

MRITYUDAND (1996) TO CHUNNAV' (2014): A SILENT EMERGENCY: SON PREFERENCE IN PATRIARCHAL INDIAN SOCIETY

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Abstract:- The India's most popular newspaper 'Times Of India' reported that this is the common tendencies among Indian couples to visit Thailand for undergoing Pre Implantation Genetic Diagnosis which involves producing embryos through IVF and implanting only those of the desired gender into the womb. According to the reports of UNICEF, census, NFHS-3 and several medical journals more than 500,000 female fetuses are being aborted per year in India. From 945 girls for every 1000 boys in 1991, it went down to 927 in 2001 and to 918 in 2011. The well-established preference for male progeny pooled with an emerging preference for small families will result in a loss of girls either before or after birth.

In the aspect of post nineties parallel Indian cinema here I want to explain 1) how patriarchy is symbolize to the identity of motherhood in private domain? And 2) are Indian parallel film directors indicating son preference as silent emergency in Indian society?

Key Word- Patriarchy, Son preference, Subordination of Women, Indian Cinema

*"Prabhujimein tori bintikaroon
PaiyanParoon bar bar
AgleJanamMoheBitiya Na Dije
NarakDijeChahe Dar..."*

---- Folk Song from Uttar Pradesh

The cited song is based on the traditional hierarchies of Patriarchy which is anonymously threatened to the birth of girl child and has claimed that when a girl is born the earth sinks by a foot, but when a son is born it rises up one foot to greet him.

The India's most popular newspaper 'Times Of India' reported that this is the common tendencies among Indian couples to visit Thailand for undergoing Pre Implantation Genetic Diagnosis which involves producing embryos through IVF and implanting only those of the desired gender into the womb. This entire practice involves the genetic investigation of the early stage embryos that have been productive In Vitro Fertilization (IVF) to determine their gender. "Those IVF egg cells are fertilized by sperm outside the body. The embryos created then are cultured in the laboratory for three days. They are approximately eight cells. Then one or two are removed for testing under powerful micro scope to identify the gender. Embryos of the desired gender are then planted into the womb." These kinds of incidents have indicated the unexpected emergency for the future of India. According to the reports of UNICEF, census, NFHS-3 and several medical journals more than 500,000 female fetuses are being aborted per year in India. It is clear that without unremitting action on many fronts, millions more women will go disappear in India. In the special radio programme of Prime Minister Narendra Modi 'MannkiBaat', there he expressed his concerned on adverse rate of child sex ratio in India. From 945 girls for every 1000 boys in 1991, it went down to 927 in 2001 and to 918 in 2011. The Government has also identified 100 gender

critical districts in the country where the CSR is abysmally low. In several South East Asian countries along with South Korea and China there have been abrupt decreases in the female sex ratios among children as a consequence of substantial declines in fertility. Most of those countries have been practicing the custom of strong preferences for sons.

Dasgupta and Bhatt have pointed out that the well-established preference for male progeny pooled with an emerging preference for small families will result in a loss of girls either before or after birth. In April-21st, 2001, inauguration address for the Radcliffe institute of Havard University, Nobel Prize winner Sir Amartya Sen addressed to the audiences that the estimates the number of women missing from worsen-short countries' where gender bias is most prevalent to exceed 100milions.

Emeritus economist Asok Mitra mentioned to the question of worsens female sex ratio after reading of census report of 1971. He wrote what perhaps is the most comprehensive review of the social malady covering all this is relevant. (Mitra Asok: 1979) He discussed at length the possibility of undercounting of females in the different census and went on to the nature and extent of higher female mortality under normal conditions and under famines. He paid attention to the economic and cultural environment that generates discrimination against females. Sociologist Srinivasan and his colleagues Rajan have observed from the chronological adverse female sex ratio in India, that gender differences in death rates have been narrowing down and further make references to the work of other demographers, pointing in the same directions. Logically all these should have led them to the serious consideration of trends in the sex ratio at birth. They have critically explained that female foeticide and infanticide promoted by son preference could have contributed

significantly to the fall in the sex ratio they assert that sex selection at birth through the emerging technology of sex determination is largely a common phenomenon.

Film and sociology are interlinked with each other. In between realist films four interrelated themes like, i) identity ii) interaction iii) inequality and iv) institutions help to sociologists to analyse society in detail. Sociologists can use films as social texts to explore these core themes. Post nineties film directors have seen our society through films and their films are treated as new spectators which have developed the new consciousness and inexhaustible work of criticism in action. Post nineties Indian film makers have critically analysed that due to strong feelings of son preferences in India every year almost seven lakh girls are killed by their parents before they are born. In the Asian countries discrimination against female child is not a rare phenomenon. Even after birth, girls are at much higher risk of childhood death than boys. Female babies are less likely to survive the first year than their male counterparts. After birth, son-preference continues to persist leading to the neglect of girls and their lack of access to nutrition, health and maternal care in these critical early years. Here I want to mention films like *Mrityudand* (1996), *Haribhari* (2000), *Lajja* (2002), *Matrubhumi: A nation without Women* (2005), *Na Ana IshdeshLaado* (2009), *Tommidinelay* (2011), *Me and my Sister* (2013), *Nahannyote* (2013), *Jalpari* (2013), *Mardistan* (2014), *Chunnav* (2014), *It's a girl* (2014), and case Studies from *'Crime Petrol'* *'Sabdhan: India Fights back'* those are examined the patriarchal gaze and visualized the woeful feelings of son preferences in Indian male headed society. In the aspect of post nineties parallel Indian cinema here I want to explain the chapter from two aspects 1) How patriarchy is symbolize to the identity of motherhood in private domain? And 2) Are Indian parallel film directors indicating son preference as silent emergency in Indian society?

(A)

'Haribhari' (2000) to 'PuritiNeppulu' (2013): Patriarchy Vs Motherhood

“Gazala: Please leave me ...not feeling well.

MunirMian: You are always sick... I am your husband so it's your duty to sleep with me and fulfill my sexual desire...don't forget, that you are my property...So I have complete right to win your body and its depend on me that how could I plough in my own land...”

----- (Haribhari: 2000)

The dialogue is pragmatically explained that, within patriarchal social structure woman's body is treated as private property of man. Gerda Lerner observed that the women's sexuality which were dominated and controlled by male classes, that key factors led to the organization of reproduction and the social,

political and economic disempowerment of women. In between four walls of home women are degraded, enthralled and treated as slave of man's desire and they are used as child bearing and child producing machine. Patriarchy has identified to motherhood as self scarifies- devoted-humble mother whose existence is only confined with to reproduce heroic sons. Patriarchy has created the sharp division between private and public, which restricts women's mobility and growth and reproduces male domination. Sociologist Leela Dube has explained that the questions of female labour within household have ignored, in the arena of family, myths of motherhood always devaluates women's position as home maker. The silences in Brahmanical texts on Women's labour are implied even in the *Grhyasūtras*, where the focus seemingly is on the organisation of household labour in a manner that is conducive for the household. In post Vedic period, while wives must have played an important role in contributing to the household through their reproductive capacity, there texts and rituals highlight the roles of women only as householder in providing substances of household. The *Grhyasūtras* have also explained how women were placed in the terms of kinship relations and marriage.

The Hindu law giver Manu wrote that 'to be mothers, women were created and to be fathers, men. The teacher is ten times more vulnerable than the sub teacher, the father a hundred times more than the teacher but a mother a thousand times more than a father'. In India it is oldest almost 5000 years old tradition of venerating the mother as goddess and the goddess as mother. Indian philosopher Sukumari Bhattacharji (1990) had explained that the real identity of mother was not exposed when the identity of mother was related with goddess. In a patriarchal kinship women's status in the household is determined by her ability to produce male offspring to carry on her husband's lineage. Post nineties Indian parallel film makers have criticized that the significance of the motherhood within the traditional family. They visualized through their creations that while mothers are glorified and defined as sources of fertility, prosperity, primeval energy and power, in real life they are deprived from the real power basically from material resources, procreative capacities. Their reproductive capacities are reduced to a function in the service of patriarchy.

The term 'Patriarchy' is used to refer the male domination, to the power relationship by which men dominate women, and to characterise a system where by women are kept subordinate in a number of way while men are getting priorities. That concept has conducted in Indian art and culture from the end of nineteenth century. It is eventually observed that from film and television to radio, magazines,

literature, newspapers, the portrayal of women is stereotypical and distorted. Male superiority and female inferiority are repeated constantly in mainstream Indian films. In the early phase of Indian cinema women represented as absolutely "pure" wives through the epical characters or sometimes they visualised as ideal girlfriends, self-sacrificing mothers, sisters and daughters or they were immoral prostitutes, cabaret dancers, strippers. In early Indian Cinematic context herself heroine had not the slightest importance, she was the one, or rather the love or fear she inspired in the hero. "In their traditional exhibitionist role women were simultaneously looked at and displayed, with their appearance coded for strong visual and erotic impact so that they can be said to connote to-be-looked-at-ness." The conception of the passive role of women in cinema to argue that film provided visual pleasure through scopophilia. Great film critic Laura Mulvey narrated that, Freud's psychoanalytic theory was the key to understand how film created such a space for female sexual objectification and exploitation through the combination of the patriarchal order of society, and 'looking' in itself as a pleasurable act of voyeurism, as 'the cinema satisfies a primordial wish for pleasurable looking.'

In the first half of Indian Cinema (1920-30s), film makers like Phalke, Kanjibhai Rathor, Damle and Fatehlal, wanted to express Patriotism, Hinduism and National emotions through their filmic gaze. Phalke argued that "while the life of Christ was rolling fast before my eyes I was mentally visualizing the Gods, Sri Krishna, Shri Rama Chandra, their Gokul and Ayodhya...could we the sons of India, ever be able to see the Indian images on the screen?" He felt the need to set up an Indian industry in line with the nationalist call for Swadeshi. It was true though Phalke was the pioneer of Indian cinema and he preferred to implement 'Swadeshi' feelings in early Indian cinematic context but all those were totally detached from reality. He had chosen to Hindu gods against the thrush of colonialism but different shades of colonial exploitations in contemporary period, totally absent in his films. Subsequently women characters like Savitri, Damayanti, Sita etc also allegorically appeared to establish traditional pure and divine icon of Hindu women. So ironically it is pointed out that such gendered projections were seen not only in traditional texts but also amongst historians, filmmakers, artists they had attempt to show women as either domestic goddesses or attribute them with the feminine mystique. One of the reasons to represent stereotypical image of women is because there has been a tendency demarcate the history of the 'public' and the 'private' spheres. Such kind of division naturally blocks out women from any histories and deal with public

spaces as women have been systematically kept out of political and prominent social religious, cultural ideological spaces. Kumkum Sangari has explained that it is this division of the public and private into discrete domains that leads to obfuscation as in practice public and private interpenetrate and are also produced together.

In colonial era, at early phase of Indian cinema apparently women also reflected as 'ideal house wife and mother.' In the films 'Sati Charitra' (1920), 'Paper Parinam' (1924), 'Sati Laxmi' (1924), 'DharmoLaxmi' (1926), 'Ma' (1933), 'Annapurna Mandir' (1935), etc. In early Indian Cinematic context though the women represented with wrap of idealness those who were always proved themselves as good-pure-dedicating wives and self-sacrificing-concern mothers but those 'ideal wives and mothers' projected as only suffering, self-sacrificing, devoting childbearing image and also incapable, helpless and controlled by patriarchal social structure. Further patriarchy not only forces women to the mothers, it also determines the conditions of their motherhood. This ideology of motherhood is one of the bases of women's oppression because it creates feminine and masculine character types which perpetuate patriarchy; it creates and strengthens the divide between private and public, it restricts women's mobility and it reproduces male domination. The glorification of idealized homemakers or idealized women in colonial Bengal was merely in the domain of ideology. Since has brought some possibility of women being in control is constantly vitiated by patriarchal norms within which women produce children. Control over women's sexuality and appropriating her reproductive ability for perpetuating the cause of the patriarchal household was merged through the mechanism of rituals. Such an ideology based on a philosophy of deprivation for women in the world of practice. 'Transposing the material onto an inner/outer- ghar/bahir, home and world - social place is divided, playing a significant role in the everyday practice of life. Gender differences fit into the division: men occupy the material world outside while women preserve at the home, its essence unaffected by the material world.'

In the colonial era with the emergence of Bourgeoisie nationalism, the directors caught hold of the image of mother to represent the nationalist aspirations. The ideology of motherhood has given an enormous importance in the cultural life of Bengal. As phenomenon, it was unique - religious, cultural and aesthetic domains were politicized with the help of the notion of motherhood. This conception also inherited in the aspect of Indian cinema. In the middle of 1940's directors like Debki Basu, Bimal Roy, Himanshu Rai, Kanji Bhai Rathore etc they visualized to the women as the part of "Desh". In the film

'ApnaGharh (1942) directed by DevkiBasu, there the women protagonist (grosser's wife), she represented as the image of 'Desha Matrika' who fought against British raj for India's emancipation. She visualized as 'Dashabhuj or Durga' because she was very careful wife- mother and as well as great combatant. In the films like 'UdayerPathe (1944)', 'Vandemataram (1946)', 'DhartikeLal (1946)', 'Srinkhal (1946)', 'DeshDabi (1948)' there women characters were visualized as the part of freedom movement of India. Hemen Gupta's films 'Bhulnai (1948) and 42' (1950) besides both films could claim complete originality in their subject matter. One did not need to be told that the feelings of patriotism that runs through this films is director's own, and director Hemen Gupta portrayed women's image as 'Deshamatrika' or 'Varatmata' to express his nationalist aspirations.

Largely some scholars like AsishRajadhyaksha, Ravi Vasudevan, Ira Vaskar, Diamond Oberoi etc they notified 1940 to 1950 was the important part of Indian Cinema because in that decades women considered as valuable part of climatic context where they glorified as 'Deshamatrika' or the part of nation. It is undeniable that filmmakers like KanjibhaiRathore, V. Santaram, Bimal Roy, Debaki Basu, Nitin Bose, Kawaja Abbas etc they expressed patriotic aspirations and nationalist emotions through the women characters nevertheless somehow, the women protagonist they performed by the direction of male fantasies and patriarchal and nationalist values. From a feminist point of view, in the context of Indian Nationalism though ostensibly the debates touched upon every aspect of women's being, the hidden agenda was always that of control. Behind this urge for a control lay a fear of the powerful forces that lay buried within women as well as nation-sexuality in one case and the demand for the social justice in the other- forces that could easily become over whelming. Resolving the 'women question' in the sense meant that control of the nation (the body politic) was link to the control of woman (the female body). Further, the image of woman as other could be drawn from the same reservoir of popular consequences as the image of 'woman as nation'.

Scholar Jasodhara Bagchi pointed out that "a distinct male anxiety in the glorification of motherhood- the need for authentication and the valor in the face of better organized cultural order of the rulers. The legitimacy that it accorded was not to the daughters but to the sons of the mother. Socially and ideologically, the glorified Indian mother belongs to the world of myth. Where it touched reality, a part from the indirect sense of power, it may have given to a few exceptional Bengali women, the ideology of motherhood strengthened the social practice of hidden exploitation of women." With the emergence of Bengalis as the distinctive identity in the Gangetic

delta, a confirmation of the spirit of tender motherhood was found in the natural setting which BankimChandra Chattopadhyay had described so movingly as well (Sujalam Suphalam Shasyashyamalam). The natural bounty of soil encouraged the representation of Bengali woman as an affectionate mother, ever ready to respond to the demand of her children.

From the Vedic to colonial period it had observed that 'motherhood' had seen as ultimate identity of Hindu women. The concept of 'glorifying Hindu women' through her reproductive capacity was the excellent ploy to keep aside them from socio-economic privileges like education, and profession that were being wrested by men. Professor Bagchi had pointed out that the difference is that while in the social reform era addressed women and tried to bring the colonial state machinery to bear upon their lives, the nationalist era used motherhood as only viable symbol of Bengali women-hood. Moreover it was the symbol that helped to bridge the social-religious-and political domain of colonial society. Representation of motherhood through nationalist approach was a multi-dimensional symbol and its authenticity arose out of its natural appropriateness to the social climate of Bengal. So in that context we said that in 1940's Indian film directors those had portrayed the women as 'ideal mother' or 'deshmatrika' it had upheld the hierarchy of patriarchal control within the family. It made the negative contributions to the lives of women. No wonder she was mythically as a symbol of order.

In the Post-Independence era some historical moments indicated striking changes in the lives of Indians.

In between fifties to eighties directors brought out women as protagonists from margin to the centre of film scripts. Simultaneously post nineties Indian film makers have explained through their creations that how does patriarchy stigmatize to the concept of motherhood and how the politics of subordination is controlled and exploited to the reproductive and sexual rights of women. Post nineties Indian films like 'Mrityudand', 'Haribhari', 'Matrubhumi' etc. have visualized that this is a very common features of patriarchal society that women are obliged to provide sexual services to their men according to their commands and needs. At another spectrum men may force their wives, daughters and other women for trading their sex. Within patriarchal social structure mothers are equally treated as sexual slaves, and the patriarchal ideology continuously opposed women as sexual beings to women as mothers. Basically women are treated as the part of male's sexual pleasure.

Recent film 'Mardistan' (2014) has visualized that male headed patriarchal society always indicates inferior position of women. While the social

construction of gender undermines the blind interpretation of the household and other social units as any longer being questionable male headed sphere. Men have come to consider themselves as superior to women as their masters. Women also have learnt to believe that they are inferior to men and regarded themselves as their slaves. In the capitalist society the question of women's liberation is not recognized in the context of gender relation.

From the feminist point of view motherhood is considered one of the bases of women's oppression because it creates and reproduces male dominancy. Feminists and feminist studies have observed that the theories of subjugation, oppression are grappled with the fact of the material bodies of women. Human body has been perceived differently while by Marx as the economic body and by the Freud as sexual body, rather than the body as a whole, constituting as an individual. Feminist like Beauvoir, Wollstonecraft etc. have tried to explain that female body as being more than a biological entity rather than politically inscribed entity. If we recall de Beauvoir's observation there find patriarchal culture constructs both women and nature as 'other', both are to be crushed and exploited. Within patriarchal social structure pregnancy has alienated women from herself, from culture, making it difficult for her to be the agent of her own destiny and engage in her transcendence.

Women's economic subordination meanwhile is reinforced by deeply ingrained patriarchal, cultural and religious attitudes. Basic tendency of fundamentalism is placing the ideal woman on a pedestal while knocking the real woman down. Together these forces are indicated the limited position of women in man dominated households as well as in the working fields also. Women whose lives are by the subsistence households, there socio-economic dependency not only undermine women's ability as decision makers but also their health and others basic needs are neglected. They are treated as caretaker of household and child bearing instrument. Nevertheless their contribution as home maker cannot recognize by male dominated society. In the film 'Haribhari' (2000), director Shyam Benagal has criticised the inferior position of five women in patriarchal society where women's economic, health, reproductive and sexual rights are neglected. Director Benagal characterized to Nazma as silent house keeper, whose life is ruined in between four walls of home as wife-daughter-in-law and mother. Whose position is not better than the buffalo Moti. Director has visualized to Nazma in low angle lens where she convulses as:-

Nazma: "My situation is not better than Moti...every year have to give birth a child and look after them properly....My existence is being counting hence I'll

serve for your family and will act as child producing machine..."

----- (Haribhari: 2000)

The film 'Mardistan' (2014) feminist Nivedita Menon has explained that physical violence often serves to underline women's subordinate position in male dominated society. Wife beating is unfortunately common phenomenon all over among all classed. Deprivation, seclusion, and violence all these serve to keep women in private sphere of society. Sometimes women's statuses are depended on having sons. In such situation children are a woman's constituency within the narrow political world of family, the more she has the stronger her clout. If she is infertile her status plunges, and she often falls accuse as polygamous, and discarding, or divorce. Indian State perpetuates patriarchal relations with two express factors- to dominate women and control over their sexuality and reproductive right. Kasturi (1996) points out that in the context of India the evolution of political understanding of the process of development, has actually strengthened to patriarchal structure in India. Rai (1996) and Basu (1998) indicate to State as inconsistent actor, because in many occasion state and traditional patriarchy are in binary opposition, while in other circumstances the state is the patriarchy which oppress to women. From gender centric view point thus feminist evolutions of the functioning of the Indian State have highlighted its contradictory nature and its tendency to operate in ambiguous ways. Indian state reflects tendencies of a post-structuralist state which relates to women in unpredictable and uncertain ways. The factors that decide whether the state will act in pro or anti gender ways in determined by the constructions of women, and the meaning of this constructions. S.Rai quite rightly notes that " the Indian state in simultaneously fractured, oppressive, threatening [and] also providing spaces for struggle and negotiation make the need for women to influence discourse and meanings all the more critical."

It is very important to contextualise the family, community and state in the ongoing decolonization process. In India, the shift from subsistence economy to the imperialist mode of production to suit the demands of the global market resulted in feminization of poverty and pushed women to experience newer forms of violence. As the ruling class has shifted their interest from domestic capital to international capital, there is a growing lawlessness on the part of the state. While existing laws are being liberalized / diluted, we see the emergence of new, repressive laws controlling economic, political and civil rights. Simultaneously, the state is co-opted by the market forces in exercising control over women's labour and sexuality. In a society where women are already denied property rights, privatization of

resources will worsen the condition of women, putting her in a more vulnerable position and reinforcing the anti-women attitude. The media advocacy by the global markets objectifies and commoditized a woman's body and she experiences even more violence outside the family and at the work-place. All these factors reinforce and strengthen the anti-women attitude.

From the Marxist point of view it is explained that underscored capitalism is the basic source of women's oppression. According to the Engel's concept it is narrated that with the implementation of the concept of private property women were bonded to serve men in domestic chores and had been gradually detaching from productive works. When men got used to agricultural methods of production and the products in surplus began to pile up. Then surplus known as private property and male section of the society were the basic ownerships of it. At the beginning of private property women were pushed back to the domestic work within the male headed family. Thus at household women worked under the control of male members and their livelihood depended to men so within the male dominating family women treated as private property of men and men were the ownership of women's mind, body, sexuality and reproduction. The worst consequence of the degradation of women was witnessed in the class divided society when the female body was used as a marketable commodity.

(B)

'Haribhari' to 'The Unwanted': When Son Preference is a Silent Emergency in India

"Rescue team: madam you have to choose one between your son and daughter to rescue..."

Mother: but how can I choose? I love my daughter also...

Rescue Team: You should choose immediately...

Mother: (cried and broken down) you will save my son's life..."

-----'Na hanyate(2012)

The above dialogue is taken from the film 'Na Hanyate' where a mother has to choose the life of only one child among two. Jui the protagonist is emotionally attached with her daughter nevertheless she has saved the life of her son since he is treated as old age assets and security. Due to the strong feeling of son preferences, gradual decline of female sex ratio indicates gender discrimination in Indian society. India's sex ratio among children aged 0-6 years is alarming. The ratio has declined from 976 females in 1961 to 914 in 2011. Primarily data from the 2011 census have recorded many districts with ratio less than 850. Film 'The unwanted' (2014) produced by Human Rights Law Network has explained that in a society with a strong preference for boys, couples with more

girls would continue childbearing till they have achieved their desired number of male children. In the past, however, not much empirical evidence was available to support this contention. Arnold (1985, 1987) developed a quantitative method to estimate the impact of sex preferences on fertility behaviour and applied the method to data collected during 1965-84 from 22 countries all over the world. Arnold (1987) found that the proportion of respondents who did not want more children would increase on an average by 4.5 percentage points in the absence of gender preferences. According to Arnold, this difference would translate into a very small increase in the average number of children wanted. The author argued that the relatively small effect was due to the random biological process, which ensures that most couples would achieve their goal for a minimum desired number of sons and daughters early in their reproductive career by sheer biological chance.

The term son preference specifies gender discrimination and nurtures to the attitude that sons are more important and more valuable than daughters. A son preference has historical root which was connected from the Vedic period. In Regveda son is referred as 'Putra', 'Su nu' and the 'Vir', the Rishi Kakshivat said that the husband and the wife should pray together for a brave son. The tradition has mentioned that just as Brahma had created the earth and other creatures it was the duty of women to create brave sons. Aśvalāyana Grhyasūtras referred that through the Brahma type of marriage in the degree to which descendents and ancestors are purified shows that a marriage began to be projected as valid only if it let to progeny, particularly to the birth of sons. A dominant theme in the Vedas was the importance of fertility which ensured the propagation of sons. In the 1900 German scholar Hermann Oldenberg had referred a wedding hymn from Rig Veda where Agni was called upon to protect the bride so that she would be of blessed womb'.

According to the narration of Oldenberg, it has found from Rig Veda that sacrifice for the dead, a request is made the ancestors, the 'fathers' to secure 'unharmful male progeny' and a special dumpling could be chosen at the time for the wife to eat in order to secure a son. This Sradha, ceremony for the ancestors persist as a religious imperative for Hindus, and is still performed by a male family member who is preferably the eldest sons. Oldenberg cited different examples from Vedic texts where special efforts were made to ensure a son: a special powder would be inserted into the nose of a pregnant woman to make sure a male child. Sons could be conceived by having sex at a certain time and place or by quoting a special verse; a man could have his wife drink a special potion, proclaiming that she then sees the birth of a son.

Documentary film 'Pankh' produced by Chetna, there are visualized that in South India, specially some Tamil Brahmin families have traditionally practiced the particular ceremony which is associated with to get male progeny, the women has to eat a barley corn, and two mustard seeds or beans placed on both sides of the barley corn and an the image of the male genital organ so that she could give birth to a male child. The film has raised a pertinent question that in the post globalization period whereas science and technologies have trounced to all irrational practices, so why some people have been still hastening for getting male progeny?

According to the Purana which was known as 'garbhadharanam' it was indicated that soon after the marriage husband and wife prayed every day for giving birth to a brave son. God Indra would bless the bride with ten sons. Slokas at the time of marriage include that 'the girl is given to you and she will be blessed with ten sons.' Yagnavalka said in Upanishad that 'in his life time man has only three wishes to fulfill -sons-wealth and heaven. Apparently wealth is to be earned for the sons and then finally son will ensure his place in heaven. According to the Valmiki Ramayana, 'PuthrakamesthiYagnya', was performed by Dashrath, under the instructions of Rishyashringa Rishi, to help him beget sons. During the Yagnya, offerings were made to Agni, amidst chanting of Mantras from the Atharvaveda. At the end of the Yagnya, a luminous person from 'Prajapita Loka' appeared from within the 'Yogavedi' holding in his hand a golden plate containing 'Payas'. The 'Payas' prepared specially by the Gods was eaten by the three queens of Dashrath. This resulted in the birth of Rama and his brothers. According to the 'Punsvana' in the third months of pregnancy the mother to be was made to swallow three seeds with curds and made to keep repeating the word 'Punsvava' thereby ensuring that the sex her foetus would be male. The belief was that even if it was female to begin with, this ritual would alter its sex. Even in the contemporary era, death of an ox is misfortune but death of a girl is a piece of good luck.

Indian parallel films like 'Mrityudand', 'Haribhari', 'Lajja' (2002), 'Matrubhumi: A nation without Women' (2005), 'Tommidinelaly' (2011), 'Me and my Sister' (2013), 'Nahannyote' (2013), Jalpari (2013), 'The Unwanted' (2014), 'Chunnav' (2014) have criticized to the patriarchal ideology which has promoted to the son preference. Director Shyam Benegal has explained in the film 'Haribhari' that most spectacular ploys of capitalist patriarchy which has been the simultaneous privatisation and institutionalization of motherhood. He has explained that how Gazala was taunted and sexually abused by her husband, since she was not the mother of son.

Vedic literatures, texts and epics have also explained that the ideology of motherhood was closely associated with having male child. Historian Sukumari Bhattacharjee had explained that in Garbadhana (impregnation) there newly married couple prayed for male child. A later Upanishad text laid down the articles of food which the husband must feed the wife for her to conceive different kinds of children- wise and intelligent male child. The prayer began with 'come let us strive together that a male child may be begotten.' The woman was a totally passive recipient; no words were allotted to her. Then when the wife had conceived she went through two rites: Pumsavana (the delivery of male child) and Simantonayana (the turning of hair parting). The Pumsavana as the world signified was overtly directed towards the birth of a male child: all the prayers transparently aim at preventing the birth of daughters, so that only a son born. The Simantonayana was a more complex rite. Women whose husbands and children were living should play the lute, sing and dance before the enceinte a mess of cooked rice was offered to her and the husband ask her, 'what do you see?' she replied 'Offspring' and then he said 'Be a mother of valiant sons, the wife of a living husband'. Bhaeadvaja Grhyasūtra referred that the three dishes of boiled rice are placed before and she is asked 'what do you see?' she replied 'sons and cattle'.

Even in the Vedic texts we have also noticed the society's pronounced preference for a male child. A barren woman could be cast away (parivritti or Parivrkti) because she was possessed by nirriti- a negative concept of a spirit that is exceedingly ugly and wholly evil but whose special function is to destroy everything good. The definition of a good woman is one who pleases her husband, gives birth to male children and never speaks back to her husband. Even in the Vedic texts we have also noticed the society's pronounced preference for a male child. A barren woman could be cast away (parivritti or Parivrkti) because she was possessed by nirriti- a negative concept of a spirit that is exceedingly ugly and wholly evil but whose special function is to destroy everything good. The definition of a good woman is one who pleases her husband, gives birth to male children and never speaks back to her husband. Historian Sukumari Bhattacharjee mentioned the Act-IV of Abhijnanasakuntala, where specified that Sees's wives blessed the pregnant girl with the rare glory of having a heroic sons, because motherhood played a very significant part in the society of Ancient India, and it was obligatory that a girl was trained to be a good wife and a good mother and was blessed with the good motherhood of sons.

By the Seventh Century BC when the Aryans had become an agricultural people and there was an

agriculturist's way of looking at life. This led to a positive male chauvinistic view of parenthood: the woman was the field, and the man sowed the seed in her. As both the land and seed belonged to the man in this predominantly patriarchal society, the son belonged primarily to the father. Manu is quite brutally explicit about it, 'of the seed and the womb, the seed is superior. All creatures of life assume the qualities of the seed. Manu had unambiguous and unequivocally said that 'As a cattle, horses, camels and maidservants, in buffaloes, goats and sheep, the male partners do not possess the calves, etc, so it is for the women.' He also stated 'now if a man other than the husband begets a son, then in the case the field is greater than the seed-the son belongs to the husband and not to the begetter.' Manu stated that 'women are fields and the men are the seeds'. So it has cleared that Manu categorized to women as exclusive medium of reproduction to men for continuation of the line, but he could not sanctioned women's rights on her male progeny just her existence confined with 'the generation of sons, bearing and rearing of the infant.'

So it has cleared that Son preference which is equivocally indicated the adverse girl child sex ratio and socio-economic powerlessness of mothers in Indian social context, it has long historical roots. Post nineties Indian film directors not only criticized to the devaluing identity of motherhood, they have tried to visualize that how within capitalist society four basic social structures are combined to subordinate women's production-reproduction-sexuality and socialization of children within patriarchal social structure. In the film 'Harivhari' and 'Mrityudand' directors have visualized that motherhood is originally identified as social necessity of kinship and later excluded women's world from production and public life. Omission from public power and discrimination in the labour force continues as women's work outside the home is regarded as only auxiliary to their primary accountability.

So following to the Engels it is explained that with the emergence of private property women are traded only as child bearing and childrearing instrument and their identities are confined within four walls of home and the over through of mother right is a historical defeat of female sex. Motherhood should be understood as a more complex reality than domestic labour within capitalist social structure because it is a patriarchal social institution not reducible to class analysis.

Film 'Lajja' directed by Rajkumar Santoshi has explained that Patriarchy dictates that the test of 'maleness' and 'femaleness' lies in the ability to produce a son. A son is the one way ticket to 'moksha', an old age support, a repeatedly renewable cheque for dowry. So people dose anything to get a

son. Secondly, in all such cases, birth of a son is attributed to the efficacy of the method. However, any failure is dumped on the errors or ill luck or Karma of the user. Thirdly, there is almost total absence of the culture of questioning. There is almost a conspiracy of silence. The state, academicians, politicians, professionals, media, social organizations, judiciary, almost all of them prefer to keep mum. Seldom are the right questions raised and debated, and the right action taken.

Professor BinaAgrawal finds out the political economy of son preferences. According to her a lack of access to assets capital and resource is at the heart of women's disadvantaged position in India. Without rights to land or real instead of nominal inheritance, preference of sons will continue to overshadow any positive perceptions of girls as they will remain as economic appendages rather than economic agents, given dowries and out-marriage of women from their natal homes. Agarwal's concerns lie with the material base of gender relations around ownership of forming the basis for son preferences alongside other gender biases. (Agrawal. B: 1994)

Simultaneously Ursula Sharma has argues how various code of exchange and communication despite some of the overreaching barriers existence for women, also offered women both negotiation power and routes to fulfillment within the patriarchal households set up. She narrates that woman's autonomy and agency even within patriarchal structures and ultimately presented an alternative epistemological position to the more reductionist views of other studies. (Sharma. U: 1980)

However in South-Asia the deep focus upon the birth points to the moment at which male and female are born and become masculine and feminine, showing both necessity and relevance of De Beauvoir's feminist existentialism but also its conceptual distance to the cultural context of South Asia. Social constructivism sadly seems to flutter in the wind during times when the aspirations of the households and communities can seemingly only be achieved by the production of a family line of male heirs. The cultural translation which is behind the focus upon the birth is a pivotal deciding moment about how gender frames the expectations surrounding the meanings of what it means to be born girl or boy. In the tale serial 'SaddaHaq', protagonist Sanyukta always tries to put her feet in the man dominating world. She speaks that her father always tries to explain her that she is luck to have elder brother. Her main ambition is to be a mechanical engineer but her father and brother are against of it. In 'SaddaHauq' there visualized long struggles of Sanyukta against inferior position of women in patriarchal society.

According to the census 2011 it has observed that though female children are stronger than male

children nevertheless female mortality between 1 and 59 months exceeded male mortality in 430 out of 597 districts, totaling about 74000 excesses deaths among girls in 2012 alone due to neglect, nutrition, health care. Child specialist Dr. SumanKaur in Raipur Government Hospital has said that parents in both rural and urban area are more concern about health and nutrition for their baby boys than girl children. Usually baby boys have been bringing in hospital at primary stage of their health problem apparently girl children are bringing in hospital at critical stage. She determines that due to son preferences girl child mortality rate in India has been increasing. Professor PrabhatJha head of the centre for Global Health research has explained that during the neo natal period biologically more boys than girls die around the world and in India death rates are opposite. India is different with higher excess girl's death. ProfessorJha indicates that most of parents will less often take a sick girl versus a sick boy to a clinic. (Jha: 2013)

In the film Aadapillalamy 2011, director Mahesh Babu has visualized the discrimination against the girl

child. Its stories demonstrate various forms of discrimination that girl children experience. There are two stories in Aadapillalam. The first follows a girl from a working class family who is about eight years old. Her parents expect her to help around the house and to take care of her baby sister, while her brother is allowed to eat more food, study, play, and have ice cream as he pleases. Her story shows her struggle to balance the household chores expected of her because she is a girl, while finding time to study and go to school. She ends up failing her exams because her parents did not allow her enough time to study, and she fantasizes how different her situation would be if her brother would only share the chores and care of their baby sister. The second story is about an older girl in a slightly better off family. She wears makeup and enjoys dancing with her friends, but her parents scold her for these indulgences. They no longer allow her to attend school because they are afraid that she will be harassed by boys. She is quite bored and her parents eventually permit her to become a domestic worker, but this makes her vulnerable to assault by the employer

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