As Bagchi puts it:

Post-modernist pluralism has initiated a cult of the 'fragmentary' that has tended to privilege the 'pre-modern' community over the 'modern' nation-state. As most try to show, when it comes to women, body and sexuality, the community becomes the main agent of the nation-state. The fragmentariness of communities, therefore, is illusory. At best it resembles the 'flexi-mode', much favoured by modern capitalism in its capacity to mutate, re-group and realign. (Bagchi 1997:78)

This passage shows us the emphasis to the traditional community not only neglects its gendered nature, but also undermines its role in reproducing the patriarchal ideology. In the context of India, it would be significant to note that some recent attempts to revive the religious institutions, and its related practices, have had an enormous impact on women. Therefore, our analysis of the gendered nature of the community in India is confined only to the religious communities. However, I acknowledge its limitations in understanding its role in strengthening the patriarchal social order. It is true that the incorporation of other ethnic groups can give us more insights in this area. However, due to our limitations I shall concentrate only on the role of religious communities.

I have already analyzed the role of procreative ideology in inculcating patriarchal norms and values of the society. More significantly, communities use these ideological elements to reinforce women's role as mothers and wives. Different religious communities despite its heterogeneity, deploy patriarchal and familial discourse, and thus argue that women have been traditionally constituted as different and weak, as wives and mothers, as inferior and subordinate. The Hindu right's approach to women and women's equality can be very much observed in the ideological apparatus of some communal organizations and political parties. These movements equate women's position to the mother goddesses, within the domain of Hinduism. As Kapur and Cossman put it,

The Hindu right's approach to women and women's equality is found somewhat more sporadically in BJP and RSS literature and statements. The discourse on women is often characterized by its strikingly religious overtones defining women in the images of Hindu goddesses and consorts-as mothers and wives, dutiful and sacrificing. (Kapur and Cossman 1996: 96-97)

It is significant to note that these attitudes are very much prevalent in the BJP's ideologies. While treating women as Matri Shakthi, Hindu rights consistently scrutinize women's chastity. It also imposes different standards of behavior for both men and women. The violation of the sexual code in case of men is more easily tolerated than that of women. Their attitude also can be adequately grasped, if we look at some of their political claims. For example, while supporting women as nurturers in the family, the communal organizations and parties accept any change in reforming the family, but excluding their traditions. However, certain political questions such as the development of lesbianism, measuring housework quantitatively, etc are opposed under the ground that they are detrimental to the Hindu tradition. On the one hand, the communal forces support improvement of women's status including the increasing educational opportunities and job prospects so as to facilitate them to command some familial obligations such as enjoying the affections of the father, the love of the husband, and the respect of their sons, and so on. A closer look at these claims will give us completely different picture. As Kapur and Cossaman notice:

Women's role in the family as mothers and wives remains the cornerstone of the BJP approach to restoring women to the position of equality reserved for them in Indian tradition. We can begin to see the extent to which the traditional discourse of women as matri Shakti infuses the BJP policies. Indeed, it is this image of matri shakti that can be seen to underlie the very understanding of women's equality. 'Man and woman will remain the two wheels of the chariot of the family, and the nation. There can be no better concept of unity and equality of man and woman than the concept of "Ardhanarishwar"'. We can also begin to see here echoes of the RSS vision of equality, that is, of equality as harmony in diversity. Equality does not mean treating women the same as men. Nor does it mean compensating women for the ways in which they have traditionally been disadvantaged. Rather, it means an affirmation of the difference between women and men. These different roles of women and men, in the family and in society, are affirmed and celebrated as a harmonious synthesis. (Kapur and Cossman 1997:100)

More significantly, these claims draw their inspirations from the Hindu ideology, which is more prevalent in the Vedic texts and Puranas. In the Vedic literature, women hardly figure as teachers or learners. It clearly indicates that women were not allowed to engage with the teaching and the transmission of knowledge. This marginal status of women was institutionalized in the Brahmanical legal code. In this process, marriage was prescribed for women as an alternative to the sacred learning. Thus in (Manusmrti II, the performance of household duties was identified with the worship of the sacred fire. Therefore, these texts considered the non domestic activities as unwomanly or unwifely. Kumkum Roy states that though women's scholarliness was not acknowledged in the Brahminical religious texts, their contribution to the sacred learning is very

much evident in other contemporary traditions such as Buddhism, whose existence is well-attested in inscriptions from sites such as Sanchi. It is significant to note that the Hindu agenda of certain political and communal organizations draw heavily from the Vedic and the later Vedic texts and puranas. Roy further analyzes the gendered nature of these developments. She writes:

The very composition and preservation of the traditions which are claimed as precursors of present-day Hindutva were processes which were structured in terms of gender. It is not surprising then, that one of the major strands worked into and through such traditions is that of gendered difference. This is not something which is taken for granted or assumed. Rather, it is carefully developed through a number of strategies, which are mutually reinforcing. The concern with structuring and delimiting understandings of procreation constitutes, in a sense, the core of such strategies. The form in which this concern is represented, in both early texts and in well-known contemporary interpretations of the theme is at least partly spiritual -- legitimate procreation is the means of acquiring sons, who in turn ensure the welfare of the patrilineage both in this world and in the next. (Roy 1995:15)

It also indicates that the existing interconnection between the marriage and procreation has to be located to the Vedic period. Another way the gender differences are implicated is through the dichotomy of physical and spiritual births. Thus the later is typified for men while the former for women. More significantly, these texts consider the spiritual birth as an ideal one. Thus Roy states that this dichotomy further empowered men. It is significant to note that the Hindutva organizations in the modern India draw their inspirations from these religious dogmas and Ideas. (Sarkar 1995) analyzes the presents of these ideological elements in the contemporary Hindu women's movements. She finds the gender ideology in the formation of the movement's name itself. As she puts it:

While the name Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh means 'Nationalist Volunteers', the term Rashtrasevika denotes women who serve the nation. The difference in the names is significant in several ways. It not only relegates women's work within the Samiti organization to a domestic role, but also consigns their domestic labor firmly to the sphere of humble service. The sense of autonomy and self-choice that are associated with the word 'volunteer' are notably missing. In the formative period of the Samiti, neither Hegdewar nor his successor, M S Golwalkar, the super ideologue of the RSS, attached much importance to women's formal organizational work, and the Samiti led a low-priority, non-innovative, routine-bound existence. In Golwalkar's corpus of writings, women are predominantly mothers who could help the Sangh cause most by rearing their children within the RSS framework of samskaras a combination of family ritual and unquestioning deference toward family elders and RSS leaders. The crisis, therefore, led to an intensive self-mobilization on a broader basis that encompassed its own women. (Sarkar 1995 184-: 185)

She argues that these women belonging to the urban middle class are not exposed to the larger problems of the women of the socially exploited caste/class. Not surprisingly, these women do

not realize their privileged positions in comparison with the women of the socially exploited class. In contrast to the Hindu rights, Islamic laws are more progressive in many ways. Firstly, unlike the Hindu rights, Muslim personal law acknowledges a woman's right to inherit property. In comparison to the Hindu marital laws, Islamic laws are more liberating for women. For example, unlike the Hindu right, Islamic law treats marriage as a contract, and thus can be dissolved with the interest of the either party. Despite these liberating features, why is it the case that Muslim community is repressive, as far as the women's cause is concerned? Engineer, traces back the gap between the existing laws and the actual practice to the patriarchal structure. He argues that unless patriarchal norms and domination are discarded, the subordination of women will persist. Muslim community is not an exception to use women for the community sentiments. The male repressive method within the domain of Islam can be observed more accurately, by looking at the Shah Bano's controversy. In response to the initiatives of some women, the Supreme Court has awarded lifetime maintenance to a divorced Muslim woman Shah Bano. However, men belonging to both Hindu and the Muslim communities, had communalized this issue and thus resulting in the mobilization of both to protect their religious sentiments. Thus in an open letter she demanded withdrawal of her petition to abort communal riot. Thus women's right was sacrificed for the maintenance of the law and order. "The women's cause was subsumed by the 'larger' cause." (Patel, 1998: 143) Patel further argues that secular women's movements had to rethink their long-term strategies to mobilize women. More significantly, the state withdrew its action under the ground that its interference against the religious personal laws is detrimental to the democratic values of the society. In a way, it reflects the patriarchal bias of the community and the state. Patel further writes:

Communization of the social milieu curbs the autonomy of women, puts more restrictions on women's basic rights to education and employment. Women are seen as the repositories of 'cultural and religious ethos' and 'community's honor' that must be guarded by the male members of the same community and violated by the male members of the hostile or opposing community. (Patel 1998:143)

A brief analysis of both the Hindu and the Muslim communities has demonstrated their commonality in subordinating women. Given this background, we are in a position to extract certain features of community, which are constructed by the patriarchal ideology. Firstly, the identity of any community is constructed on women's body. Secondly, it is also buttressed by violence and the other repressive measures. In the context of the communal riots, it takes

extreme form. "Identity is formed through the allegation by the dominant group of the rape of and aggression on their women by men of minority communities, an allegation which serves to justify dominant caste/community hegemony, by demonstrating the "lack of character" of minority men who show scant respect for women." (Kalpana Kannapuram, 1997:122)

The above analysis has shown that despite the heterogeneous characteristics of communitarian structure, they share a commonality in imposing patriarchal power on female sexuality. In the light of this, the public intervention is necessary to change the existing social inequality in general, and the gender inequality in particular. However, further analysis will reveal the fact that the state's intervention has always not been devoid of the acknowledgement of the deep-rooted patriarchal structure. Consequently, the state also is one of the institutions, which reinforces patriarchal oppression.

V.II.3 Patriarchy and the state

Since 19th century, the State has been attempting to empower women through social reform, through various measures. However, the neglect of the deep-rooted patriarchal structure have always resulted in failure of its measures. Feminist scholars analyze the State's measures by looking at its attitude towards women, both in the colonial and the postcolonial period. Since the early 19th century a series of measures have been taken by some reformist movements with the cooperation of the state. It is significant to note that women's movements, excluding some sporadic and spontaneous reaction, did not emerge in those period, and therefore, not surprisingly, women's questions at the beginning of the 19th century, up to the twentieth century was taken up by some educated upper class men. Therefore, those problems did not target women, cutting across all stratum of the society. (Oberoi 1996) Many feminist studies have demonstrated that in most cases, men have been the major beneficiaries of the social reforms, no matter, whether by the state, or by the social movements. Oberoi further notes that the state's support for certain customary rights may actually serve the materiel interests of the men, to the disadvantage of women. Some feminist writers, problematise the reform by locating it to the existing patriarchal structure. They argue that men exercise their power over women's sexuality, by using reform, or other measures. Therefore, sexuality itself has to be problematised to uncover the neglect of the gender bias in such measures. Notions of ideal gender relationship

among the colonial administrators were reflected in different legislative measures, affecting many of women's traditional areas of influence (Poonacha 1996). By studying the impact of the colonial state on the Coorg Kodava, she analyses the impact of colonial state, and its intended consequences in the control of the female sexuality. She writes:

Within the pre-colonial social organization with its well-defined gender roles, there existed a by and large pragmatic attitude to what might have been construed as sexual 'deviation' in most patriarchal societies. Examining the sexual code as enumerated in indigenous records of customary practices, it becomes apparent that women could not be punished for adultery or for premarital sex as long as the partner was another Coorg. Similarly attempts were made within the institution of marriage to ensure that the paternity of children born out of wedlock was recognized and that they were integrated into either their mother's clan or their father's clan. The sexual codes applied more or less equally to men and to women. This, it is suggested, was due to certain constraints within the physical and the socio-political environment. Gradually, with the far-reaching transformation of society during the colonial period, social controls over women's sexuality seem to have increased-creating a difference between the codes governing men's and women's sexuality. (Poonacha, 1996: 40)

More significantly, the liberal democrats in India trace back the women's liberation movement to the colonial period. However, as far as the women's cause is concern, the above mentioned passage explicitly articulates that the colonial rulers like the indigenous monarchs were equally repressive in controlling the female sexuality. This is more explicit for widows. Chowdhry, (1996) analyzes the inter-linkage between the patriarchy, structures of customs, and the state in the colonial Punjab, in preventing widows from their inheritance rights through institutionalized legal procedures. Their rights have always been contested by relating it with their sexuality. At the same time, widows also resisted against such patriarchal oppressions through legal system, and through direct confrontation.

On the one hand, patriarchal interests were invoking the aid of the law to get certain highly contentious customs and claims accepted, stretching notions of legitimacy and morality and impinging upon the rights of widows; on the other, the widows were making use of the new legal and public space to counter these moves, activate their inheritance rights, assert their preferences in sexual and marital relationships and make counter-claims of their own. (Chowdhury 1996: 65.)

In the context of this, it is significant to note that the concept of widowhood is very much deep rooted in the Brahminical patriarchal structure, and thus it is further strengthened by its Ideological apparatus, which has already been analyzed. Chowdhry further states that the colonial rulers have selectively introduced customs on widows to control their sexuality. Institutionalization of the levirate marriage is one of such attempt

to curb their relative autonomy in owning their property. However, the status of widows no matter, whether in the colonial regime, or in the contemporary society, has to be analyzed by comparing the lower caste women with that of the twice born upper caste women.

In the 20th century, there was a paradigm shift in the understanding of the women's development. Unlike the 19th century's intellectuals, the 20th century's reformers addressed to the problem of women's empowerment, their role in production, their right to own private property etc. By analyzing the report of the National Planning Committee, Chaudhuri (1996) analyses the paradigm shift in the understanding of the women's empowerment in the 20th century. "The terms of reference, though extensive, laid special emphasis on providing women equal opportunities as a matter of right to enable her to take 'full share in India's planned economy'. Entry into the production sphere was seen as the key to resolving the unequal status of women. This is a radical departure from the concern of 19th century reformers."

A closer look at the Indian social structure clearly brings out the fact that the planning of the N.P.C is tilted towards certain sections of the society. In the context of this, it should be noted that the state's primacy to the individuality, resulted in the neglect of some institutions, such as family, marriage, religion and so on, and thus not adequate emphasis was given to the understanding of the manner in which they impinge on women. "The separation of 'Individual status' from 'Social status' in the report hinges on the basic understanding of the SCW that the individual is the legitimate unit of society while the social-understood as 'marriage, family problems, caste and religion'-refers to the encumbrances which impinge upon the individuality of the woman." (Chaudhuri 1996:213-214)

The state considers women as the symbol of community and thus interrogates their lives, undermining their individual choice. Butalia 1996 analyses the gendered nature of the post partition related violence, and the question of female sexuality. She states that the violence that accompanied partition targeted women and their bodies in a particular way. Even the state's response to such development was scant and thus even the state authorities adopted the institutionalization of the patriarchal violence in a way. Such violence was more prevalent among the abducted, or the widowed women. She questions the state's definition of the concept of abduction itself. She writes:

Abduction is a catchall description that has come to be used for all women (and some men) who disappeared during the confusion of partition. While it is true that many were actually abducted, it is equally possible that some may have gone of their own accord. None the less, the we countries treated all women missing or living with men of the other religion after a particular time as 'abducted' women. (Butalia 1996:91)

On similar lines with the colonial regime, the Indian and the Pakistani rulers also adopted the reformist measures to realize these abducted women. It is significant to note that these measures

were taken largely in response to the pressure of the families, and different communities. In response to their demand the state launched, what is known as 'the central oppression force. However, this further aggravated the position of those women, than liberating them. It becomes more evident, when she writes:

The basic assumption of the Central Recovery Operation was that any woman found living with a man of the other religion after a certain date (and there was some dispute on exactly when this cut-off point was to be located) would be presumed to have been abducted or forcibly pushed into that relationship, and she therefore had to be 'rescued'. If women protested, and said they were in one or other relationship as a matter of choice, it was assumed that such statements were being made under pressure and had therefore to be discounted. (Butalia 1996:93)

However, by looking at various government records, and the reports of social workers, she notes that many women who were categorized as abducted women, did not wish to return to their nations. She further states that some of this women did not want to take their children, who were fathered by a husband of another religious, as the symbol of pollution, while some other women did not wish to face second migration. Thus the attitude of the state towards the women's cause, no matter, whether through planning, or through the rehabilitation of the abducted women, did not adequately look at the existing structural and the cultural domination. Such shallow understanding resulted in the further aggravation of women's position in the existing social structure, and thus it strengthened the patriarchal structure.

This analysis shows us the role of colonial states in reinforcing the existing patriarchal norms and values of the society through its social reform. Does it mean that we need to problematize the social reform itself? Despite the drawbacks of such measures, it should be noted that many of the colonial measures were the crucial steps in the direction of the social change. At the same time, women's questions were either left unaddressed or partially taken up even by the Indian intellectuals of that period. Therefore, our endeavor in this analysis is not to spurn the reform completely, but rather to draw our attention to the neglect of women's causes in the reformist measures. I shall analyze below, the attitude of the state towards the women's cause in the postcolonial India.

I have argued that woman's questions either remained unaddressed or partially accepted by both the social reformers, and the colonial state. It is true that women's participation in the work

forces after India's political freedom have increased to a considerable extent. If this is approached from the liberal feminist point of view, then such developments should be appreciated and taken as a positive aspect towards achieving an egalitarian society. However, a closer look at the role of such State's measures clearly reveals that the policies of the state are biased towards certain sections of the society, and thus benefited mostly to the middle class women by neglecting the larger sections of the agrarian women. Therefore, Indian feminist writings in most cases are targeting the state's attitude towards, women, the role of households, communities, caste, class and so on, and the role of state in mediating them.

By looking at the main features the first plan documents, we have seen the attitude of the policy makers towards women, and their development. Though it did not acknowledge the deep-rooted patriarchal structural domination, they paid specific attention towards women's participation in the productive forces. However, when the state actually begun to work out the planning for the over all development of the nation, they marginalized women's development. Therefore, feminist writings revolve around the explanation of the deep-rooted patriarchal structure, and its impact on the process of development, its impact on the state policy, etc.

Agarwal (1988) through cross-cultural studies, analyzes different structure, affecting patriarchy, and thus illustrates the impact of such changes on women's social and the economic position in the present Asian society. We have seen the ideological inclination of the policy makers and its reflection in the first plan document. In consequence to such development, agricultural sector was considered to be secondary to the industrial sector. Agarwal argues that such attitudes of the state have an enormous impact on women. In the post colonial period, even the state's attention towards this sector was oriented towards the growth, and thus undermining the developmental aspect, which is more crucial for the so called developing countries. Agarwal further writes:

A feature common to agricultural development strategies across Asia, especially over the past decade and a half, has been a concerted effort to increase productivity and agricultural surpluses through the introduction of new technologies and practices, embodied especially in the green revolution package of practices and in major irrigation and resettlement schemes. In non-socialist Asia, this preoccupation with growth and the neglect of both distributional and ecological considerations has led to the uneven emergence of capitalist development in agriculture, exacerbated class and regional inequalities (especially in South Asia where the radical components of land reform attempted in the immediate post-independence period were soon abandoned), and impinged in crucial (although as yet inadequately explored) ways on the political power

balances, economic institutions and social fabric of these societies. The gender effects of these strategies have been particularly complex and sometimes contradictory, depending especially on the initial condition of women's existence in these societies, the degree to which gender biases are an explicit part of the planned schemes as opposed to unplanned fallouts, and the extent of organized resistance to effected changes. (Aggarwal, 1988: 2)

In this context, it should be noted that these changes were very much enunciated in the form of some kinds of gender bias, such as the preference of male child, increase of female infanticide, and so on. She also draws our attention towards the regional variations in such biases. She states that these regional variations explicate the role of social, economic, and the cultural variations. More significantly, the Indian planners in the post independent period, treated women as handicapped and thus considered them as the recipients of the social welfare policies of the state. Therefore, not surprisingly the deep-rooted structural inequalities that are inherent in the existing social customs and institutions such as marriage, family and their related customary practices have been completely neglected by the state planners. Can the existing patriarchal domination be grasped in isolation from these customs and institutions? Can the state succeed in illuminating gender inequality by disengaging itself with these customary practices? A closer look at the development accords negative answer to these questions. It also indicates the state's inclination towards certain structural and ideological elements. Chaudhuri illustrates this by looking at the measures of the Indian policy makers in the first decade after it's political freedom. She writes:

The Planning Commission's Plans and Prospects for Social Welfare in India, 1951-61 spells out social welfare services as intending to cater for the special needs of persons and groups who by reason of some handicap-social, economic, physical or mental-are unable to avail of or are traditionally denied the amenities and services provided by the community. Thus women were considered to be handicapped by social customs and values and social welfare services were thought of to rehabilitate them. This is a far cry from the systematic analysis of marriage and family, rights to property and rights at work which marked India's first plan document-the WRPE. The break with the past seems absolute. A new, fresh beginning takes place with distinct ideological moorings. (Chaudhuri 1999: 120)

By analyzing various five-year plans, rural development programs, she points out that these initiatives of the state do not make any ideological shift in pursuing gender inequality. According to her these plans and programs do not look at the structural elements in pursuing gender inequality. The recent development in the agricultural sector clearly explicates this argument. Many of the state's planning in agrarian sector is largely affecting the destitute women in rural

areas. Agarwal further analyzes the manner in which the State's measures are effecting the agrerian women. She writes:

Agricultural growth strategies pursued since the mid-1960s have not only made an insignificant dent on the incidence of absolute poverty, but have increased male-female differentials in employment and earnings among the poor in many states of northern India where discrimination against females has also historically been high. Added to this, State policies have contributed significantly to the rapid depletion of the country's natural resources (water, forests, soils) and the increasing appropriation of what remains by a few. The permanent fall in the groundwater table in many areas (due to unmonitored private tubewell expansion, with the consequent drying up of shallower irrigation and drinking water wells); escalating deforestation (especially due to commercial tree-felling, large-scale surface irrigation works, and agricultural expansion); soil erosion (due to loss of tree cover, canal-related water-logging, salinity, etc.); the decline in village commons (due to appropriation by large farmers, and government auctioning to private contractors); the barring of the poor from access to forest produce, have all created, on the one hand, severe shortages in the availability of fuel, fodder, water and gathered food items to poor women and, on the other, made questionable the long-term sustainability of agricultural yields under the present agricultural strategy. (Aggarwal 1988:4-5)

In the context of India, it should also be noted that in most cases these women who are deprived of these natural resources belong to the scheduled caste, or scheduled tribes. Aggarwal further notes that these trends can be observed all over south Asia, cutting across cultural and other structural variations. More significantly, the patrilineal bias of the state has also been reflected in the policy measures of the state. For example, a series of measures have been taken in traditionally matrilineal societies to impose patrilineal norms and values and thus the relative gender equality of those societies are intimidated. Nongbri (2000) states that through legislative measures, traditional resistance of men against the existence of the relative autonomy of *Khasis* women is threatened. She writes:

Since Meghalaya came into being in 1972 only two *Khasis* women (in addition to three Garos) have made it into the State Legislature. The traditional prejudice against women taking part in politics has proved to be a major obstacle to their entry into the modern political process. Women's marginal position in politics is highly disadvantageous to their interests. This has not only resulted in the persistence of gender biases in development policies, but more importantly, with the increasing intrusion of the state into the sphere of the family, their absence has allowed men to interfere with their civil and cultural rights. (Nongbri, 2000: 375)

The above analysis brings out two crucial critical points in understanding patriarchy in India. Firstly, the state has always has been reinforcing a particular ideological and theoretical position which neglected the deep-rooted patriarchal structure. Secondly, the state's notion of empowerment, and development have always been used to fulfill the needs of certain sections of

the society, while some critical issues related with gender inequality have been left either unaddressed or completely neglected. It also uncovers the fact that the concepts of empowerment, development, etc have to be redefined to grasp the patriarchal structure in India. Through this analysis, I sought to uncover the Indian patriarchal structure, by looking at the feminist writings on different cultural and the structural variations. As it has been mentioned, patriarchal ideology is reinforced through this institution. Therefore, The deep-rooted patriarchal structure and it's ideological construction can be adequately grasped, only by looking at these structural elements. It also becomes clear, that Indian patriarchal structure is significantly different from that of the west.

CHAPTER - 6

CONCLUSION

Sociological writings for the past two centuries have introduced a wide variety of concepts and theories in understanding social phenomena. The emergence of this discipline has to be traced back to the French and the Industrial revolution. The concern of the founders of sociology was to restore order and stability of the society, which was threatened by these developments. This also became a central focus in the conventional sociological perspectives, such as evolutionism, diffusionism, functionalism etc. More significantly, these dominant sociological perspectives neglected existing structural inequalities. Gender was one such neglected factor in social research.

With the emergence of feminist movements in the west, and the second phase of feminist movements in India, many of the existing dominant theoretical assumptions were called in to question. With their interrogation, even the conventional social theories started rethinking their concepts and analytical tools. Not surprisingly, the feminist writings are themselves diverged, and therefore, it is difficult to uncover any single theoretical paradigm in their analysis. More significantly, their analysis did not give adequate emphasis to the ideological construction of patriarchy. Though these ideological elements are inherent in their analysis, it has been the result of their specific theoretical positions. For example, liberals considered socialization as an important analytical tool to grasp the ideological construction of patriarchy. Such analysis neglected the role of caste, race and so on, which play a predominant role in the ideological formation. On the other hand, the Marxist/socialist feminist writings, while emphasizing the role of domination and power relations, failed to adequately emphasize the role of socialization, which has an important bearing on the ideological construction of patriarchy. Such analysis was absent even in the writings of radical feminist scholars. Given this theoretical background, this study was an attempt to look at the ideological construction of patriarchy, by looking at three important concepts, namely patriarchy, ideology and family, which are indispensable for the understanding of the ideological construction of patriarchy, particularly within the domain of family.

I

Significance of the study

The early sociological writings were based on some conventional perspectives, such as functionalism, diffusionism evolutionism etc. Therefore, not surprisingly, a specific emphasis was

given to these conventional theories in sociological researches and teaching. Therefore, any area, which falls outside these perspectives, was considered as ideological. However, the impact of Marxist writings, had introduced various concepts and analytical tools, which gave primacy to the structural inequality. Ideology was one of such concept. However, Different conceptions of ideology, within Marxist writings uncovers the fact that this concept has been treated as a gender neutral one.

The concept of patriarchy has been a major analytical tool in feminist analysis. This concept in feminist writings had acquired a new meaning. Unlike anthropological writings, feminist scholars extended its meaning to the existing social structure. However, they did not emphasize the ideological construction of patriarchy. Even the inherent ideological element in their analysis is the result of their specific theoretical positions. Therefore, one can not analyze any single conception of patriarchy.

Another major concept, used in this study is family. In sociology and social anthropology, Most studies on family and kinship structure were based on the conventional theories. Therefore, not surprisingly, they did not use gender as a category. A survey of the existing literatures on family have shown the inadequacy of these perspectives in grasping the ideological construction of patriarchy, particularly, within the domain of family. Feminist scholars attribute the reason to the existing male bias within the social research. Thus by looking at these concepts and analytical tools, I sought to demonstrate that patriarchal ideology can be adequately grasped only by inter relating these concepts and theoretical paradigms. To do so, I attempted to extend these concepts beyond the specific analysis. The manner, in which this has been attempted, will be explicated in brief, below. I shall briefly describe the use of these concepts, in conceptualizing patriarchal ideology, and thus their specific usage, and the inter connection between them will become clear. Before looking at their usage, I shall summarize some important aspects of these concepts.

II

Summing Up

As I have pointed out, three important concepts, namely, ideology, patriarchy, and family have been specifically used in this study to uncover the ideological construction of patriarchy, particularly within the domain of family. The concept of ideology has been under going greater

transformation, since its appearance in the writings of the French ideologies. Destutt de Tracy considered ideology as a science of ideas, and they can be pursued only through our sensation. In contrast to this, Napoleon, argued that Ideology was an abstract speculative doctrine, which was divorced from the realities of political power. Much like French ideologies, the German idealists also prioritized the ideas and doctrines, in understanding the existing realities.

Emergence of Marxist literature in the 19th century had completely changed the meaning of this concept. Two important features can be acknowledged from his conception of ideology. Firstly, His concept for the first time had emphasized the role of historical and the material condition of human beings in understanding their mental production. Secondly, Marx attempted to link this concept with the ruling class. However, 20th century's Marxist scholars had further enlarged its meanings. And some of them emphasized the role of super structure, in the ideological formations. Some of the Marxist writers introduced two different conceptions of ideology, of which one is formed out of the specific situation of individuals or groups, while the other is formed out of the existing historical and the material condition of human beings. To certain extent, this dichotomy can be compared with the existing debate within the main stream sociology that is the individualism versus the collectivity.

Also within the main stream sociology, it was attempted to define this concept. The structural functional theoretical paradigms were considered as an alternative to the Marxist conception of ideology. However, they did not intent to develop a specific conception of ideology. Moreover, their emphasis to the order and the stability of the society had made them to undermine the social domination, which is strongly rooted in ideology.

More significantly, Karl Mannheim had systematically analyzed this concept by contrasting it with the sociology of knowledge. Much like the later Marxist writers, he also introduced two different conceptions of ideology, namely, the total conception of ideology and the ideology of the particular. These conceptions of ideology are important in the understanding of the patriarchal ideology. It will become clear, when it is inter linked with other concepts and theories.

Like any other concept, the meaning and the character of patriarchy has also been changing, according to the historical and the social change. Some of the 19th century's anthropological writers argued that patriarchy as the earliest form of the social system, which was under the absolute authority of the eldest male member of the society. In contrast to this, some scholars, envisioned matriarchy as the earliest one, and thus with the establishment of the monogamous family, and the patriarchal society, the domination and the subjugation of women begun.

Many of the 19th century's speculative claims have been contested by the 20th century's anthropologists, who supported their argument by conducting fieldwork. In contrast to the anthropological writings, feminist scholars extended it's meaning to the wider social structure. Thus this concept acquired a new meaning, with the emergence of the feminist movements of the west.

However, since the western feminist writings on this concept are themselves are so diverged and thus one can not introduce a single conception of patriarchy. However, one common point to be noted in their analysis is that despite the heterogeneous characteristics of the feminist writings, they considered patriarchy as oppressive, and therefore, they proposed distinct solutions, according to different theoretical positions. Given this background, one can easily observe, these theoretical elements in family research.

Conventional theories of family emerged out of the predominant perspectives, such as Functionalism, Evolutionism, Diffusionism etc. Therefore, not surprisingly, in sociology and social anthropology, family researches were mainly focussed on the explanation of the functions of family and its inevitability. Writings on family gave over emphasis to the positive functions of family, and thus neglecting the gender inequality, within the domain of family. For example, Talcott Parsons argues that "procreation" and "child care" are the primary functions of family. In his view, it also performs economic and religious functions. He further states that despite the destabilizing character of the contemporary family structure, it continues to perform two important positive functions, namely, the socialization of the children, and the stabilization of human personality.

More significantly, sociologists and social anthropologists in India have largely adopted concepts and theories developed in the western context. The earlier anthropological field studies were concentrated on the explanation of kinship terminologies and their practices in different kinship zones. Nevertheless, most of them shared a general assumption that family and kinship structure is necessarily patrilineal, patrilocal and the patriarchal one.

A brief survey of the Indian writings on family has shown that their emphasis to the positive functions of family has made them to neglect the deep-rooted gender inequality within family. It should also be noted that many of them analyzed family within the western dichotomy of the 'joint family versus the nuclear family. In Chapter four, I traced it back to the existing male bias within the domain of the social research. This theoretical vacuum necessitated me to look at the feminist writings on family and kinship structure to grasp the Indian patriarchal structure.

Feminist scholars in India have approached patriarchal structure from two different angles. First, they attempted to trace it back to the micro structural elements, such as the kinship structure, family, and the household. Second, they further extended the deep-rooted gender inequality to other structural and cultural variations, such as caste, community, state, etc. In both these analyses, the question of development, social reform and the role of state, etc are the central focus.

Thus the concept of patriarchy has acquired a new meaning in the writings of Indian feminist writers. Thus it becomes clearer that these concepts analytical tools are important to understand the ideological construction of patriarchy. In the following section, I shall attempt to specifically bring out the importance of these concepts in understanding patriarchal ideology. I shall also show, to what extent, these concepts have facilitated me to grasp the ideological construction of patriarchy.

III:

Conceptualizing patriarchal ideology by inter linking different conceptual apparatus

Ideology and patriarchy

As it has been pointed out, the concept of ideology is essential to understand any ideological construction. As I have already noted, this concept is so complex, and different conceptions of ideology have been appearing for the past two centuries. Despite its heterogeneity, this concept can be used to some features of patriarchal ideology.

- The debate within the French ideologs, can expose two important ways of looking at the ideological construction of social reality, namely, through sensation, and through speculative doctrines. More significantly, patriarchal ideology also can be looked at from these two angles.
- German idealists gave a specific emphasis to the inner realities, and metaphysical ideas. In the context of the feminist perspective, it should be noted that it looks at the metaphysical ideas and doctrines, to understand the ideological construction of patriarchy.
- Marxist's emphasis to the historical and the material condition of human beings was to be the ultimate bases for the ideological understanding of patriarchy, in the later feminist writings. Particularly, the socialist feminist drew heavily from this conception of ideology. More significantly, their emphasis to the role of ruling class in the ideological formation was another major analytical tool, which was later adopted by the feminist scholars to explain the gendered nature of the state. However, it should be noted that feminist understanding of the ruling class is extended beyond the economic rulers.
- Gramsci's distinction between the historically organic ideologies and the ideologies, which are formed out of the rationalistic will, can make one to understand, those ideological elements, which are historically necessary for the deep-rooted patriarchal structure. More significantly, his emphasis to the positive conception of ideology, and the role of intellectuals in transforming society can be a firm bases to organize the masses to contest the existing patriarchal structure.
- Althusser's notions of ideology can be applied to see the role of patriarchal ideology in subordinating the oppressed class.
- Ideology, within the structural functional school can bring out the role of family in inculcating patriarchal norms and values on children through socialization. More significantly, these theoretical assumptions are more evident in the writings of liberal feminists.

- By applying Mannheim's distinction between the total conception of ideology, and the ideology of the particular, one can grasp functions of patriarchal ideology, both at the individual and at the collective level.

Thus it becomes clear that ideological construction of patriarchy cannot be understood in isolation from these theoretical assumptions. More significantly, Different perspectives, within feminist approach have drawn inspiration from different conceptions of ideology in understanding the ideological construction of patriarchy.

Patriarchy and family

Family has been a major area of research in sociology and social anthropology. However, most of these studies have not given adequate emphasis to the gender inequality, within family. By drawing inspirations from the speculative writings of the 19th century, Family and kinship studies consider family and household as necessarily headed by the eldest male members. This general assumption has been applied in empirical research, both in the west, and in India. The basic functions of family, described by the structural functional approach, clearly reproduce the gender specific role, which is clearly a manifestation of the patriarchal ideology. By looking at both Indian and western literature on family, I sought to demonstrate that most of them share these general assumptions. I have attributed the reason to the existence of male bias, within social research itself.

In contrast to the conventional theories of family and kinship, feminist analysis starts with the premise that gender roles are socially constructed, and thus both men and women are turned in to the gendered objects. Unlike the conventional theorists, feminist scholars trace back the gender inequality to the kinship structure. In their view, kinship ideology determines the unequal distribution of both material and the non-material resources among men and women. (Dube 1997, Agarwal, 1994).

Further, feminist analysis also looks at the procreative ideologies of different kinship structures. In their view, patrilineal procreative ideology, by giving primacy to the semen, emphasizes the role of men in life giving activities. Further more, it considers the ultimate goal of marriage as to

procreate children. In contrast to this, the matrilineal procreative ideology gives centrality to women's role in procreating children. However, feminist scholars point out that both of them emphasize the gender specific roles, for women as mothers and wives, and men as fathers and husbands.

While looking at the existing studies on family and household, I have argued that these studies introduce the western dichotomy of the joint family verses the nuclear family. However, feminist scholars introduce multiple forms of familial structures, and thus the strong patrilineal bias of the conventional theories has been contested by them. Some scholars trace back the unequal distribution of food, medical care, and the gender differences in education to family and the kinship structure. Sen, (1993). However, patriarchal ideology can be adequately grasped, only by inter-linking patriarchy with the cultural and the structural variations for the reason that they also have an important bearing on the existing gender relations within family household, and the kinship structure.

Grasping patriarchal ideology through structural variations

By analyzing different perspectives within feminist writings, I have questioned the simple generalization of the universal domination and subjugation of women, and thus emphasized the need for the incorporation of the cultural and the structural variations in grasping the important features of patriarchy. To substantiate my argument, I looked at the feminist writings on three important structural elements, namely caste, community, and the state.

In India, caste structure has an enormous impact on gender relations. Women have always been a major target in the reproduction of culture, tradition, religious beliefs etc. Not surprisingly, violation of the norms and values reinforced different standard of behavior for men and women, and thus treat women as the central object for the preservation of these institutions. According to Dube, (1996), three important themes determines the relationship between caste and gender. They are, Occupational continuity and the Reproduction of caste, Food and Rituals, and Marriage and Sexuality. Chakarvarti 1998 analyzes the symbolic construction of the widowhood among the upper caste Hindus. By contrasting the rituals, and practices of the widows, with that of the marriage rituals, she argues that an upper caste widow is considered as socially dead, and

therefore, many of the symbols, and rituals of marriage are denied to her. By comparing the status of the upper caste widow with that of the widow of the lower caste, she argues that female sexuality is strictly controlled among the upper caste, than that of the agricultural labourer caste.

However, I argued that the existing liberating feature among the agricultural labourers, can not be compared with the status of the upper caste women the reason that the structural constrain on the lower caste women is significantly different from that of the women of the upper caste. Through this argument, I also emphasize that patriarchal ideology constrains women differently on different sections of the society.

Like caste, community also impeaches on women. They have been centrally implicated in the alignment of the communities and families. The resent attempts of some religious community's emphasis to the revival of the religious sentiments have an enormous impact on women. Communities also use procreative ideology to emphasize women's gender specific roles as mothers and wives. More significantly, some communities are attempting to impose patriarchal norms through political mobilization. Thus Community is an important structural element, through which patriarchal ideology is inculcated on women.

Since 19th century, the State has been attempting to empower women through social reform, through various measures. However, the neglect of the deep-rooted patriarchal structure have always resulted in failure of it's measures. The gendered nature of the patriarchy has been looked at elaborately in Chapter four. However, one crucial point to be noted is that the state always considers women as the symbol of community, and thus their cause is subsumed by the cause of the community. Thus patriarchal ideology has to be analyzed by looking at different cultural and the structural variations.

Thus in this study, I attempted to grasp patriarchal ideology by analyzing different analytical tools of both conventional and the feminist writings. In this context I would like to mention, some important findings from this study.

Concluding remarks

The concept of ideology is an important analytical tool in grasping the ideological construction of patriarchy. In sociology, and social anthropology, family research has largely been conducted under the general assumption that patriarchy existed since the origin of the human society. This general assumption can be attributed to the existing male bias within the main stream discipline. Therefore, these studies also reflect the inherent patriarchal ideology within social research.

The concept of patriarchy is a major analytical tool, in grasping patriarchal ideology, and it has to be grasped, by looking at its ideological bases. Different conceptions of ideology have influenced distinctive perspectives within feminist writings. This fact also necessitates one to look at the concept of patriarchy in the western feminist writings. Family is an important social institution, in which the bases of patriarchal ideology are firmly established. Therefore, both the conventional and feminist theories of family are indispensable to grasp its ideological bases.

In India, the concept of patriarchy takes new forms. First, the question of development, social reform of the state, and other institution, etc are the focal points in grasping the Indian patriarchal structure. Therefore, the analysis of Indian feminist writings can bring out these features. Indian patriarchal structure also has to be grasped by inter connecting it with both micro and the macro structural elements. A closer look at these will bring out the manner in which patriarchal ideology constrains on women, differently, in different social settings.

More significantly, patriarchal ideology has to be grasped by inter linking the above mentioned concepts and analytical tools. This also make one to grasp the inherent ideological elements in each concepts, and by inter linking them, one can uncover the specific patriarchal structure, and by inter connection of them can make one to avoid any generalization from some specific analytical tool.

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