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**LOCATING EARLY
FEMINIST
THOUGHT :
A REVIEW OF
WOMEN'S SITUATION FROM
THE 17TH TO THE 20TH
CENTURY**

DR. VIDYUT BHAGWAT

**WOMEN'S STUDIES CENTRE
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY
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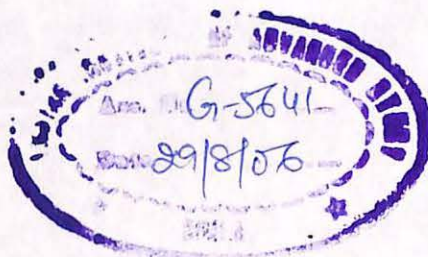
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PREFACE

Right from its inception, the Women's Studies Centre, at the Department of Sociology, University of Pune has focussed on gender - issues in Western India, locating them within the political economy and social history of Maharashtra with a view towards developing a better understanding of Indian History. We believe that gender politics pervades all domains of human activity and therefore on analysis of subordination of women must be essentially interdisciplinary. We are aware that doing women's studies is more than doing just academics. Women's studies, we believe is not for ghettoising women's issues, but that it has universal emancipatory possibility and potentials for enhancing knowledges developed in various disciplines. It involves attempts to understand and to challenge the complex relations between caste, communities, classes and gender. It is more than just analysing gender relations in society, it is about taking historical responsibility for our location in society.

We know that 'Indian Society, caste and gender, all of these are shaped by political struggles and processes. We stress the political because many a times caste is understood in connection only with religion and gender within the private realm of family kinship network. One needs to understand caste and gender in the context of relations of power and also in the context of its contribution through history on culture.

By bringing this monograph out we are trying to take a small step towards accepting our historical responsibility. The monograph includes two well researched articles searching for historical and conceptual legacies on an attempt to understand 'The Question of Women's Liberation in India.' and towards finding a 'Da Feminist Stand Point Position.'

At the Women's Studies centre, there has been a constant endeavour on our part to undertake translation work of those texts which we feel are crucial to the struggle for creating alternative and liberatory knowledges. It is with this in view that the centre had earlier undertaken the translations of some important English texts into Marathi. In our interactions with Women's Studies persons and activists in other parts of India, often there have been requests for translations of the important Marathi texts into English. This is specially true of texts on the caste and women's questions. We hope to undertake this activity as a part of building a network amongst all those who are seeking to develop counterideologies for combating brahmanical Hindutva position. Translations therefore are a political activity not only in the selection of the text to be translated but also in that it essentially is a step towards

extended dissemination of knowledge. The first article is a translation of Pratima Pardeshi's 'Dr. Ambedkar and the Question of Women's liberation in India' published by the Krantisinh Nana Patil Academy, Pune. We have taken certain liberties in avoiding a word to word translation, there has been an attempt to keep the original sharp political polemic and style of the original text.

The second article "Dalit Women Talk Differently...." largely draws upon our understanding of and engagement in the contemporary women's movement in Maharashtra. It points out how Dalit Women's voices were excluded in the two important New Social Movements of the 70's, the dalit and the women's movement. It is an attempt to locate the difference of dalit women's voices historically in the real struggle of marginalised women. This article rightly has argued that this is not just an issue of naming their 'difference' but an effort to centre the discourse on caste and gender.

The debate on the Women's Bill, more than reveals how the question of political empowerment of women is being posited as if against and apart from that of the empowerment of Dalit, OBC, Tribal and other marginalised communities. It is as if an all women paradigm can inevitably address only those women who are born in a Hindu/Brahmin framework and remaining all other like Dalits and OBC's are as if essentially males. In such a situation the definition of Indian woman is being narrowed to such an extent that millions of toiling women who live on the margins are denied the honour of being called 'Indian Women'. On the other hand positing upper caste, class women in opposition to Dalit, OBC men diverts our attention from the reality of the complexities of multiple patriarchies in the Indian context. Hence, developing an understanding of caste-gender interrelationship in the context of changing political economy in India and in the context of the 'Crisis of Crisis management' in the so called 'advance' capitalist milieu is a real challenge to Women's Studies in India.

Fifty years of India's independence and its development process make us ask obvious but pertinent questions, such as, whose development, at whose cost? The environmental groups, in search of sustainable development, many a times, talk on behalf of those, whose lands are used and sacrificed for the development of projects. But they rarely raise issues that concern those who do not have lands but whose very survival is threatened by the deskilling, deindustrialising effects of the "development" projects.

India's history tells us several instances of the colonial economy wiping away many

caste-based occupations from different castes (e. g. weavers, cobblers, fisherfolks, butchers, etc.) in India. These caste-based skills were appropriated by the Patriarchal Brahminical Capitalist forces. With machinery and new sophistication turned into industrial houses of groups owned by the elites from both the worlds, colonial as well as Indians. In fact, in the name of caste upliftment or annihilation and under the force of industrialisation, many caste groups either willingly or due to coercion, gave up their caste-based productive work and accepted marginalised work in the unorganised sectors of the urban centres.

One is afraid that, in the new wave of globalisation, this is what will happen to the masses of women in India. It is now quite apparent that women who are into their caste-based occupations, supporting their households at times single handedly. (due to migrated, unemployed, alcoholic or absconding husbands) will be the major victims at this 'liberalisation' process. The milieu of liberalisation, globalisation will also increasingly bring in the language of 'empowerment' of women and the provision of 'reservations' for women. But what concerns us really is how women from different caste groups will have access to and control over the new knowledges, technology and the capital for their survival as well as empowerment. Struggles for such an empowerment require that we develop more emancipatory understandings of empowerment by drawing upon the legacy of non-brahmanical renderings of women's emancipation of India.

In India, the material cultural reality of the everyday lives of masses and women is constituted by their caste and class position. We wish to underline that caste is not a 'Hindu' phenomenon and that it is a 'social formation with a distinct material base', that gender too is an axis of power, socially constituted and having a distinct material base. The Criss-cross of the axes of gender and caste determines on the one hand the position of the castes in the hierarchy and on the other hand, the labour, controls on sexuality of women. Such an understanding of caste and gender emerged in the works of those who conceptualised non-brahmanical understanding of Indian history.

We thus feel the need to reread the lives and works of thinkers like Jotirao Phule, Ramaswamy Periyar, even Karl Marx in order to understand and counteract today's gender-caste relations. All the 19th and early 20th century thinkers during the colonial period were trying mostly to prove that India had a political past. But Phule, Ambedkar as thinkers and leaders are more relevant in terms of understanding gender-caste nexus. Phule granted women an agency. He posited women on autonomous self and told them that the sources of

power were within themselves. This was the context within which Phule started a separate school for Mahar, Matang girls. Ambedkar looks at the phenomenon of 'untouchability' in terms of a search for a wider community and not merely as an "Indian" problems. He wanted women's emancipation not in the framework of instrumentality but for their own sakes. Here we see that for Phule, Ambedkar the politics of empowerment was not separate for us the politics of freedom or self.

Many scholars and activists seem to now accept analytical category. If caste system was not only a 'division of labour' but also of labourers as Dr. Ambedkar points out, one needs to look into the structures of castes as constituting gender and constuted by gender. Women due to the caste hierarchy are not only divided among themselves but are posited as each other's enemies. An upper caste woman pay a very heavy price by having to accept the one way rules of 'purity-chastily' and the lower caste woman's sexuality itself becomes her work in the caste society. Lower caste man is robbed off often from his masculnity when through his powerlessness he is proved to be incapable of 'guarding' his wife, purity chastity. In short, in the areas of production, reproduction, fertility, sexuality and socialisation caste constructs gender and gets constructed by it.

This monograph through these two articles seeks to go into the gender and gender constitution of caste we hope that this monograph will be of help to students of social sciences. A brief life-sketch of Dr. Ambedkar (upon whose works, both the papers draw) has been given especially for those readers who may not be familiar with his life and works. This is only a step in the direction of rereading the non-brahman legacy for the emancipation of women in India. Your comments, suggestions, notes of appreciation are all welcome.

-Vidyut Bhagwat

PREFACE

The Women's studies Centre at the University of Pune was started in March 1988. Ever since the Centre has been actively involved in research, teaching, documentation and extension work in the area of gender issues. Since August 1995 the Centre has launched an One Year, Interdisciplinary Certificate Course in Women's Studies, the response to which has been heartening. One of the major papers in this course centres around debates and discussions in feminist theorisation. Our team at the Centre (Vidyut, Anagha, Sougata, Swati, Praveen and myself) has been struggling over the last few months to put together relevant readings on feminist theorisation for the course participants. There is really no dearth of text on feminist thought and theory: new publications on the theme are still pouring in. But all review of most of these texts revealed that

(a) Many of these texts tend to take a 'key authors' approach and construct yet another cannon.

(b) Other that take a 'hyphenated approach' i.e. to say present a list of liberal, radical, socialist to postmodernist feminism, often view feminist theorisation as only an appendage of liberalism socialism or of other major trends in political theory. The fundamental concepts developed within feminist theory are often lost in such exercise for e.g. such texts do not reveal to the reader, the way in which the concept of patriarchy put forth by the radical feminists was reworked by the socialist feminists or the psychoanalytic feminists.

A commonality that we found across the different texts despite the difference in their approaches was an absence of a background, to put it more explicitly most of the texts did not locate the feminist theory, its changing trends etc within the context of the changing political economy, moreover, most of the texts seemed to marginalise the thought of the 'founding mother' of feminist thought. This as we gather is an obvious consequence of the increasing alliance between feminism and postmodernism.

It has become so usual these days to talk of entire history as if divisible into two epoch-viz. Modern and the Postmodern. It is important to underline the fact that such a division creates a misconception about postmodernism or postindustrialism etc. as being a major rupture. We need to highlight the fact that the shift from fordism-to-information technology, the ever-increasing interaction of labour or capital in no way has undermined what we understand as the logic of capitalism. Postmodernity -as a cultural condition of late capitalist societies is something we can understand but seeking postmodernism as a theoretical ally for feminism- is akin to taking 'politics' out of feminism.

For those of us who seek a feminist theorisation rooted in feminist politics-it has become imperative to go back and review the important linkages between capital, modernity and the framing of the 'Women Question'. Feminist thought of the "founding mothers" had critiqued 'modernity' without giving a death blow to the human subject, history and metaphysics. Located within the Indian context, critiques of 'Eurocentrism' of feminist thought often seem very attractive. No doubt the 'eurocentrism' of the feminist theorisation has to be countered, but we need to be cautious in embracing all that goes in the name of critique of eurocentrism often, several of these critiques reduce eurocentrism to the 'cultural'- thereby pulling a carpet over the histories of colonialism and imperialism. It is this history and its linkages with feminist thought that we wanted to highlight to our course participants. We found that such a review of the changing sensors from the seventeenth to the twentieth century had been undertaken by Vidyut in her yet unpublished doctoral thesis. The thesis presents an in-depth review of the thought of the founding mothers and hence the first chapter seeks to locate the thought in the political economy of the period. We decided to publish a section of this chapter in the form of a monograph -so to make this background reading to feminist theory-easily accessible-not only for our course participants but for students, researchers, activists interested in theoretical debates and issues.

The thesis in its reworked and updated version is presently under publication and therefore we express our sincere thanks to both the author and the publisher for granting us permission to publish a section. From the thesis original submitted in 1985 the development in feminist theory since 1985 have been taken note of in the reworked version of the thesis. We also owe our sincere thanks to the Head and Faculty of the department of Sociology for their continued support to this activity of dissemination of knowledge. Without the support of our office and library staff, we would be lost. We hope that you will send in your comments, criticism, suggestion to us. We are on E-mail, you could mail to SRege@unipune.ernet.in

Dr. Sharmila Rege

The changing social and economic background from the 17th to the 20th centuries:

The contemporary women's movement is not the first such movement to offer a comprehensive feminist critique of society. Some of the present -day typical feminist attitudes and concerns can be traced as early as the early 17th century which witnessed the transition from feudalism to capitalism. Robert a Hemilton, a sociologist, in fact, insists in her study of patriarchy and capitalism that "The transitional period from feudalism to capitalism must be the point of departure for the study of the position of women in capitalist society: not industrialization, not urbanization, not modernization, but the emergence of capitalism". (Hemilton, 1978,92).

Within the contemporary women's movement and thought, the beginnings of not feminism but of women's increasing protests against the male-dominated culture are traced back to the 17th century. The growth of early capitalism, of Puritanism and of new ideas of reason and science caused people to see many questions in various walks of life in a new light. This same combination of forces allowed the first expression of doubt about the nature of relationships between men and women. At the same time basic changes in commodity production began to affect women's position in the structure of work and consequently in society. The separation of family from work had occurred before capitalism, but as commerce, trade and industry grew in scale it appeared in its most distinct and clear form.

As Sheila Rowbotham puts it, the questioning of authority, the idea of individual responsibility and conscience as a guide for political action, the elevation of activity, the notion of control and change of the outside world, and its corollary that these changes in turn affected the characters of human beings, were as relevant for women as they were for men. As crafts became more intensively capitalised, the wives of the larger tradesmen no longer worked in the business. The roles of husband and wife were more specifically differentiated. The external world of work became the sphere of the man exclusively. The internal world of the family and the household thus remained the proper business of the women. Changes in industrial organization affected women's position in the structure of work. In the guilds their situation was being progressively weakened. The old protection and privileges of widows disappeared and as apprenticeship became more formal the entrance of women to trades was closed. With every new refinement in the division of labour women found themselves allocated either a place in which they were powerless or a place in which they were more

severely exploited. Not only was industry closed to them but their limited education made their entrance into the professions impossible. (Rowbotham, 1972, 18-35). Barbara Rogers has pointed out that with the increasingly complex division of labour in industrial society, the basic divisions of gender and age have lost their original functions as they operated in a present society as a function mainly of kinship. (Rogers, 1980, 17).

The changing economic conditions led to increasing liberalisation in the Common Law attitude toward women through out the 16th and 17th centuries, (Morris, 1959, 126-128). Yet the era during which the most decisive end, it would appear, irreversible changes in the status of women were initiated was the 19th century. The circumstances which got them slowly and falteringly under way were the technical, economic and social upheavals generally known as the Industrial Revolution. The transfer of production from home to factory, which sharply increasing the productivity of labour, destroyed the family as an economic unit. Industrialization forced work and home to be separated. Alva Myrdal and Viola Klein have argued that the process of eliminating women from economically active positions affected different social groups in different ways, (Myrdal & Klein, 1956, 1). The industrial revolution cast out of existence the Yeoman cultivator, the copy-holder, the domestic manufacturer and the independent manufacturer. The decline of domestic industries affected the lives of men; women and children form the classes. They had to leave their homes and villages to work in factories and mines living in industrial slums of crowded tenements in big cities. Many women of the new industrial proletariat had to work in sappling conditions of near-starvation and unlimited working hours under a system of exploitation that became notorious as 'sweated labour' while they gave birth to one child after another.

Klein argues that the industrial revolution affected middle and upper class women in a totally different way. On the one hand, the shift of productive activities from the home to the factory led to the loss of self-respect incurred by women by the knowledge of their economic uselessness. Yet the growing prosperity of the middle classes freed the upper middle class women from the drudgery of work in a big way. (Klein, 1946, 10). The prosperity of the bourgeoisie relieved their women of a great part of her household duties. Thus side by sides with the presence of the hard-working, dehumanised women of the working class the new ideal of the "house- wife" or the "lady of leisure" began to appear. But the very life of idleness and peristism, which these women had to lead, arrested a sense of the futility of feminine existence in this upper middle -class women. This sense of vacuity accompanied

by advances in women's education in this class provided the main spring, which motivated the social unrest unusually called the emancipation of women. (Myrdal & Klein, 1956,6-7).

Thus the cumulative changes initiated by the Puritan Revolution and ending in the Industrial Revolution created a divided and polarised society. There was, therefore, no common experience for women of the effects of early capitalism and industrialization. Rowbotham also states: "(Their) consequences were diverse and affected different groups of women in quite distinct ways. It tended to differentiation of interest and expectation rather than a unifying feminist consciousness. Feminism of this stage was still aspiration, an ideal amongst a small group of women; it had no possibility as movement." (Rowbotham, 1972,34).

In the case of working class women leading a sub-human life the temptation to accommodate rather than resist was strong. They were not in fact submissive but their resistance erupted in crime or sexual "immorality". The revolt against "their" world was a personal one. Collectively their protest is registered in the 18th century food riot, the traditional manner in which the poor tried to reassert a pre-capitalist moral economy which placed need before profit, and the old community against the new state. Rowbotham points out they figured prominently in these riots. Within this narrow necessity few had the leisure to muse on masculine superiority. Nor was this superiority evident in their men's relation to them, except in their physical strength. Their resistances were defences against new kinds of Industry and trade, they were completely unconnected with the feminist consciousness developing in a small circle of privileged women. The demands for education or the right to be useful were nonsensical in the situation of the poor woman. (Rowbotham, 1972, 33-34). On the other hand, the smaller size of families made possible by the increased knowledge of birth control methods, compulsory school education and the greater attention given to education general, growing interest in the psychological factors, and the more and more generally practice of premarital employment of women were among those conditions fostering the development of feminine individuality and aspirations. During the last decades of the 19th and in the beginning of this century women were gradually admitted to secondary school and university education; Property laws were reformed in their favour; marriage and divorce laws were altered. (Klein, 1946,25; see also Gilman, 1905 and Schreiner, 1923).

It is highly revealing that in spite of the time gap the above judgement of contemporary feminists is not much different from that of the far-seeing feminists like Ethel Snowden who wrote as early as 1913 that "In the loss of their work by women lie the roots of the modern

feminist movement. Those acquainted with the history of the movement know that the founders were women of the educated middle class, together with one or two women of aristocratic connections. At the present movement after more than sixty years of strenuous agitation, the women's movement includes women of every class and condition, working women as well as rich independent women. But the numbers of working women form a very small proportion. The busy working wife, with her limited means, her large brood, her vision frequently limited by the harassing cares and worries of her life, feels little sympathy with the feminist, whose gospel she has never understood" (Snowden, N.D.(1913),38-41).

To sum up, the withdrawal of commodity production from the home radically separated women from men. The creation of a separate 'sphere' for women laid the basis for a separate women's movement. Women attacked the general idleness of the 'doll's house' and demanded entry into education, the professions and public life. 19th century feminism of this kind was also closely involved with movements of moral reform such as temperance and the abolition of prostitution. On the other hand, working class women drawn into large-scale industry began to demand improvements in conditions of work. (Zaretsky 1980, 53-54). To put it differently, where as the women of the upper and middle class claimed political freedom, the right to work, and improved educational facilities; working women wanted protection. The middle class women were fighting for equality, working class women demanded differential treatment.

The changing character of the family from the 17th to the 19th centuries

Germaine Greer has brought our attention to the impact of the changing character of the Western family since 16th century to the First world war. She has pointed out that the effects of industrialization and urbanization in changing the pattern of settlement and requiring the mobility of labour have hastened the decay of the stem family, which declined in Western Europe some time before the 16th century. The changes in tenure of land, the decay of regional authority, the centralization of government, enclosures development of money rents and absentee landlordism all played a part in the development of the nuclear family. By the beginning of the second half of the 19th century literature was full of the domestic tragedy in which family had become a prison where the young struggled to escape the dead hand of the old. Given the character of the new family which was emerging, upper class women began to claim for the right to work outside domestic service. Expanding industry came to need them

much later when the first world war made the problem of man-power crucial in character.(Greer, 1976,222-223).

Philippe Aries, a student of demography, has thrown light on this problem from an entirely different perspective. He has made a study of the development of family life in France from the late Middle Ages upto the 18th century. He writes "for a long time, it was believed that the family constituted the ancient basis of our society, and that, starting in the 18th century the progress of liberal individualism had shaken and weakened it. The history of the family in the 19th and 20th centuries was supposed to be that of decadence; the frequency of divorces and the weakening of marital and paternal authority were seen as so many signs of its decline. The study of modern demographic phenomena led me to a completely contrary conclusion. It seemed to me (and qualified observers have come to share with my conclusions) that on the contrary it had perhaps never before exercised so much influence over the human condition. I then went on to wonder, not whether it was on the decline, but whether it had ever been as strong before and even whether it had been in existence for a long time"(Quoted by Janeway; Janeway, 1977,16). Janeway has explained the process, which led to the emergence of modern home as social island as follows. She points out that the western ideal of a home centered on one tightly knit group of parents and children denotes a way of living that has emerged very recently in world history. It's spread is also not very wide in strict geographic sense of the term. Janeway argues that more and more the group that made up a household became the 'nuclear family' of parents and children living together in privacy and increasingly cut off from the wider community life; Servants now formed a separate, subordinate class working within the house for the comfort of those living there instead of as apprentices or journeymen manufacturing goods for consumption or market. House was becoming home by separating itself from the world of work and turning into a stronghold of family living and leisure. This process, fairly swift for a social change of such magnitude, sprang up all over North Western Europe during the 16th and 17th centuries and had it become well established - in those classes it affected by the 18th. The home had been born (Janeway,1977,16-17).

As we have already noted, Robert Hamilton has made a special study of the changing role of women in the 17th century and since then. She has argued that the nuclear family emerged with capitalism. It is one of the institutional developments of capitalism just as much as the corporation, that bank or the educational system. She states that "If there are some points of friction between the requirements of the family and the requirements of the market, these are

contradictions inherent in capitalism; they are not the /consequence of capitalism having somehow to cope with a feudal remnant."(Hamilton, 1978,92). With the transition to capitalism, the differences between the women of the bourgeoisie and the women of the other classes became increasingly polarised. Hamilton has further pointed out that the emergence of the Protestant world-view led to a rejection of celibacy, and, therefore, to a radical respraisal of the family. The Protestants raised the family to the status of the "little church" necessary for the rearing and maintaining of the godly. Women were made fit for this new family. At the same time, capitalism was gradually stripping home off its productive functions. In the ends, the western home became a spiritual retreat in need of protection from an amoral world, that is, a civil society. With the rise of capitalism class of women isolated from process of production and economically dependent on their husbands had emerged. Their lives came to consist increasingly of leisure and idleness. Where as one industry and thrift had been inseparable aspect of a husband and wife's productive life together, now their interests diverged: his interest was to make money, hers to spend it. (Hamilton, 1978,98). Hamilton adds that once the partnership between husband and wife was no longer based on the companionship of working in daily life, the nature of the relationship shifted. It led to the reversal of the catholic view of male spirituality, female carnality; male virtue, female evilness. By the 19th century the new romantic image of women emerged. Women came to be seen as pure, innocent, child-like and asexual. Hamilton demonstrates that women's newly discovered goodness came from, and could only be preserved through, isolation from the world.

The cumulative effects of the transition from Catholicism to Protestantism and from Feudalism to capitalism led to two major developments. The separation of work and home with morality being confined to the latter put fewer strictures on the behavior of men outside the home. At the same time, the hardships of working-class life were creating a greatly expanded population of the prostitutes and potential mistresses. Side by side, the economic functions of the family were declining. Men were on longer dependent upon the labour of their wives. Women no longer had important responsibilities to fulfil within the home. The elevation on of love as the chief ideological underpinning of the marriage among the bourgeoisie took place during this period. (Hamilton, 1978,94-100). In the upper middle-class nuclear family spirituality thus ultimately became transposed into a quality of the dependent and powerless female member. As we have already seen, the working class home provided neither the material nor the spiritual possibilities of retreat from the world. These women

were depicted as evil, sexual, dirty and passionate in contrast to the purity of the bourgeois women. Without direct access to the means of production, with totally inadequate wages, a high proportion of them supplemented their income with prostitution.

The genesis of the 19th century and the contemporary family and hence the women's movements can be thus traced finally to "the interlocking and overlapping histories of the capitalist mode of production and the Protestant forms of particular ideology." In Hamilton's opinion, the particular dilemmas which are manifestations of the position of women in this society can be seen in the context of, and as intrinsically related to, the mode of production, the ideological mode of patriarchy and their interconnections. (Hamilton, 1978, 103 -104).

The Feminist Thought And Movement From The French Revolution To The End Of The Second World War

France:

As Rowbotham points out, the Feminist aspirations of the privileged and the unprivileged women encountered each other, for the first time in the modern history, in the French Revolution. They regarded each other uneasily and never really combined. But each emerged tinged with the values of French Revolution. Thus the women from the toiling classes and peasantry rioted over prices in Normandy, and also marched to Versailles to confront the baker and the baker's wife. On the other hand, the women from the upper classes were expressed themselves against the rising romantic women out by petitioning the Assembly in 1789. They pointed out to the men: "you have destroyed all the prejudices of the past, but you allow the oldest and the most pervasive to remain, which excludes from office, position and honour, and above all from the right of sitting amongst you, half the inhabitants of the kingdom" (Quoted by Rowbotham; Rowbotham, 1972, 32).

Simone de Beauvoir has shown how some middle-class women took up the cause of liberty, such as Mme Roland and Lucile Desmoulins. Charlotte Corday assassinated Marat. There was some feminist agitation. One of the women proposed in 1789 a "Declaration of the Rights of women" equivalent to the "Declaration of the Right of man," in which she asked that all masculine privilege be abolished. Short-lived journals appeared, and efforts were made by a few women who undertook political activities.

De Beauvoir points out that with all this, the French Revolution did not change the lot of women. De Beauvoir concludes that "During the Revolution women enjoyed a liberty that was anarchic. But when society underwent reorganization, she was firmly enslaved a new. From the feminist point of view, France was shed of other countries; but unfortunately for the modern French woman, her status was decided during a military dictatorship; the Code Napoleon, fixing her lot for a century, greatly retarded her emancipation." (De Beauvoir, 1981,191). De Beauvoir further points out that it was a tradition of resignation and submission, a lack of solidarity and collective consciousness, that left French women, therefore, disarmed before the new opportunities opened by French industrial development. The catholic religious culture further denied to French women the benefits of growing contraceptive technology.

This is not to say that no new ideas emerged between 1789 and 1895. There were eminent women like Mme De steel and George sand who fought their own individual battles for freedom. George sand, for example, kept herself contemptuously aloof from the women's movement but supported the rise of new values and demands asking for justice for women. Similarly, working class women like Sussanne Voilguin, Clair Demer, Jeanne Deroin and Flore Tristan may not be better known yet they too were expressing the new aspirations of women. Flora Tristen for example, devoted a chapter to the rights of women in a book of her own published in 1843. She stressed the importance of the relations between men and women in the working class family. Thus despite intense opposition and repression the connection between the emancipation of women and idea of a new, more just society for the poor continued to be discussed, argued and contested in France in the utopian underground in the first part of the century.

We must also note the contribution made by Charles Fourier in developing women's consciousness. His book published in 1808 is generally considered to be an important contribution to socialist-feminist thinking and influenced not only the early French socialists, but radicals and cooperators in England and America as well. He connected the economic and sexual oppression of women. He also ridiculed the upper class women's indifference to the fate of most women. He was the first major Utopian Socialist who demanded education for women not simply for domesticity but for social and political participation for women.

Great Britain

In the context of the French Revolution a remarkable woman produced a remarkable book. Mary Wollstonecraft published Vindication of the Rights of Women in London in 1792. As Rowbotham has pointed out, this book is often taken as the beginning of feminism for all practical purposes, a history of modern women's movement starts with Wollstonecraft's work. Wollstonecraft belonged to the generation that exerted in French Revolution. In her work there is a crucial break with earlier women's consciousness. She is self-conscious in consciously identifying herself with women. Yet her work also suffers from the limitations of her times. Her demands and argument are couched in terms of the religious and moral ideas of the individual worth and dignity of women. Not surprisingly, her remedial action to improve woman's lot took the form of demanding education. Times were such that it was still necessary to justify women's rights to self-development on the ground that it would make her a better mother. In a Rowbotham's opinion "The Vindication, often taken as the beginning of feminism, was rather the important theoretical summation of bourgeois radical feminism still in the phase of moral exhortation, before there was either the possibility of a radical and socialist movement from below, to which the revolutionary feminist could relate, or a movement like that of suffragettes, of privileged women for equal rights with bourgeois men." (Rowbotham, 1972, 45).

The next major work which made an impact on woman's consciousness was "Appeal of one-half of the Human Race, women etc." Written by William Thompson and published in 1825. He raised points, which were to become essential parts of feminists thinking; economic independence and security for women, and communal responsibility for the upbringing of children, social support during pregnancy the right to work. He was the first major English author who linked the liberation of women with a social movement against capitalism.

William Morris and Edward Carpenter also contributed much to the growth of women's progressive consciousness. Perhaps more than any other thinker of the period Carpenter depicted the natural healthiness of human sexual relations. Carpenter stressed the emotional aspect of family life and insisted on the need for a "free" and "spontaneous" relationship between human beings based on individual choice and voluntary commitment. Carpenter generally followed the utopian socialist and Marxist traditions of radical thought. But he was the first to consider the psychological suspects of female sexuality of the time. Morris and Carpenter were followed by Olive Schreiner. She was noted novelist and short story writer of her days. In her work she described with feeling and insight the lives of the two kinds of women workers and parasite. The difference in her approach is not so much in what she said

but the way she said it. She bases her entire connection to other women only through the common experience of pain. As Rowbotham puts it "There seems to way (in Schreiner's work) to transcend, no way beyond masochism as the consciousness of women." (Rowbotham, 1972,94). Yet Schreiner made a lasting impression on English women.

While radical theory thus played an important role in British women's consciousness, there were good economic reasons for the development of the suffragist movement in the second-half of the nineteenth century. It tried to improve the legal status of women and enabled her to be educated and enter the professions. It was already clear by 1840, that the women's movement in England would follow two different paths of development. One represented the situation, the aspirations and contradictions of the upper class women; the other represented the world-view of the working class women. The suffragist movement represented the first stream

The increasing prosperity of the middle class released many women from housework into Aristocratic leisure. But it also deterred men from marrying young's the conspicuous display of the household increased. The unmarried gentle woman with an educated mind was not going to accept the status-quo. The vote seemed the obvious way of carrying into effect a general improvement in the position of women. (Wender, 1978,16). As Ethel Snowden explains, the suffragist feminism sought to remove all barriers which opposed the perfect freedom of women as human beings conventional, social, political and economic. Women's suffrage would break down one of these barriers only. The suffragist movement proper is generally dated back to the year 1867. But its real beginnings were in 1819 When a meeting was held in Manchester to demand adult suffrage. Government reacted with a tremendous show of violence. In 1867 women led by Miss Lydia Baker sought to register their name as parliamentary electors. The negative ruling given in this case by the Lord chief justice and the passing of the Divorce Act of 1857 contributed to the strength of the suffragist movement. The movement certainly made a deep impact on British social a cultural life during 1880 to 1940. It secured many concessions for women in various walks of life. Yet these great measures were, in Snowden's judgement, ".....In the nature of sope, thrown to the women to induce them to forgo the larger privileges. It was hoped by a partial recognition of grievance and a partial removal of disabilities to make the demand for the parliamentary role less justifiable than it otherwise would appear." (Snowden, N.D. (1913),146-147).

Rowbotham has assessed the impact of the suffragist feminism in the following words. "There were two crucial weaknesses in feminism in its liberal-radical political phase. First it could not come to terms theoretically with social class; secondly it could not define itself except in terms of the dominant groups. The new woman was in fact merely the upper middle class man in a peculiar kind of drag. These weaknesses made the split with Sylvia Pankhurst and the patriotism of World War I inevitable. It was a case of any thing they can so we can do better. There was no alternative social vision. The feminist movement at this stage consequently failed to produce any prospect for a real social emancipation which could include all women, or to create a consciousness through which women could appreciate their identity as a group." (Wandor, 1978,16). It should be noted that Sylvia Pankhurst's attempt to link the women's cause to that of the working class met with her mother's and her sister's determined opposition.

We have already seen that by the 1840s connection between social revolution and the liberation of women had been made. Yet a proper socialist movement developed in England only from the 1880s onwards. The middle class women's movement had raised women's right as a living issue. The post 1880 socialist movement could not ignore it. As a result, women's emancipation became an extremely important issue in the socialist movement which developed in England from the 1880 onwards. As is well known, English socialism was not so much influenced by Marx's Capital as by the writings of Morris, Carlyle and Ruskin. Women's emancipation was thus treated by English socialists typically as a moral issue. It was related to ideas about consciousness and cultural change. The cultural life was full with the ideas about the "New Woman" and "Ibsenism". The English socialist thought emphasized very much the connection between the socialism and creation of a new morality and new ways of living together by men and women. It is not an accident that the ideas held by Marx's daughter Eleanor Aveling and her husband, on the one hand, and the great liberal socialist, John Stuart Mill on the other, strike a common emotive note. They reflect a common socio-cultural background and tradition of thought and movement.

John Stuart Mill's The subjection of women in way sums up the ideology of British Women's movement in the latter-half of the 19th century. Mill has tackled the problems of women's subjection in a courageous and intelligent manner. As Kate Millett has pointed out, The subjection of women is a reasoned and eloquent statement of the actual position of women throughout history. (Millett, 1980,128). Mill argued the case for women as powerfully as his famous essay on liberty. He states that "That the principle which regulates

the existing social relations between the two sexes –the legal subordination of one sex to the other –is wrong in itself and now one of the chief hindrances to human improvement; and that is ought to be replaced by principle of perfect equality admitting no power or privilege on the one side nor disability on the other". (Mill,1966,427). As Millett notes this was drastic recommendation to make them, just as it is now. His thought sums up at its best both the liberal-radical and socialist position and thought on woman-question.

The United states:

Just like its counter part in England, the Puritan Revolution also stirred some exceptional American women to think about women's rights. As Yates puts it, in those days there were no feminists but there was some female rebellion.(Yates, 1977,20). Women like Anne Hutchinson, Mary Dyer, Anne Bradstreet, Judith Sargent Murray, Abigail Adams and Frances Wright gave expressions to women's aspirations in the period between 1620 to 1820. Much of the early 19th century women's right activity rose out of women's involvement in the anti-slavery movement. The first Female Anti-Slavery society was formed. Yates observes "women were quick to make the analogy between the slaves bondage and their own lack of rights".(Yates, 1977,24). He cannot but note that this has once again emerged as a very dominant theme even in contemporary women's movement after 1960s. It was in the abolition movement of the 1830 that the woman's right movements as such had its political origins. Grimke sisters-Angelina and Sarah, Laucratia Mott and Elizabeth Cady stanton, played a prominent role in anti-slavery movement. They missed no opportunity to demonstrate that the issues of freedom for slaves and freedom for women were inexplicably linked. Their efforts culminated in the senecca falls convention of 1848 where a "Declaration of sentiments" modeled after the Declaration of independence was adopted. This convention is considered as the official beginnings of the women's suffrage movement in America. Other key issues also occupied women's attention at this historical meeting women expressed their desire to gain control of their property earning , guardianship of their children, the right to divorce, right to enter various professions and to secure better wages and working conditions.

In 1845 Margerat Fuller published her book Women in the Nineteenth century. It is a remarkably perceptive account of the Psychological and cultural effects of women's oppressions . Although fuller came before the time of the organized women's right

movement, her book provides a good index to the importance of the women-question in American society in those days.

Two separate tendencies gradually emerged in the American women's movement during the Anti-slavery campaign. In 1869 the movement had a split over ideological and tactical questions into two major factions. One group led by Lucy Stone and others restricted its activities to the ideas of vote. But another group led by Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton embraced the broad cause of women's right of which the vote was seen primarily as a means. But the compulsions of the suffrage movement led to the merger of both the associations in 1890. Shortly after the turn of the century, the second generation of women suffragists came of age. Carry Chapman Catt and Alice Paul led the new movement. At last, the nineteenth Amendment granting American women the right to vote was finally ratified by Congress on August 26, 1920. But with typical irony of history the American woman's movement virtually collapsed from exhaustion. William L. O'Neill concludes, in his book Everyone was Brave: The rise and fall of feminism in America, that the historical feminist movement failed in America because the early feminists defined their problem too narrowly. The real issue was the role of woman in American society, yet the feminists for some seventy years, from 1848 to 1920 focussed more and more closely on the issue of women suffrage. "Thus when woman won the right to vote with the Nineteenth amendment their millennial euphoria's prevented them from seeing that they had won a battle, not the war, and the movement died," (Yates, 1977, 13). The women's movement almost died in 1920. Feminism was to lie dormant for next forty years.

All historians of the nineteenth century American women's movement, however, agree upon one point. Most of the standard American history books focus exclusively on the suffrage campaign and ignore its radical critique. Judith Hole and Ellen Levine, the authors of Rebirth of Feminism have put the point so well in the first chapter of their book. They note that "By virtue of this omission they have, to all intents and purposes, denied the political significance of the early feminist analysis. Moreover, the summary treatment by historians of the nineteenth and twentieth century drive for women's suffrage has made that campaign almost a footnote to the abolition movement and the campaign for Negro suffrage, obscuring the traditional 'new' book image of the early feminists, has further demoralized the importance of their political analysis." (Hole & Levine, 1973, 14). Betty Friedan, chairwoman of the most prominent American middle-class organisation of women the National Organization for Women, also states in The Feminine Mystique, that the movement for

almost fifty years in America to laugh at pre-1920 American feminism as "one of history's dirty jokes." In the popular histories, American feminists were depicted as women who had denied the very nature as women. It led to the standard American stereotype of "Men-eating myth" of a feminist. She argues that "It is one of the strange blind spots of contemporary psychology not to recognize the reality of the passion that moved these women to leave home in search of new identify, or, staying home, to yearn bitterly for something more." (Friedan, 1979,71).

Trade Union Movement and Women's movement

We have already seen the tension produced by a differing situation of upper-middle class, bourgeois women and women coming from working class and present background. But there was also another problem which continued to condition the women's movement right from the inception of capitalist production. The up and coming system of production affected women's position in the structure of work. At the very moment when their puritan men were establishing work as the criterion of dignity and worth, not to work became the mark of class superiority of the middle-class women. Not only was industry closed to them but the limited educational opportunities opened to women right upto the midst of the 19th century made entrance into the profession practically impossible. The process of intellectual specialization, one of the effects of the scientific revolution, emphasized this exclusion (Rowbotham,1972,27). On the other hand, the poor women were facing an altogether a different situation throughout the 17th,18th,and 19th centuries. By the time of the Industrial Revolution there was a virtual army of people totally dependent on wage-labour employed in agriculture, manufactories, in their hovels or in domestic work. The economic basis of this pre industrial but post-feudal was the same as that of the industrial family. It was totally dependent either on the wage labour of individual family members or on capital. This situation put the women from the poor classes in a peculiar situation. While the women of the bourgeoisie found themselves cut off from the production process and stop a pedestal, the women of the labouring class were burdened with toil at home and work outside. (Hill,1969). Thus the rising capitalist mode of production produced what viola Klein has called "Two nations" of women (Klein, 1963,28). Contrary to logical expectations, participation of the labouring class women in production work, however, did not secure for them the dignity of

work.. Two often seemingly contradictory factors for the situation were responsible. The first reason is that poor women retained certain features of pre-capitalist labour force. They provided a major source of cheap unskilled labour. Employers used them often to dilute the labour force. Whenever a process had been simplified and devalued often it was allotted to women worker. In other words, the vast reserve army of labouring women often faced the vast reserve army of male labour. Labouring men thus resented the "intrusion" of women in the work process. Ironically enough the very starvation and misery of the poor classes made the wage earning an ordinary and routine part of poor women's life. This situation sapped the bargaining position of women right from the beginning. They did as much work as men but without the social recognition of their right to work and with far lower wages. Another factor added to the male hostility towards female labour force. The very poverty of the lower classes forced not only women but children as well to work in the factories for long hours. This situation led to a natural neglect of children and "home" on the part of a working class wife. Given the Puritan ethos of the hegemonic culture of the early capitalist societies, women's neglect of children and home was regarded as a social evil. Women once again were one-sidedly held responsible for this state of affairs.

This tradition of male hostility to women labour force continued into the 19th century. Women were excluded from the rising Trade Union Movement. Even otherwise militant working-class men "excluded women from trade unions, made contracts with employers to prevent their hiring women, passed laws restricting the employment of married women, caricatured working women, and carried on ceaseless propaganda to return women to the home or keep them there." (Hacker, 1951, 67). Germaine Greer has demonstrated that the ethos of the male hostility towards women labour and the persistent male undervaluation of it persist up till now. She has pointed out that women formed thirty-eight percent of the work force in England. Half the women between the ages of sixteen and sixty four worked outside their homes. Yet the pattern of female employment followed the course of the role that she played outside industry. She was almost always ancillary, "a hand-maid in the more important work of men." Three times as many girls as boys left school at fifteen. "The pattern that emerges is that of an inert, unvalued female work force, which is considered a temporary labour, docile, but unreliable." Of the nine million women in employment only two million female workers were members of trade unions. (Greer, 1976, 116-117).

The above situation caught the poor working women in a trap right from the 17th century. Even though women took as much part as men in resisting the class exploitation, their role in militant struggles was too often undervalued. On the other hand wherever labouring women as women tried to secure some remedial action to solve some of their unique problems, male-dominated trade union movement often treated their struggles and demands as divisible in nature. Thus most women soon found the attempt to struggle on several fronts too exhausting.

The peculiar situation of both the bourgeoisie and the working class women in capitalist societies produced therefore two persistent tendencies which marked the women's movement throughout the 19th century. As Rowbotham puts it "The absence of any practical theory of revolutionary feminist action and organization which made explicit the necessity to fight on several fronts rather than isolating one aspect of oppression had serious consequences. The corollary of feminist isolationism was a tendency amongst some women revolutionaries and industrial militants to smooth over and camouflage the specific oppression experienced by women, either because it was felt to endanger movements and causes or because it was felt to endanger movements and causes or because it was felt to be unresolved in the immediate future. The tension which resulted from this voluntary containment of energy was corrosive and destructive. There was continual pressure on women to compromise on this way. They found themselves having to make choices with nothing but their own feelings to guide them. Each choice appeared as an individual matter because there was no theory to which it would be more broadly referred." (Rowbotham, 1972, 109-110). We must remember that this thorny question has produced a diploma as much for the feminist movement as for the working class revolutionary or reformist movement. To this day, no satisfactory theoretical and practical solution has been found by either of these movements. We must keep this dilemma constantly in mind when we shall follow the contemporary feminist literature.

THE DECLINE OF FEMINISM BETWEEN 1920 TO 1960

For variety of reason feminism declined during the period 1920 to 1960. The onset of the First World war saw the end of women's movement so far as Europe was concerned. The Bolshevik Revolution also played its role in diverting the attention from feminism. Rowbotham has pointed out that the First World War and the Bolshevik Revolution forced feminists to define clearly which side they were on: While the extension of the franchise

removed the single unifying issue which had bound them together. (Rowbotham, 1972,131). English women secured the right to vote with restrictions in 1918 and the unrestricted vote in 1928. The suffragist movement in the United Kingdom split into two. Women's movement in England collapsed soon after.

The Nineteenth Amendment granting women suffrage became a reality for American women in November 1920. Yet as Betty Frieden puts it, "The fact is that to women born after 1920, feminism was a dead history. It ended as a vital movement in America with the winning of that final right: the vote." (Frieden, 1979,88). Janeway has pointed out that American middle class spent the years between 1920 to 1960 in an increasingly acute state of self-doubt about its identity and historical mission. Whether it was originally triggered by the closing of the frontier, the decline of the Protestant ethic, the shock of the first world war or some other combination of causes, the process was clearly underway in Twenties. It was followed by the economic shock of the Thirties, and by the international involvement's of the Second World War and the years thereafter. The Fifties saw an exhaustive retreat in to personal isolationism. America suffered from a nostalgia of a lost Gold Age and thus lost itself in status quoists' attitude. (Janeway, 1977, 159 - 160).

Betty Frieden has described the material environment which supported American women's withdrawal into their own shell. By the end of the nineteen-fifties, the average marriage age of women in America dropped to 20, and was still dropping, into the teens. Fourteen million girls were engaged by 17. The proportion of women attending college in comparison with men dropped from 47 percent in 1920 to 35 percent in 1958. A century earlier, women had fought for higher education; now girls went to college to get a husband. By the mid-fifties, 60 percent dropped out of college to marry, or because they were afraid, too much education would be a marriage bar. Colleges built dormitories for 'married students', but the students were almost always with the husbands. Then American girls began getting married in high schools and the women's magazines, deploring the unhappy statistics about these young marriages, urged that courses on marriage and marriage counselors be installed in the high schools. Girls started going steady at twelve and thirteen in junior high. By the end of the fifties, the United State's birth rate was overtaking India's. Statisticians were especially astounded at the fantastic increase in the number of babies among college women. Where once they had two children, now they had four, five, six. Women who had once wanted careers were now making careers out of the babies. Interior decorators were designing kitchens with mosaic murals and original painting, for kitchens were once again the center of

women's lives. Home-sewing became a million dollar industry. Many women no longer left their homes, except to shop, chauffeur their children, or attend a social engagement with their husbands. Girls were growing up in America without ever having jobs outside the home. In the late fifties, a sociological phenomenon was suddenly noticed: a third of American women now worked, but most were no longer young and very few were pursuing careers. They were married women who hold part-time jobs, sailing through college, or to help pay the mortgage. Or they were widows supporting families. Fewer and fewer women were entering professional work. The shortages in the nursing, social work, and teaching professions caused crisis in almost every American city. The American housewife- freed by science and labour - saving appliances from the drudgery, the dangers of child birth , and the illness of her grandmother emerged on the social scene. Frieden insists that the mystique of feminine fulfillment became the cherished and self-perpetuating core of American culture during the fifteen years after the Second World War. (Frieden, 1979, 14-16).

Various interpretations have been offered to explain the collapse of feminism between 1920 to 1960. According to Frieden, the feminists had destroyed the old image of women. But they could not erase the hostility, the prejudice, the discrimination that still remained. Nor could they paint the new image of what women might become when they grew up under conditions that no longer made them inferior to men, dependent, passive, incapable of thought or decision (Friedan, 1979, 89). In Rowbotham's opinion, the weakness of revolutionary feminism before 1920 was a failure of coherence, both in practice and in theory. It could not relate and clarify the specific aspects of woman's oppression within the framework of a systematic theory. The extension of the franchise to women thus proved not a beginning of an advanced stage of militancy but the end of it. According to Kate Millett, the period from 1930 to 1960 marks the period of "The Counter revolution" so far as women's movement was concerned. She states that the first phase of feminism ended in reform rather than revolution. Representing the Radical Feminist position, Millett argues that "for a sexual revolution to proceed further it would have required a truly radical social transformation the alteration of marriage and the family as they had been known throughout history. Without such radical change it remained impossible to eradicate those evils attendant upon these institutions which reformers found most offensive. ...A completed sexual revolution would have entailed, even necessitated, the end of the patriarchal order through the abolition of its ideology as it functions through a differential socialization of the sexes in the areas of status, temperament and role. While patriarchal ideology was eroded and patriarchy reformed, the essential

patriarchal social order remained. As most people could conceive of no other form of social organization, the only alternative to its perpetuation appeared to be chaos." (Millett, 1980, 222).

Millett has also referred to other factors which had undoubtedly contributed to the collapse of the organized feminism in 1920 – the Depression, the end of left wing radicalism in the thirties and the rise of totalitarian forces thereafter, post-war reaction after 1945, the post-Second World War labour situation and finally the general conservatism of the fifties.

Almost all the feminists also refer to the set back received by feminism due to what they call the failure of the Soviet experiment to achieve all-round women's emancipation. Even the most sympathetic student of the Soviet experiment like Rowbotham agrees that women's condition in Russia from 1925 to 1955 was not that envisaged by the revolutionaries in the twenties. She notes that in the initial phase some positive legislation was accepted by the new communist government. Women like Alexandra Kollontai felt free enough to advance very bold theories about the nature of women's freedom and the family system. But by the mid-1920s, the atmosphere began to change. Rowbotham has identified various factors, which might explain the shift in the Soviet policies. She notes that Marxist ideas about the family assumed a completely different historical tradition from the cultural realities of Russia after 1917. In a backward country traditionalism, superstition and the old authorities had a real hold. In a situation of economic crisis, post-war chaos and revolutionary upheaval Russia experienced great psychological tension and familial insecurity. It was difficult for people to keep their nerve throughout this process of sexual-cultural revolution. The immediate task of creating a communist society from the chaos in the 1920s required a great effort of self-discipline. A new culture based on hard work, abstinence and repression was the need of the hour. To ignore this was to take cover in fantasy. But the fact remains that women's emancipation was the first casualty of this policy. The whole series of legislation passed under Stalin's rule was a complete reversal of the laws passed in the 1920s. It is not that the Soviet Union did not make any progress whatsoever in the matter. Two aspects of Soviet progress with reference to women are noted all over the world namely the right to work and welfare facilities for children. But the fact remains that the Soviet experiment did not meet the original expectations entertained by the women all over the West. It, therefore, dampened the women's movement during the inter-war period. (Rowbotham, 1972, 136-169).

Millett considers that the Soviet experiment failed and was abandoned. She asserts that through the thirties and forties Soviet society came to resemble the modified patriarchy of other western countries. She admits that the Civil-War condition prevailing after the revolution and the post-revolutionary economic crisis were the two factors responsible for the regression. But Millett argues that the root cause of the failure was that "Marxist theory had failed to supply a sufficient ideological base for a sexual revolution, and was remarkably naive as to the historical and psychological strength of patriarchy. ...Therefore, with the collapse of the old patriarchal order, there was no positive and coherent theory to greet the inevitable confusion. In addition to this, there was no realization that while every practical effort should be made to implement a sexual revolution, the real test would be in changing attitudes." (Millett, 1980, 240). Millett points out that one real problem facing in the Soviet.

Union was whether it could, through a revolutionary education, set up a new psychic structure in its members to replace that of patriarchy. It failed in this respect. It gradually instituted its own moralistic, authoritarian ideology. Millett states that twenty-seven years after the revolution, the Soviet position had completely reversed itself. The initial radical freedoms in marriage, divorce, abortion, child care, and the family were largely abridged and the reaction gained so that, by 1943, even coeducation was abolished in the Soviet Union. The sexual revolution was over, the counter revolution triumphant. In the following decades conservative opinion elsewhere rejoiced in pointing to the Soviet as an object lesson in the folly of change. (Millett, 1980, 249).

Most of the students of the women's movement have also noted the adverse effects of the rise of the rightwing totalitarian force during the inter-war period viz. Fascism and Nazism. For example, Nazism saw feminism as a force to be dealt with seriously. The Nazi culture represented national, sexual, racial chauvinism. Hitler's regime took maximum efforts to glorify the motherhood and the family. The fascist ideological waves which spreaded all over the world had an adverse effect on feminism.

Both feminist and non-feminist students of women's movement also tend to agree that the conservative trends that operated between 1920 to 1960 were accompanied by the immense influence of Freud and his psychoanalytic thought, on the one hand, and functionalism on the other. For example, Millett representing a wide spectrum of radical feminist opinion argues that in most cases the feminist movement collapsed from within and was undermined more through its own imperfections than from hostile forces which combined to crush it. According to her, the real causes of the counter-revolution appeared to lie in the fact that

basic attitudes, values and emotions supporting patriarchy remained practically untouched. Millett further argues that the new ideological support to the patriarchal social order, its sex roles and its differentiated temperaments of masculine and feminine was not based on or derived from religion. She asserts that "The new formulation of old attitudes had to come from science and particularly from the emerging social sciences of psychology, sociology, and anthropology – the most useful and authoritative branches of social control and manipulation." (Millett, 1980, 251). All other women thinkers under our study also hold similar opinions a rare thing in contemporary feminist literature. The trend of scholarly opinion seems to confirm their judgement.

If the Depression, the political turmoil in between the two World Wars and the Second World War represent the objective factors which pushed the women's movement in the background during 1920 to 1960, the unsettled conditions governing social, economic and cultural life and the task of post-war recovery and reconstruction left no room for the rise of radicalism in Europe. While American escaped a direct devastation caused by war, another set of reasons prevented the rise of feminist movement in the U.S.A. between 1945 and 1960. A number of studies have explored this aspect of the problem. The President's Report on the Status of Women Prepared by a Commission appointed by President John F. Kennedy in 1961 and submitted in October 1963 has offered a detailed explanation of the prevalence of the conservative trends during this period. (PRSW, 1963). Betty Friedan has also identified some of the crucial factors, which prevented the rise of feminist consciousness and the women's movement in America between 1945 to 1960. She is of the opinion that the loneliness of war, the trauma caused by the onset of the Nuclear Age, the frightening uncertainty generated by the rise of the Cold War led women as well as men to "the comforting reality of home and children." She asserts that "A pent-up hunger for marriage, home, and children was felt simultaneously by several different generations; a hunger which, in the prosperity of post-war America, everyone could suddenly satisfy." (Friedan, 1979, 160). Betty Roszak and Theodore Roszak have pointed out that with the end of the war the average age of marriage declined, the average size of families went up and the suburban migration began in the earnest. The political conservatism of the 1950s was echoed in a social conservatism, which stressed a Victorian ideal of the women's life, a full womb and selfless devotion to husband and children, (Roszak & Roszak, 1969, 188). Elizabeth Janeway has also examined this issue. In her opinion, the economic shock of the thirties, and the international political and super-political involvement's of the war had already put an end to the radical defiance of women

against male-dominated culture. She further points out that in reaction from that demanding time, the fifties saw an exhausted retreat into personal and political isolationism, and an attempt to revitalise some of the values and virtues attributed to a past that had receded far enough to be reinvaded under the mythic label of Golden Age. (Janeway, 1977, 159-160). Friedan has noted that America witnessed a "greater baby-boom" in the fifties with the rising teenage marriages and pregnancies, and the increase in family size even among the families in the relatively higher age brackets. She has also considered the impact of the post-war prosperity on American culture. It led to the rise of consumerism and the accompanying "feminine mystique." She has noted a certain paradox in this context prevailing at least in the first decade after the end of the war. When the war ended, the demolition led American men to take the jobs and fill the seats in colleges and universities that for a while during the war years had been occupied largely by girls. For a short time, competition was keen and the resurgence of the old anti-feminine prejudices in business and the professions made it difficult for a girl to keep the job or advance in a job stimulated by consumerism and feminine mystique, this undoubtedly reinforced women's desire to cover of marriage and home. Friedan admits that it can be demonstrated in just cold statistical terms that the proportion of American women in industry had steadily increased since 1945. But the thrust of her argument is to prove that women had not accepted careers or professions requiring training, effort and personal commitment. Friedan has also assessed the significance of Freudianism in relation to the American culture for feminism during 1945 to 1960. She argued that the Freudianism, apart from the practice of psychotherapy itself, also filled a real need in the forties and the fifties: the need for an ideology, a national purpose, an application of the mind to the problems of people. She further argued that the lack of a purposive ideology led post-war American culture and particularly mass-media to imbibe a certain kind of vulgarised Freudianism. It reinforced the traditional American stereotype of woman as a "Mom". Friedan has termed it as an "occupation: housewife" (Friedan, 1979, 167-180). One may sum up the decline of women's movement between 1920 to 1960 in terms of Yates' detached and academic assessment of the situation. She points out that after the world war II when the war effort was no longer the singular concern in American life requiring women to take outside employment and to engage in public life, women had returned in great numbers to the home as the central focus for their identity. This was a period of conservatism, during which the role of women was regarded as primarily domestic. (Yates, 1977, 3).

A CONCISE HISTORY OF THE WOMEN'S MOVEMENT

FROM 1960 TO 1975

The United States

A Historical Review:

However, a series of crucial social developments emerged by the beginning of nineteen sixties which made a rebirth of the women's struggle inevitable. First, inspite of the myth of "occupation: housewife", by 1960 women came to make up more than a third of labour force. The number of working women was twice the pre-war figure. Yet they lacked equal access to all sectors of the occupational structure. They were being forced into the low-paying service, clerical and semi-skilled categories. The proportion of women in service jobs rose up in a noticeable manner. It is remarkable that while women had held forty five percent of all professional and technical positions in 1940, they held only 37 per cent of these positions in 1967. Second, a generation of women woke up "to find their children grown and a life (roughly thirty more productive years) of housework and bridge parties stretching out before them like a waste land." Third, a growing Civil Rights Movement began to sweep thousands of young men and women into a moral crusade – "a crusade which harsh political experience was to transmute into the New Left," The Black Civil Right's Struggle in Mississippi and the increasing radicalization of American politics around the issue of vietnam war changed the American social environment radically. Thus each and every traditional political stereotype, ideology, cultural myth, sexual mores and sex roles with them began to be challenged as an explosion of rebellion and protest. (Roszack & Roszack, 1969, 188-189).

Webster Schott has also delineated the changing conditions which led to a revival of women's movement in the 1960's. He has noted that women began to take jobs in a big way consciously to make careers. Within a decade fifty two per cent of all women between 19 and 59 were employed. Nearly 90 per cent of all women over forty were in work. Only 11 percent of U.S. families consisted of Dad on the job and Mom at home with the kids. 58 per cent of all mothers of school children worked. The change affected American life all the way from the size of grocery stores to the frequency of church services. In addition, Schott continue, in the decade and a half that followed 1963, a confluence of forces beyond anyone's imagination, oral contraceptives, an inflationary war in Vietnam, more inflation from OPEC oil and Federal fiscal policies and the informed will of the first generation of the post-Second World women – gave American females some of what they wanted. They

organized themselves to gain access to power outside the family. They learned how to change the behaviour of institutions. Because they had acquired control over child-bearing, they could enter business, industry and government with plans to stay. They got somewhat what they wanted because standards of living would fall without wives and mothers at work. Moreover the American economy could not face foreign productivity unless women worked. (Schott, 1982, 86-8) It is reported that the increasing pressures on American women led to a sharp increase in American Women asking for private psychiatric help. By 1962 the plight of American women emerged as a high-priority item on serious academic agenda. A general sense of disenchantment with the idyllic image of female fulfillment in domestic life was noticed by social scientists. American women began increasingly to find it difficult to decide whether they were to achieve success in fulfilling traditional woman's role or to pursue an independent life-long career.

Soon all the major women groups in the American society-students, middle-class married women and working women - began to participate in the new women's movement. Each group represented an independent aspect of the total institutionalised oppression of women. Their differences are those of emphasis and immediate interest rather than fundamental goals. Thus as Hoie and Levin have pointed out that the so called "silent fifties" came to an abrupt end with the beginning of confrontation policies in the early 1960's - marches, pickets, sit-ins. College and University students began to participate in political activities. In the early sixties, large number of students, both men and women, spent their summer, working in the new activist Civil Rights movements in the south. Women had gone to the South to work alongside men in the fight for equality only to find that they were second-class citizens in a movement purportedly determined to wipe out all discrimination. This experience also made a rise of a new independent and militant women's movement inevitable. (Hole and Levin, 1975, 109-110).

As Merlene Dixon has pointed out, a new women's movement arose in a dramatic way by the beginning of 1961. It ranged in politics from reform to revolution and produced critics of almost every segment of American society and culture. (Dixon, 1969, 57-64).

The new feminist movement began to arise in the early 1960's. It came to public attention in a major way in the last two years of the decade. It reached its peak during the latter half of the 1960s and the first half of the 1970s. The end of the Vietnam war also witnessed the beginning of its decay. By the end of the 1970s it had spent its full force.

The first signs of the coming turmoil appeared in 1959. In that year three major books appeared on the women's problem, and were extremely well received. (Flexner, 1968; Newcomer, 1959; Smuts, 1971). The increasing pressure from American women led President John F. Kennedy in 1961 to appoint a President's Commission on the Status of Women. Its task was to study and make recommendations regarding employment practices and legal treatment of women in the federal and State governments and to suggest services needed for women in the nation. American women participated in a massive manner in the preparation of this report. It was finally submitted to the President in October 1963. At about the same time, Betty Friedan published The Feminine Mystique (Friedan, 1963). Germaine Greer, a leading radical feminist, marks its publication as the beginning of the second feminist wave. (Greer, 1976, 295). It made a tremendous impact on women. Friedan's description of the women problem as "The Problem that has no name" soon became an everyday expression current in American media. In the Spring of 1964, prestigious Daedalus magazine published a special issue on women which provoked a serious discussion of the woman problem on American campuses. (Daedalus, 1964). In the same year the United States Congress added the word "Sex" to the Title VII of the Civil Rights Bill. It prohibited discrimination in employment on the basis of "race, colour, religion, national origins or sex" (emphasis added). (Yates, 1977, 5).

In the meantime a large number of young women had already begun to take part in the New Left politics in the early years of 1960s. They were really keen to take a major part in the radical social movement. Yet they soon found that even their radical male comrades treated them in no different way than the most of the orthodox men. They expected women in the radical movement to play the typical, conventional, subordinate roles of women in the name of the movement. Friedan had already pointed out that "the suburban wife" faced a problem with no name. She stated that "As she (suburban wife) made the beds, shopped for groceries, matched slipcover material, at peanut butter sandwiches with her children, chauffeured Cub Scouts and Brownies, lay beside her husband at night-she was afraid to ask even the silent question - 'Is this all?' (Friedan, 1979, 13). But even these radical left activist woman soon realised that their position was no different from the suburban woman whom they were denouncing. As Lydia Sargent, a Socialist Feminist, has pointed out. "At the same time that suburban women read and identified with Friedan's 'problem with no name', women in the New Left were busy cleaning and decorating movement offices, cooking movement dinners, handling daycare, chauffeuring. Answering phones, and lying beside their movement lovers

and husbands at night also afraid to ask the silent question – 'Is this all?' (Sargent, 1981, xiii-xiv). As a result, Ruby Doris Smith Robinson, a founding member of the Student Nonviolent coordinating committee (SNCC) wrote a serious paper titled "The Position of women in SNCC". It was present at an SNCC meeting in October, 1964. A well known radical black leader with an international reputation Stockley Carmichael condemned it with a contemptuous remark, "The only position for women in SNCC is prone." This contemptuous remark reverberated throughout the American radical movement and in due course led to the rise of Radical Feminism. (Yates, 1977, 6-7). Throughout 1965-66 various kinds of New Left conferences were held all over America.

In the meantime a new organization, representative of the liberal, middle-class, and mainstream female public opinion, came into being in 1966. In the spring of that year the U.S. Labor Department held a conference in Washington for representatives of the various State Commissions on the status of women. Disappointed with governmental indecision with regard to women's rights, thirty-two persons from twelve states and the capital organised the National Organization for Women (NOW) under the presidency of Betty Friedan. It was established on October 29, 1966. NOW was the only major women's movement which achieved in course of time some degree of recognition from the political establishment when NOW was formed it, was read into the Congressional Record. To begin with, NOW fought against job discrimination, worked for the Equal Rights Amendment and for the repeal of Abortion Laws. NOW had been founded basically to fill an women's rights. It also acted as a forum for new feminist ideas. NOW has pledged seven goals.

1. Equal Rights constitutional Amendment
2. Enforcement of Law Banning Sex Discrimination in Employment
3. Maternity Leave Rights
4. Tax deduction for Home and Children Expense for Working Parents
5. Child Care Day Centers
6. Equal job training
7. The Right of Women to Control their Reproduction Lives.

The younger women's liberation groups representing the university left wing also began to appear during latter half of 1966. In the November-December issue of New Left Review in 1966 Juliet Mitchell published one of the most renowned statement of the socialist-feminist position.

A number of developments provided additional stimulus to the women's movement by the beginning of 1967. At the end of 1966 SNCC, a black power movement, formally banned white members. For different reasons, SDS (The students for a Democratic Society) rejected women's demand to have a plank on women's liberation. Since these movements were primarily concerned with other issues like the Black Movement, or the Arm's Race, or the Civil Liberties, or the Third World; both the radical and socialist women began to feel a need for their separate platforms and organizations. Masters and Johnsons published their work with the title Human Sexual Response also in 1966. (Masters and Johnson, 1966). It also provoked as great a debate about sexual issues as Kinsey Report had done earlier (Kinsey et.al., 1948). All the above developments made 1967 a memorable year in American women's movement. In the summer of 1967 the women's caucus of the National Convention of the S.D.S. adopted a Women's Manifesto drafted by the Women's Liberation Workshop. The beginning of women's Liberation Movement is traced from this manifesto. They made four demands on the movement (a) "(We demand) that our brothers in the S.D.S. (must) recognize that they must deal with their own problems of male chauvinism in their personal, social and political relationships"; (b) "We call upon the women to demand full participation in all aspects of the movement's work, from licking stamps to assuming leadership position." (c) Movement must be responsible "for cultivating all of the female resources available to the movement." (d) "All university administrations must realise that campus regulations discriminate against women in particular and must take positive action to protest the rights of women. ..." (Greer, 1976, 300). In the autumn of 1967, women members of the students' Union for Peace Action, Canada's leading New Left Organization, produced a paper called "Sister, Brothers, Lovers... Listen". It too demanded an autonomous platform for women.

The radical trend in women's movement gathered additional strength by the following developments. The first women's liberation news letter, called Voice of the Women's Liberation Movement and edited by Joreen Freeman, was published in the 1967 National Convention of the New Politics (NCNP) in Chicago. The NCNP Convention heralded its arrival with a manifesto titled "Towards A Liberation Movement." It was a product of the Convention. At this Convention, Shulemith Firestone and Pamele Allen met and decided to start a women's liberation group in New York. It became the New York Radical Women. But there was bound to be a conflict between "women's issues" and "New Left Politics. It soon led to a split. One of the groups called itself Redstockings. Hole and Levin in their history of feminism titled Rebirth of Feminism have called Redstockings as the first known

independent radical women's group that is not a women's caucus within another political organization. (Hole and Levin, 1975, 112). Gayle Yates has called The Redstockings Manifesto as "one of the purest expressions of the radical feminist point of view." (Yates, 1977, 89). The manifesto declared that women want to achieve final liberation from male-supremacy. It treated women as an oppressed class governed even by the threat of physical violence. It asserted that women's personal suffering is a political condition. It identified male-supremacy as the oldest and the most basic form of domination. It rejected the idea that women themselves are responsible for their present situation. It announced that women's own personal experience must serve as the basis for an analysis of women's situation. And finally the manifesto identified women as the poorest and most brutally exploited class. On December 5, 1967 Ann Koedt and Shulamith Firestone presented a further statement of radical feminism. They declared that the goal of radical feminism. They declared that the goal of radical feminism was the elimination of the sex-class system.

This system referred to the "fundamental political oppression wherein women are categorized as an inferior class based upon their sex." (Hole and Levin, 1975, 152).

As a result of radical women's political activity women groups began to form all over America. Of the literally hundreds of groups in 1967 and 1968 the Seattle Radical Women group might be seen as typical. It stated that the issue of women's emancipation was a first priority political, legal and economic question. And its fundamental solution called for a radical change in the political, legal and economic structure of society. Its membership consisted of working women, students and housewives of all races. In January 1968, a coalition of women's peace groups demonstrated against the Vietnam war at the opening of the American congress. They chanted the slogan of "The Burial of Traditional Womanhood."

The Summer of 1968 proved momentous for the women's movement. The women's peace groups taking part in the women's movement. The women's peace groups taking part in the above demonstration called themselves the Jenette Rankin Brigade. (Jenette Rankin was the first woman in the United States to serve in the Congress between (1917-1918). It was at this protest demonstration that the famous slogan that "Sisterhood is Powerful" was first used. (Hole and Levin, 1975, 118 - 119). In June 1968 a new radical journal Notes from the First Year started its publication. A short essay written by Ann Koedt titled "The Myth of Vaginal orgasm" attacking the position taken by Masters and Johnson in their book and published in the Notes soon became the most talked about article in the woman's movement. Among other things it provided inspiration for various lesbian groups to start open

organizational activity in the same year. In September 1968 Federally Employed Women (FEW) was founded. It was and is only organization devoted specifically to achieving legal equality and equal employment opportunity for women who are federally employed. Another major event soon brought mass media's attention to woman's movement. Various radical women's groups staged a protest demonstration against the Miss America Contest on September 7, 1968. By holding such a demonstration feminists were trying to prove that beauty contests as an expression of male hegemony was as much a part of women's oppression as discrimination in Jobs and wages. Even though no bras were in fact burned, this alleged action was overblown and projected by the mass media. Paradoxically, this distorted but massive publicity further deepened the strength and intensity of women's movement. A radical women named Valerie Solanas shot Andy Worhol. The extremist temper of some of the radical groups can be seen through the manifesto of the Society for Cutting Up Men (SCUM) of which Valerie Solanas was reportedly a member. It stated that "Life in this (American) society being, at best, and utter bore there remains to civil minded, responsible, thrill- seeking females ... to overthrow automation and destroy the male sex". (Emphasis added; Roszak & Roszak, 1969,262). The SCUM manifesto provides us with a fair idea of the rabid nature of some feminist groups and propaganda. We have to take note of it as it too provides a backdrop to women's literature under our consideration.

A major women's group was formed on October 17, 1968. It had broken away from NOW. Led by Ti-Grace Atkinson, It adopted a new strategy of group consciousness -raising. It rejected sexual intercourse as an oppressive institution & limited their membership to no more than one-third for those women who were married or lived with them. The group rejected any private relationship whatsoever with men. It also attacked the position of Catholic Church on Abortion and Contraception. This group soon began to be known as "The October 17th Movement" Later to be called "The Feminists". From the outset this group defined itself as a theory- action group. It asked for a rigorous theoretical analysis of women's social role. Even though the slogans like "Personal is Political" and "Feminism is Political" were by now common stock among radical feminist circles, this group was the first to formulate these slogans in detailed analytical and theoretical arguments. They defined the term radical feminism as the annihilation of Sex-roles. Depicting women as a political class they identified the male-female role division as the basic source of women's oppression. We must note here that a noisy polemics soon started between the New Left (Political) or Feminist Radicals, on the hand, and the upholders of "Women's issues" represented by

Radical Feminism of this new group. The "October 17" group condemned the institution of marriage. Soon it invited from other women groups the label of "eliticism". Both the Feminist Radical Politics and the Socialist Feminists began to accuse the new Feminists that they skirted the issue of political power and its relationship to oppression. Their ideological position that treats the male-female system as basic to women's practical and theoretical concern represents a major theoretical current in feminist literature. When October 17th Group finalised its analysis of the class condition of women and the resultant programme for elimination of that class condition, it adopted the name- the Feminists. It published a manifesto on June 13th 1969. It says "The class separation between men and women is a political division. The role (or class) system must be destroyed ... women, or "females", were the first class to be separated out from humanity and thus denied their humanity. It is the male role or the role of the Oppressor that must be annihilated.... (Thus) Both the male role and the female role must be annihilated. Certainly all those institutions Such as family (and its substitution, marriage), sex, and love must be destroyed. ..All political classes grew out of the male- female role system. The pathology of oppression can only be fully comprehended in its primary development: the male-female division. The feminist is an action group The male-female role system is political because the roles are defined by one group (men); men are the powerful class and women the powerless class : The maternal instinct - desire to bear and raise children - is attributed to women ... we must eliminate the institutions built on the myth of maternal instinct. Extra-utarian means of reproduction should be developed ... We must destroy the institution of heterosexual sex a manifestation of the male-female role.... (To sum up,) The strategy requires that all avenues of escape from our destruction the male role and role system be closed. (Koedt et. al., 1973, 368 - 378).

The peak of extremists feminism was reached in the summer of 1968 and thereafter. We have already seen above that Selamantas had advocated the extreme strategy of exterminating men and had shot Andy Werhol. Her shocking strategy pressed some women groups into further extremist positions. A new women's group was called Women's International Terrorist Conspiracy from Hell (WITCH). Greer has offered an objective assignment of their tactics. "WITCH is essentially and experiment with the media. Public Bra-burning, hexing the Chase Manhattan Bank, and invading the annual Bride Fair at Medison square Garden dressed as witches and bearing broomsticks were all badly-hoo operations, and, given the susceptibility of the commercial system to its own methods, they worked, to the point of causing the Wall

Street market to drop five points, but nowadays, through fear of the Tactical Policies Force and other forms of established reappraisal, what is essentially a publicity movement has gone anonymous and underground," (Greer, 1976, 308-309). Two key statements from the WITCH manifesto gives us some idea of this ideological position. It stated that "WITCH is all women, everything. It is theatre, revolution, magic, terror and joy." And, "witches have always been women who dared to be groovy, courageous, aggressive, intelligent, non-conformist, explorative, independent, sexually liberated - and revolutionary." (Roszak and Roszak, 1969, 259-260).

Kate Millett's manifesto titled Sexual Politics: A Manifesto for Revolution represented the high-water mark of radical feminist positions. It also represents the radical feminist opinion on American University campuses. In terms of organizational development, the year 1968 ended with the establishment of Human Rights for Women (HRW). It was founded by Mary Eastwood, Sylvie Elison, Cerutherse Berger and Ti-Grace Atkinson. It was devoted to feminist research, education and legal aid services. Thus by the beginning of 1969 the women were insisting that feminist movement was essentially political in nature.

1969 proved to be a year when occupationally-oriented feminist groups were formed. Thus women's caucuses in various fields like sociology, psychology, political science, and modern languages, economics and history were formed. It is not surprising that an enormous amount of feminists activity is devoted to occupational issues particularly upgrading the status of women at work. These organisations began to lobbying for adding the word "Sex" to the various discriminatory bans effecting their status. Along with the demand for Equal Pay for Equal Work and equal opportunity, they were pressing for the removal of job category exemptions displaying sex discrimination. The ideological temper of 1969 can be gauged by the manifesto adopted by New York Radical Feminists in December, 1969. It stated that "It remains for us as women to fully develop a new dialectic of sex class. - and analysis of the way in which sexual identity and institutions reinforce one another." (Koedt et. al., 1973, 379 - 383). The two-year period, 1969 through 1970, was a time of extra-ordinary growth in the women's liberation movement. Hole and Levine have pointed out that any and every pre-conceived notion, pattern of behaviour, and theory or analysis relating to women were questioned. (Hole & Levine, 1975, 157- 158). In June & July 1970, the House Special Subcommittee on Education held hearings on sex discrimination in education. It has been noted that the 1250 pages of testimony that resulted from the seven-day hearings constitutes

the most extensive compilation surfaced of the women's movement. A Gay Liberation Movement of both homosexual men and homosexual women had begun. Kate Millet and some other prominent feminists publicly announced themselves as bi-sexual. Paradoxically, 1970 also witnessed the revival of orthodox Marxist women's groups led by women like Evalyns Red. A new major national organization, The Women's Equity Action League (WEAL), was formed in 1969 in Cleveland from which it spread all over America. It channeld its efforts into three areas of sex discrimination - employment, education and de facto tax inequities. Thus by the beginning of 1970 feminist groups were formed in every major city and many smaller cities in U.S.A. One can secure a rough idea of the rapid growth of the women's movement, by the fact that New York and Los Angeles taken together constituted 200 women's groups around this period.

1970 continued to witness this phenomenal growth of feminist movement. Most of these groups began to publish news-letters, odd journals. A journal of Liberation from Baltimore almost came close to being a national publication. In April 1970 Professional Women's Caucus (PWC) was founded. The major development of 1970 was the adoption of a manifesto by the San Francisco Red Stocking in March. It reiterated radical feminist stress on the small group activity. It talked about the system of male domination throughout history. It asserted that the economic system of male supremacy lay at the core of women's oppression. It finally declared its character as a flexible organization (Roszak and Roszak, 1969,285-290). This manifesto revealed a widening gap between the Militant Radical Feminism on the one hand and the Liberal or Socialist or Marxist feminism on the other. In the next year the National women's political caucus (NWPC) was formed in Washington. It represented in it's National policy council such influential women as Belle Abzug, Betty Friedan and Gloria Steinem. NWPC's influence become clear within a very short period of time. More women fought for election office in 1972 and 1974. They won greater representation for women at the national level. The U.S. party system was thus compelled to take note of women's movements and aspirations. A new trend in Women's movement appeared through The fourth World Manifesto. It first appeared in Notes from the Third year. On the one hand, it condemned the male-dominated left movement for its attempt to suppress a strong and independent women's movement. On the other hand, The Manifesto also criticized "An unfortunate reaction among some women's liberationists and feminists... to call anything which they do not like 'Male'". It finally declared that neither the male culture nor the female culture is a model for a human society. (Koedt, 1973,322-357).

On the crest of new feminism the Equal Rights Amendment to the United States constitution was passed by the American Senate in March 1972. We must note that this amendment had been bottled up in American congress for nearly fifty years. 1972 also witnessed a competition among the established publishing houses for publishing or republishing works about women's experience and problems. As Yates has pointed out, abortion also emerged as a principal issue in the contemporary feminist movement (upto the U.S. supreme court decision in 1973). From 1968 to 1973 the issue was constantly under a major feminist focus. (Yates, 1977, 110-111).

In the meantime the socialist feminist part of women's movement was also developing in new and important ways. A conference was held in July 1975. It marked the first organized attempt at gathering together group of women as socialist feminists. From 1975 to 1978 number of important statements and manifestoes were published by several socialist feminist women's group like The Barkely Oakland women's statement (1974), The combahes River Collective (A Black feminist) Statement and a Report by the Marxist-Feminist Group 1 (M-F1) in 1977, etc. (Eisenstein, 1979, 349-389).

A wording classification of various Trends in the American women's Movement

A broad classification of various ideological trends in American women's movement will help us to situate the writing of six women writers under our consideration. Before we proceed further, some rough-and ready definitions of feminism thrown by various feminist writer will help us to understand the ethos of contemporary feminist movement.

What is feminism?

Role and Levine think the feminism by definition challenges the statuesque. It Questions political, social and cultural institutions, ways of thinking and the very articulation of those thoughts. (Hole & Levine, 1975, 226). Michale Berret believes that feminist seeks to change not simply men or women or both, as they exist at present, but seeks to change to relations between them. She adds that although the basis for this will be provide by an autonomous women's liberation movement the strategy must involve political engagement with men rather than a policy of absolute separatism. (Berrett, 1980, 259). Sheile Robotham points out that there are two possible interpretations, one ideal, the other historical. She states that

feminism own be seen as the conception of a society in which the roles of dominator and dominated are reversed and in which women take over superior status of men. It can also be seen as the demand for equality for women made on religious or ethical grounds: this feminism wants to compete more fairly with men and is expressed in the struggle for equal rights. Feminism in the first sense is utopian i.e it exists in the realm of stories and visions, not as a political movement. Feminism in the second sense is more sedate. It is possible to trace two phases: the emergence of the religious and moral ideal of the individual worth an dignity of women, and the movement for specific reforms, legal, educational, the vote etc.(Wandor,1978,14).

The ideas and issues explored in almost all of the new feminist writings fall into two major concerns. The first is an analysis of the biological differences between men and women. They argue that there are no inherent emotional, intellectual or psychological differences between men and women. All differences, they hold, are a reflection of socially imposed values. The second concern deals with the social values which distinguish male from female on the basis of psychological made from female on the basis of psychological made from female on the basis of psychological characteristics and social roles as a system of sex-role stereotyping. In addition feminism also analyses the kinds of resistance the women's movement the encountered. Feminism thus handles issues like sex-role stereotyping women's self-image, women's public image, social role and functions of women-hood, the sexual revolution and the politics of patriarchal language. Feminist thought has centred around four crucial issues which impinge on women's life-(a) Women's role in production, (b) Women's role in reproduction, (c) the role of socialization in a male-dominated social culture and (d) sexuality. Analysis of the family has also been the pivot of the feminist analysis of women's oppression. Another new feature of modern feminism is its analysis of ideology. Rosalind delemar has pointed out that the importance of the process of foremation of the individual him being has drawn the attention of the women's movement to freud (Wendor, 1978,116-120). In case of American feminists this has led to a critic of "Male chauvinism": the ideology of male domination. Another feature of current feminism is its exploration of the possibility of using personal experience as a raw material for a re-analysis of women's condition. It was put into practice in what are usually called "consciousness-raising" groups. Delmar further notes that the "Sexism" fundamentally involves is the complex unity of the four distinct levels of women's oppression-biology, the unconscious / the economy and ideology. Modern feminism insists, as did historic feminism, on the need for separate

women's movement in order to combat women's specific oppression. The demand that maternity be an option rather than a social duty for women was a part of the free love debate which accompanied the early feminist movement. Today, the right to free contraception and abortion is a common agenda of women's movement all over the world. What was denounced fifty years ago as a 'bourgeois demand' has at present been shown to have a genuine mass appeal.

Contemporary feminism has taken action-oriented interest in areas like media, reproduction, childcare, education and career opportunities. It denounces the image of woman portrayed by the mass media. The right to abortion has formed one of its principle planks. The demands for better childcare facilities and reorganization of the traditional division of labour in this area are common to all feminist groups. An equal access to all educational and professional avenues also appears as a common theme.

Delemer's description of what is feminism will be acceptable to almost all schools of feminism in spite of their ideological differences. She states that feminism is the political movement of women produced by the contradiction between men and women. It is women's response to their own oppression. The real power and privilege which men have over women produces the political movement of feminism. (Wandor, 1978, 116-120. According to Hole & Levine, feminist analysis begins with the assumption of the absolute equality of men and women notwithstanding biological differences. This analysis holds that the socially unequal position of women throughout history is not the result of biology, but rather the result of the value society has placed at any given time on the biological difference between the sexes. (Hole and Levine, 1975, 171-172).

Problem of classification

As Delmer has pointed out, feminism has historically been heterogeneous. Different analyses, different tactics, different strategies have been put into practice and debated. As yet there is not even minimal agreement about the precise nomenclature and meanings of the terms like 'feminism', 'liberal feminism', 'radical feminism', 'Feminist radicalism', 'Socialist feminism', and 'Marxist feminism' either among the feminist writer themselves or among the academicians who have specialized themselves in feminist studies. Most often than not the levels and classifications are arbitrary in nature. The leveling and classification is either polemical in nature or amorphous and ambivalent in character. Howsoever, we are

presenting three typical classifications to secure a broad understanding of the various ideological trends in the women's movement.

Rosalind Delmer's Classification:

Delmer, a member of the London women's Liberation workshop, has divided the feminist movement as follows. According to Delmer, the Anglo-American movement produced what can be called "Liberal feminism". It was a feminism which tried to manipulate the possibilities of the political system of the ruling class in order to gain new right for women and to ameliorate women's conditions. Betty Friedan's "National organization of women" is a model example. There were two main strands in liberal feminism. One was 'equal rights feminism' which understood the women's movement as essentially a struggle for (a) the recognition of equality of opportunity with men and (b) for equal rights irrespective of sex. The problem was one of a discrimination backed up by the weight of habit and customs which legal equality could overcome. The second was 'Social- feminism'. The social feminists dedicated themselves to educational reform, philanthropic activity like the temperance movement, and religious work. They established nursing and teaching as female professions, and believed the women had unique qualities usually connected to their maternal vocation, which if socially mobilized would make the world a better place to live in. (Wandor, 1978, 117).

Alison Jagger's classification

Alison Jagger has presented the following classification in a revised version of a paper titled "Four views of women's Liberation" read at the American Philosophical Association meeting, Western Division. She argues that the feminists divisions are not basically about differences in strategies or tactics. The differences arise due to fundamentally different political philosophies or ideologies which govern the women's movement. (Bishop and Weinziveig, 1979).

(A) Conservative View: It is the view that the differential treatment of women as a group is not unjust. They do not see women's suffering as a part of the systematic social oppression of women. Conservatives either claim that the female role is not inferior to that of the male or the argue that women are inherently better adapted than men to the traditional female sex role. The former use such phases as "complementary but equal": the letter postulates an inherent inequality between the sexes. Some modern feminists have revived the latter claim.

All conservatives claim that men and women should fulfil different social functions, that these differences should be enforced by law. Thus all sexual conservatives presuppose that men and women are inherently unequal in abilities and that the differences in ability implies a difference in social function. Thus, they argue, social differentiation between the sexes is not unjust, since justice not only allows but requires us to treat unequally.

(B) Liberal Feminism: This refers to that tradition which received its classical expression in J.S. Mill's the Subjection of Women and which is alive today in various 'moderate' groups, such as the National Organization for Women, which agitate for legal reform to improve the status of women. The main thrust of the liberal feminist's argument is that an individual woman should be able to determine her social role with as great freedom as does a man. The liberal views Women's liberation as the elimination of constraints and achievement of equal rights. Underlying the liberal argument is the belief that justice requires that the criteria for allocating individuals to perform a particular social function should be grounded in individual's ability to perform the tasks in question. Race, sex, religion, national origin or ancestry will normally not be directly relevant to most tasks. An individual should not be penalized for deficiencies that her sex as a whole might possess. The liberal feminist interpret equality to mean that each individual, regardless of sex, should have an equal opportunity to seek whatever social position she or he wishes. Freedom is primarily the absence of legal constraints to hinder women in this enterprise. Modern liberal feminists differs from the traditional one in believing not only that laws should not discriminate against women but they should be used to make discrimination illegal. The liberal argues that if women are to participate in the world outside the home on equal terms with men, not only must our reproductive capacity come under our own control but, if we have children, we must be able to share the responsibility for raising them. The liberal views liberation for women as the freedom to determine their own social role and to compete with men on terms that are as equal as possible. The liberal does not believe that it is necessary to change the whole existing social structure in order to achieve women's liberation. Nor does liberal feminists see it as being achieved simultaneously for the women, she believes that individual women may liberate themselves long before their condition is attained by all. The liberal claims that her concept of women's liberation also involves liberation for men since men are not only removed from a privileged position but they are also freed from having to accept the entire responsibility for such things as the support of their families and the defence of their country.

(c) Classical Marxist Feminist: According to the Classical Marxist View, the oppression of women is, historically and currently, a direct result of the institution of private property, therefore, it can only be ended by the abolition of that institution. Consequently, feminism must be seen as part of a broader struggle to achieve a communist society. Feminism is one reason for communism. The long term interests of women are those of the working class. Marxists also recognise that women suffer special forms of oppression to which men are not subject and hence, in so far as this oppression is rooted in capitalism, women have additional reasons for the overthrow of the economic system. For Marxists, an analysis of the family brings out the inseparability of class society from male supremacy.

From the very beginning of surplus productions, "the sole exclusive aims of monogamous marriage were to make the man supreme in the family, and to propagate, as the future heirs to his wealth, children indisputably his own." (Engles, 1942, 57-58). Such marriage is "founded on the open or concealed domestic slavery of the wife". (Engles, 1942, 65) and is characterised by the familiar double standard which requires sexual fidelity from the women but not from the man. The advent of capitalism intensified the degradation of women and that the continuation of capitalism requires the perpetuation of this degradation. Capitalism and male supremacy each reinforce the other. Sexism helps capitalism to secure cheap female labour. It keeps down the wages. It increases the demand for the consumer goods on which women are conditioned to depend. It makes it possible for capitalism not to pay for domestic labour. Thus the liberation of women require women's free and equal participation in public industry. The state, therefore, will have to undertake the responsibility of child-care. Thus the economic and service functions performed by the family will have to be brought within the sphere of state activity. In this context Marxists insist that they do not demand the abolition of the monogamous family but only its abolition as the economic unit of society. It is clear, therefore, that classical Marxist feminism is based on very different philosophical presumptions from those of liberal feminism. Freedom is viewed not just as the absence of discrimination against women but rather as freedom from the coercion of economic necessity. Similarly, equality demands not more equality of opportunity to compete against other individuals but rather approximate equality in the satisfaction of material needs. The classical marxist feminist denies the possibility, envisaged by the liberal, of liberation for a few women on an individual level. However they do agree with the liberals that women's liberation bring liberation for men too.

(d) Radical Feminism: This is a recent attempt to create a new conceptual model for understanding the many different forms of the social phenomenon of oppression in terms of the basic concept of sexual oppression. It is formulated by such concept of sexual oppression. It is formulated by such writers as Tigrace Atkinson, Shulemith Firestone, & Germaine Greer. The radical feminist claims that the roots of women's oppression are biological. They believe that because of child bearing women became dependent on men for physical survival. They argue that the origin of family primarily has a biological base rather than a social or economic one. The physical subjection of women by men is the most basic form of oppression. It provides the model for understanding all other types of oppression such as race or class oppression. Women's liberation, therefore, requires a biological revolution. The development of techniques of artificial reproduction make it possible for women to be liberated

From the basic inequality of the bearing and raising children. It will snap the link between sex and reproduction. Thus it will abolish the family and, therefore, the prototype of the social role system. The end of biological family will and the sexual repression of all kinds. The very institution of sexual intercourse, where a male and female each play an ascriptive role, will disappear. Radical feminists insist that sexuality is not naturally genital and heterosexual. They finally argue that emancipation of women from child-bearing and child-rearing roles will also mean emancipation of men from their artificial roles of provider, protector. More importantly, children too will be freed from their "infantile" role. To sum up, they argue for a 'polymorphous' sexuality. Lesbian separation represents one of the extreme off shoots of radical feminist position.

E) Socialist feminism: The socialist feminists went to construct a theory that avoids the weaknesses of classical marxism and radical feminism while incorporating their insights. They, therefore demand that it is both necessary to develop a militant feminist consciousness and to secure equality by transforming the economic base. Thus they want to consider woman-problem in a holistic manner. They demand that all the four basic dimensions of women's life namely production, reproduction, sexuality, and the socialization of the young must be considered together. They want more effective participation of women in public production but they also insist that women's domestic labour is also a productive labour. The socialist feminists do want to wage a war against capitalism, but they also want to pursue the slogan and the programme that "The personal is political". Thus they recognize the importance of both subjective and objective factors in emancipating women.

Jagger makes it once again clear that women's movement is divided not so much by programmatic differences as ideological presuppositions. (Bishop & Weinzieg, 1979, 258-268).

Gavle Grahemn Yate's classifications:

Yates in a study devoted to the ideas of American women's movement points out that the movement was so large that factions were inevitable. She is of the opinion that underneath the variant rhetoric their argument is at the core the same. All of them challenged the identity which society has assigned to women. Yates has pointed out that in popular usage the terms "women's Liberation", "Feminism", and "New feminism" are used as virtually synonymous. But in her classification she wants to designate these terms in a more precise and definitive manner.

According to Yates, underlying the consensus on the general goals of the new feminism are at least three informing ideologies. She calls them (1) the feminist ideology, (2) the women's liberationists ideology and (3) the androgenous paradigm.

In Yate's opinion the feminist paradigm evolved from the central quest of the historical feminist movement. It wants to extend the values, rights, privileges and opportunities that men had established as good and secured long before. It follows liberal values. Yates notes that the feminist ideology has a masculine-equalitarian or women-equal-to-men orientation. She points out that typical of this group are Betty Friedan (*The feminine mystique*) (Friedan, 1979); Helen Gurley Brown (*Sex and the single girls*) (Brown, 1962); the magazine *Cosmopolitan* and the big association NOW.

According to Yates, the women's liberationist paradigm is pro-women anti masculinist model. It argues that the values for women's freedom should be arrived at by women. It adopts a women-over-against-men or women separate from men stance. It asserts that women should separate from men either permanently or temporarily. It is keen to establish female identity and to support each other psychically as women. Yates argues that the women's liberationist concept is the old masculinist concept turned upside down. Women like Kate Millett (*Sexual Politics*) (Willett, 1980) and Ti-Grace Atkinson; and groups like the New York Feminists and cell 16 in the Boston area are typical of them.

In Yate's opinion, the third ideological perspective represents the androgynous paradigm. It takes the position that values should be arrived at, decisions made, and society ordered on

the basis of women and men together. It holds that task, values, and behaviour shared by them both except for behaviour traditionally assigned to one sex or the other should be shared by them both except for behaviour dictated by purely physiological differences. Yates points out that this trend has no single organizational base. Yates includes women like Elinor Janeway (men's world, women's place) (Janeway, 1977) Alice Rossi ("Equality between the sexes: An immodest proposal") (Deedalus, 1964, 608), Carolyn Feilbrun (Toward's Recognition of Androgyny) Heilbrun (Toward a Recognition of Androgyny) (Heilbrun, 1973), and Germaine Greer (The female Eunuch) (Greer, 1976)

Yates has shown the contrast among the three paradigms in a schematic manner in the following table *

Comparison of the Ideologies of the women's Movement

Characteristic	Feminist ideology	Women's liberationist Ideology	Androgynous ideology
Ordering principle	Women-equal-to-men	Women-over-against-men-or separate-from-men	Women-and-men-equal-to-each-other
Source of standard	Established by men, adopted by women	Arrived at by women	Arrived at by men and women together
Analysis of problem	Women subordinate or secondary to men	Women as sex objects, property, laborers	Loss of legitimacy of traditional male/female roles
Identification of enemy	Socioeconomic attitudes and institutions	Men, other women, capitalism, the family	Cultural value orientations, institutional structures
Techniques for change	Court cases, electoral process, information dissemination, voluntary groups	Consciousness-raising, separation from men for female psychic support, awareness and exercise of woman power.	Educational process, voluntary groups, information dissemination.
Primary focus for change	Political	Social	Cultural

Strategy	Pressure	Conflict	Conversion
Goals	Integration (Collapse of diversity into unity)	Segregation (diversity at expense of unity)	Pluralism (diversity within unity)

Literature on contemporary women's movement bounds with all kinds of rough-and-ready classifications. The point is that they are highly subjective in nature depending upon the author's immediate polemical preoccupation. Even Comparatively more objective, "academic" women historians of contemporary women's movement like Yates, Hole and Levin or Mary O'Brien or non-feminist male academicians like John Charvet has readily conceded that their classifications are more in terms of guidelines than precise and clear-cut differentiation. The fact is that in spite of their vehemance, the contemporary feminist though is often overlapping. It tends to be often eclectic and in some cases even amorphous. These classification, therefore, help us to situate the writings of the women authors under our study in a thumb-of-the -rule manner and nothing more.

Great Britain

There are many similarities between feminism in each country. One can see virtually simultaneous historical developments. They include the advent of the suffrage movement the birth control movement and the renaissance of feminism in the 1960s. As two of our women authors namely Juliet Mitchell and Sheila Rowbotham belong to Britain, a brief background of women's movement in British in the recent period is necessary. It should be noted at the outset that the British women's movement in the 1970s never achieved the size, publicity and impact as the contemporary American women's movement . It never became a mass movement or a political force as the American moment did. The British movement remained essentially a small group activity. Rowbotham has pointed out that as late as June 1969, there was no women's liberation movement worth speaking in Britain. There were some echoes of the anti-Vietnam war and the Civil Rights moment in the U.S.A in Britain before 1968. Juliet Mitchell's longish article "Women: The longest Revolution" appeared in the New Left Review in 1966. She also taught a course "The Role of women in society", as a part of students protect movement. (Datar,n.d.,30-31). But there was not follow up.

As Rowbotham points out in the autumn of 1968, "veague rumours of the women's movement in America and Germany reached Britain." (Wandor, 1978, 91). The British women's movement differed from the American movement in the sense that originally it was more oriented towards working class women..(Quick, 1973, 131). It was not that nothing was happening on the English feminist scene. A small group of Trotskyist women has come together earlier calling themselves the Nottingham Group. After Juliet Mitchell's article appeared in the New left Review they held a point meeting with NLR. But the real impetus for women's movement came from women's trade union activity. A women's right group formed in Hull in the Spring of 1968 led by Lil Bilocca and fishermen's wives to improve the safety of trawler after two ships had been lost in bad weather in January 1968. Bilocce's campaign had connections with the left middle class women in Hull. So they came together and formed an Equal Rights Group in Hull. It then organized a meeting for all the sixth-formers in the town on women's liberation. (Wandor, 1978, 91-92). In 1968 the sewing machinists of Dagenham led by Rose Boland brought the Ford factory to a halt. This strike made a demand for equal pay. It lasted for three weeks and received great publicity. The papers called it the 'Petticoat Strike'. Out of the Ford strike came a Trade union organizations for women's equal pay and equal rights called the National Joint Action Committee for Women's Equal Rights (NJACWER). The Ford strike also helped to make the question of women's specific oppression easier to be discussed in the left movement. A revolutionary paper called Black Dwarf brought out a special issue on women. Shortly afterwards, the women of Essex university arranged a discussion on women's liberation. It led to established of a series of women's groups in Essex, London and other places. But the real stimulus was provided by demonstration organized by NJACWER for equal pay in May 1969. It led to some important developments. The Nottingham group, the above -mentioned. Trotskyist group began to participate in the women's movement Before that they were terrified of being called feminist. Soon a journal with a broad Marxist perspective called Socialist Woman appeared on the scene.

In the mean time another women's group had come up in London. Women in this group were mainly American and felt very isolated both as housewives and foreigners. Some of them had been active in Camden Vietnam Solidarity campaign. They started to meet in Tunnel Park. (Wandor, 1978, 92-93). As a result of various women's groups, the first women news-letter came out in May 1969. The next issue representing Midge Mckenzie's feminist was called

Harpies Bizarre. Another group at Bristol brought out a sheet called Enough is enough. The third news-letter was called Shrew (Greer, 1976,353-354). These publications followed the principle that the editing should pass from group to group.

In Autumn 1969 some women's groups held an informal meeting at Ruskin College in Oxford to plan a big women's meet in the near future. As a result, the conference was held at Oxford during 20th February 1970 to 1st March, 1970. Rowbotham has pointed out that "It was really the Oxford conference in February 1970 that movement could be said to exist". (Wandor, 1978,96-97). From February 1970 to 1975, Britain experienced some demonstrations and national campaigns organized by women. They represented all ideological tendencies like orthodox communists, Maoists, Trotskyists, Syndicalists, Seventh Day Adventists, nuns, Anarchists, Labour Party Members etc. The most active women's group in British Women's movement, The London workshop, reflected the disparate influences under one organizational umbrella.

Rowbotham, the most active, important and well known of the British feminist, has drawn the following conclusion about the British Women's movement in comparison with the American Women's movement. She states "In contrast to America, where the movement in some places became very inward-turning because of exhaustive consciousness-raising, in England we rather over-reacted against this and have never built up the independent strength they achieved. We have not solved the problem of translating the personal solidarity of the small group into external action either." (Wandor, 1978,97). She adds that although the movement was nationally committed to four demands (equal pay, improved education, 24-hours nurseries, free contraception and abortion on demand), action for these, apart from the demonstration of March 1971, had been very localized and groups had taken up issues as they came up. Rowbotham notes that British women's movement was not clear about what was distinct about the ideas in women's liberation. It failed to develop any explicit theory. Rowbotham further points out that on the other hand all the revolutionary left organizations had had an awkward relationship to women's liberation. The personal and emotional emphasis inherent in the women's movement and its middle-class membership probably put them off. Rowbotham concludes by noting that it was easier in America for women's liberation to relate and develop in practical activities with other movements. In Britain the student movement was collapsing as women's liberation started, and the Vietnam Solidarity campaign was already dead. The structure of British women's movement remained such that

it prevented the rise of a women's movement as a mass movement as in the U.S.A – howsoever for a short period.(Wandor, 1978, 98-100).

THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND WOMEN

The relationship between social theory and women's situation has emerged as an important theme in contemporary feminist analysis. Almost all major feminist writers irrespective of their ideological position within the feminist movement have devoted much time and space in exposing (what they have termed as) male bias in conventional social theory. In order to make sense of the relevant arguments made by the feminist writers under our consideration we provide in this section a terse outline of some of the social science approaches during the last 150 years having a bearing on contemporary feminist statements. Given the large amount of material which is relevant in this context, we have adopted a highly schematic & selective ordering of material mostly for illustrative purposes. Thus in the first sub-section (a) Victorian Social Anthropology and Women. We take note of the relationship between 19th century social anthropology and women. In (b) we have offered a brief outline of Marxism understanding of women's problem. Under (c) we have offered an outline - rather a sketch - of the relevant theories developed by Freud, Reich, Marcuse, Laing, Lacan and Althusser. It must be emphasized that the aim of this section is not to offer either detailed or critical account of the thinkers or the theories but to provide some theoretical information which will serve as a back drop to contemporary feminist thought.

(a) Victorian Social Anthropology and Women

As Klein notes, the reasons for the character, abilities and social functions of women become a problem of scientific investigation during the 19th century were essentially of two kinds. The first was the Industrial Revolution, which affected the life of the family and altered the position of women. Secondly, science made such progress in the course of the 19th century that it not only widened its field of competence enormously but also began to colour the general outlook and to create an universal willingness to submit to scientific scrutiny of all problems that may arise. (Klein, 1946, 6).

Fee's well known article on "The Sexual Politics of Victorian Social Anthropology" (Chant and Fauvel, 1980, 195-213) discusses the relationship between the Victorian Social

Anthropology and women in following terms. Until about 1860, marriage, the family, and sexual roles were assumed to belong to the natural condition of man, institutions beyond and above any mere geographical or historical accident. Between 1860 and 1890, however, social anthropology demonstrated that the idealized family of the Victorian middle class was dictated by no law of nature and that monogamous marriage was only one of various human sexual possibilities and women were not necessarily born only for domestic and decorative function. Yet the scholarly work of the anthropologists also supported the conventional vision of perfection in family life; it was not, perhaps a natural institution, but it was the result of a long and painful evolutionary struggle away from nature. Current social arrangements should be seen as the final culmination, the glorious end product of man's whole social, sexual, and moral evolution from savagery to civilization. Other forms of marriage and the family were still surviving remnants of worn-out cultural patterns that had long been superseded. By thus presenting 'civilized' marriage as the end-point of social evolution, these men provided a solid, historical, evolutionary justification for the role of women in their own culture. Fee has considered in depth the work of Henry Maine, Johann J. Bachofen, John McLennan, John Lubbock, Lewis Henry Morgan and Herbert Spencer.

It should be noted that in the 1860s the feminist challenge raised severe questions about the nature of "Natural family" itself. The elemental source of paternal authority in the tradition was questioned. The rise of individualism and liberalism also brought patriarchalism as a theory of political authority in doubt. It is in this broad context a generation of social anthropologists turned to a consideration of this fascinating intellectual and political problem. Social Anthropology turned to the study of the role of women in the history of mankind. From a brilliant reconstruction of ancient histories and legal codes, Henry Maine built a case for the foundation of all known societies from the same patriarchal basis. But most of the anthropological community worried about several methodological inadequacies of Maine's work. It became apparent that sexual control was not natural to men and thus patriarchalism was not an immutable fact of nature. Bachofen opened up new line of analysis in the face of these difficulties. He saw the continuing struggle between male and female as the central theme in social evolution. Women to Bachofen represented materialism, and men spirituality. The balance of power between the sexes defined the main stages of history. Bachofen's theory dovetailed well the Victorian identification of sexuality with animality. Yet his alien methodology and rather flawed use of mythology called for a more sophisticated reconstruction of his model. In Fee's opinion his successors carried out this task. Their work

met the social and intellectual needs of their middle class audience and proved that women was a passive being but with better methodology than Bachofen's Jone McLennan, avoided Bachofen's absurdities. He incorporated Maine's and Bachofen's patriarchal family as the last of a succession of historical forms. Yet he excused Bachofen's Amazons and matriarchs. Giving up the notion of matriarchal power McLennan introduced a new factor into his social history; an economic motive. Transition from matrilineal to patrilineal succession must have been aided, according to McLennan, by the growth of private property. John Lubbock added further refinements to McLennan's theory. He elaborated on the connection between the monogamous family and private property. Lubbock emphasized the emerging theme that the system whereby males ruled their families was better than natural ("primitive" or "savage") it was "civilized". Fee concludes that "In view of the fact that the association of monogamous marriage and male descent with the transmission of property is usually attributed to Angels, it is interesting to see how widely this ideal was held by the most conservative anthropologists. None of them consider the possibility that property might have been held by women, although instances of female ownership are often cited (With surprise) in the anthropological monographs". (Chant & Fauvel, 1980, 205).

Louis Henry Morgan is best known as the immediate authority for Engels' 'Origin of the family, Private property and the State'. Morgan was sympathetic to the demands for emancipation of women. He did not resist with usual decision to Bachofen's postulate of matriarchy in the past. As far as Morgan was concerned, the transition to patrilineality had a very unfavourable influence on women (Engels thus could derive from Morgan the world historic defeat of the female sex) Morgan emphasized the crucial importance of private property in the transition from mother right to father right. Through this concern with the inheritance of private property, men came to the realization of the advantages of monogamy. Unlike other anthropologists, who considered the Victorian family as the final culmination of evolution, Morgan left his evolutionary scheme open-ended. In future the family would move toward more perfect monogamy to greater sexual equality. Herbert Spencer held no such hopes or expectations. He in fact provided a dynamic version of patriarchal theory with new support based on the theory of natural selection. According to him, civilization rested on the control of sexuality. The monogamous family represented the highest form of social evolution. It curbed "the natural passions" of women and made them the "angels of the homes." Thus in Spencer's theory patriarchalism now inevitably linked with progress of

civilization.

Fee argues in her article that the 19th century anthropology harnessed the whole series of concept to explicate the patriarchal society. Male superiority was sanctified not by nature but by civilization. She considers the 19th century anthropology about the family "a massive exercise in circular reasoning." She admits that the scholarly apparatus used by it was impressive and the technical nature of the many of the discussions of a high order. Her real grievance is against the projections made by these anthropologist of their own culture and its norms by which all others had to be compared. "Primitive promiscuity" was more a projection than fact. She concludes, "In their speculations about primitive man, Victorians Projected fantasies of his enormous physical and sexual power the untamed brute often seemed fashioned out of their own repressed psychics.

Primitive woman emerged as an odd mixture of blushing bride and lascivious where, since she was both 'Primitive' (Sexual and 'women' (pure and innocent)... In doing so, cultural anthropologist utilized the prevailing worship of progress and brilliantly confirmed their own social order by constructing an appropriate past." (Chant & Fauvel, 1980,212).

(b) The Marxian Tradition and women:

Marxism existed as a separate theoretical tradition along with the dominant liberal tradition from the midst of the 19th century upto 1920. The place of feminism in Marxist thought has emerged as a subject of controversy in the post-1960 women's movement. Some understanding of the position taken by the founders of Marxism will therefore be helpful. There is a general agreement among the concerned scholars that it is not Marx but Engels who has provided greater attention to issues which attracts the attention of present-day feminism.

In the Economic and philosophics manuscripts written by Marx in 1844, Marx considered a theme generally discussed in utopian socialist writing on women but expressed in a well-known form by Fourier. Marx states "The immediate, natural and necessary relation of human being to human being is also the relation of man to women... From this relationship man's whole level of development can be assessed. It follows from the character of this relationship how far men has become and has understood himself as a species being, a human being. ... it also shows how far men's needs and consequently how far the other person, as a person, has become one of his needs, to what extent he is his individual existence (and) at the same time a social being." (Bottomore et.al.1983, 154) Marx and Engles developed this

position in The German Ideology written in 1845-46. Discussing the three aspects of social activity which are crucial to human existence and history, they stated "The third circumstance which from the very outset, enters into historical development, is that men, who daily re-create their own life, begin to make other men; to propagate their kind: the relation between man and woman, parents and children, the family." (Marx/Engles, 1976, 47-49). They further noted that "the family" which to begin with is the only social relation, becomes later when increased needs create new social relations and the increased population now needs, a subordinate one ... (it) must then be treated and analyzed according to the existing analytical date..." (Marx/Engles, 1976, 47-49). They however made some interesting statements about women and the division of labour in the sexual act. They explained that the division of labour which in its turn is based on the natural division of labour in the family and the separation of society into individual families opposed to one another simultaneously implies the distribution of the labour and its products, hence property. As we know they have taken division of labour and private property as identical expressions. Thus, Marx and Engels suggested that at least in the early stage of human history the family structured the division of labour in society.

Marx argued in his latter work that the progressive development of private property led to the progressive subordination of the social relation of family. Marx and Engels believed that by removing the economic dependence of women upon man under private property, a new, truly human relationship would be possible under communism. Engels repeated this ideal very clearly in this Principles of communism the draft for the Communist Manifesto written in 1847: "Community of women is a condition which belongs entirely to a bourgeoisie society and which today finds its complete expression in prostitution. But prostitution is based on private property and falls with it. Thus communist society instead of introducing community of women, in fact abolishes it." (Quoted by Rowbotham, Rowbotham, 1972, 64).

In Capital Marx takes up the theme of the dissolution of the family in connection with the effects of machinery on human condition. He connects the decay of the family to the development of the factory system and the physical separation of home and work inherent in the modern system of production. The family ceases to be a unit of production and becomes increasingly a unit of consumption.. He argued that "Modern industry, in overturning the economical foundation on which was based the traditional family and the family labour

corresponding to it, had also loosened all traditional family ties." ((Quoted by Rowbotham, Rowbotham, 1972,73).

According to Marx the very existence of capital requires the commodity called labour-power. Now the process of reproduction of labour -power has been carried out historically in the institution of the family . The family reconverts the mean of subsistence into fresh labour. That is way Marx declares in Volume on the Capital that "The value of labour -power was determined not only by the labour time necessary to maintain the individual adult laborer, but also by that necessary to maintain his family." (Quoted by Foremen, Foremen, 1978,118).

In spite of Marx's occasional yet insightful comments on the family, Marxist analysis of the family, is still dominated by Engles's The origin of the Family, the private property and the state. His account is heavily based on Morgan's anthropology . He follows Morgan in tracing the Pre-historic evolution of mankind. "Monogamy", according to Engels, "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....Monogamy does not by any means make its appearance in history as the reconciliation of man and women still less as the highest form of such reconciliation. On the contrary it appears as the subjection of one sex by the other, as the proclamation of the conflict between the sexes entirely unknown hitherto in prehistoric times." Engel's then makes an important theoretical statement. He notes. " In and old published manuscript the work of Marx and myself in 1846, I find the following 'The first division of labour is that between man and women for child-bearing.' 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 monogamian marriage, and the first class oppression with that of the female sex by the male . Monogamy was a great historical advance, but at the same time it inaugurated, along with slavery and private wealth, the epoch, lasting until today, in which every advance is likewise a relative regression in which the well-being and development of one group are attained by the misery and repression of the other,. It is the Cellular form of civiced society in which It can already study the nature of antogaonism and condractions which develop fully in the latter." (Marxs/Engles, 1977,494-495).

Engels's account of the evolution of the family began with the overthrow of mother right in the pairing family and ended up with the present stage of history. He considered the overthrow of monter-right in the pairing family as a revolution as "one of the most decisive

ever experienced by mankind." He argued that "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". (Marx/Engels, 1977, 485-488). At the other end, Engels argued that the bourgeois family rested on the material foundation of inequality between a husband and a wife. The wife produces legitimate heirs for the transmission of property in return for board and lodging. Engels described this relation as a form of prostitution. He contrasted mercenary bourgeois marriage with the "true sex love" allowed to flourish in a proletariat marriage where husband and wife attained an equality of exploitation through wage labour. Absence of all property, the lack of means-the legal means - to protect male-domination, and the transfer of women's labour power to factory remove all foundations of male-dominance in the proletarian family. Engels argued that the social revolution which would bring about socialism would produce a society where monogamy, instead of declining would finally become a reality for the man as well. In other words, the family in the future would be strictly based on love, equality and complete reciprocity.

We must note Engels's position on the impact of industrialization on women. He argued that the emancipation of women & their equality with men would be impossible so long as women are excluded from socially productive work and are restricted to house work which is private. Marx and Engels stated: "The emancipation of women becomes possible only when women are enabled to take part in production on a large, social scale, and when domestic duties require their attention only to a minor degree. And this has become possible only as a result of modern large-scale industry, which not only permits of the participation of women in production in large numbers, but actually calls for it and moreover, strives to convert private domestic work into a public industry." (Marx/ Engels, 1977, 569-570).

It should be noted that Engels was aware of the present-day relation of women to modern industry. It is now governed by the laws of capitalist production. Industry opened the avenue of social production to women but only of the proletarian class. Thus modern industry absorbs, the women in social production"... in such a way that when she fulfils her duties in the private service of her family, she remains excluded for the public production and cannot earn anything; and when she wishes to take part in public industry and earn her living independently, she is not in a position to fulfil her family duties". Engels is careful to add that "what applies to the woman in the factory applies to her in all the professions, right upto medicine and law. The modern individual family is based on the open or disguised domestic

enslavement of the women; and modern society is a mass composed solely of individual families as its molecules. Today, in the great majority of cases, the man has to be the earner, the bread-winner of the family, at least among the propertied classes, and this gives him a dominating position which requires no special legal privileges. In the family, he is the bourgeois; the wife represents the proletariat." (Marx/Engels, 1977, 501)

Engels then spells out the necessity and the manner of establishing real social equality between the man and the woman. According to him, the peculiar character of man's when both are completely equal before the law. So domination over women in the modern family will be brought about into full relief only his logic leads Engels to say that "It will then become evident that the first premise for the emancipation of women is the reintroduction of the entire female sex into public industry; and this again demands that the quality possessed by the individual family of being the economic unit of society be abolished." (Marx/Engels, 1977, 501). In the future all the characteristics stamped on monogamy in consequence of its having arisen out of property relationships will most definitely disappear.

"The predominance of man in marriage is simply consequence of his economic predominance and will vanish with it automatically." (Marx/Engels 1977, 508).

In The Origins Engels has thus applied Marx's analysis of capitalism to the theories developed by Morgan and others. Following Marx's analysis of the transition from production for use to production of commodities for exchange, Engels is able to explain the transformation of communal family relations and gender equality to monogamous families as economic units and women's subordination.

Lenin carried forward Marx' and Engel's line of analysis in tackling questions concerning the emancipation of working women in general and peasant women in particular. He argued that large-scale industry tends to emancipate women and broadens their outlook. He thus stressed the need to enable all the women to work for the benefit of society. Yet he was quite clear that socialism alone would bring true emancipation for women. As Clara Zetkin - has pointed out Lenin's position was that "Nowadays all the thoughts of communist women of working women should be centred on the proletarian revolution, which will lay the foundation, among other things, for the necessary revision of material and sexual relations." (Lenin, 1971, 103). Lenin also believed that. "Communism should not bring ascetism, but joy and strength, stemming, among other things, from a consummate love life. Whereas today, in my opinion, the obtaining plethora of sex life yields neither joy nor strength. On the contrary it impairs them." (Lenin, 1977, 107).

Theory of sexuality. These essays developed the notion of infant sexuality. These three essays were important in establishing that a) heterosexual genital intercourse is not the product directly of instincts, but has to be learned, or achieved, by human beings; b) children enjoy erotic pleasures from birth; c) organs other than the penis and vagina can and do provide erotic gratification to both children and adults; and d) human beings seem to be predisposed to bisexuality but may learn to regard one or the other or both, sexes with disgust. (Bocook, 1981, 11). A succession of books followed. They offered now concepts like sublimation, compensation, drive and the later versions of the instinct theory. He was trying to connect guilt, the super-ego and civilization. In July 1925, Freud published a highly significant essay entitled "Some Psychological Consequences of the Anatomical Distinction between Sexes". This essay marks the first published turning point in his thinking about the psychology of women. He discarded the equilateral theory of parallel development of girls and boys and began to probe the meaning of female sexuality. The essay contained seeds of Freud's latter thought on the subject. Freud dealt at length with the question of female sexuality into two equally celebrated essays on the problem namely "Female Sexuality" published in 1931 and "Femininity" in 1933.

We must keep in mind certain crucial facts in arriving at a judgement about Freud's position on the problem of female sexuality and his analysis in general. Freud's work falls in line with a reaction against the dominant official morality of the Victorian era. He carried forward the rebellious tradition of thinkers like Halls, Carpenter and Hirschfeld. On the other hand it is no doubt true that at least his major work upto 1925 was male-centered. In any case, the ambiguities in his writings leave ample room for different and even contradictory interpretations and appropriations by his latter followers. The dominant post-Freudian tradition worked out by Helen Deutsch and others had projected in feminist opinion (as we will see later,) the patriarchal view of women. (For various interpretations of the history of psychoanalysis see, Brake 1982, 13-30; 11-16 and 105-107).

Janet Sayers has offered the following perspective on the interaction between Freud and feminism. She notes that Freud was certainly no great advocate of the feminist cause. She states that Freud sometimes dismissed 'emancipated' women as motivated by unresolved penis-envy. She adds that Freud also asserted that, since the incest taboo was not reinforced in girls (as it was in boys) by castration anxiety girls were therefore 'less ready to submit to the great exigencies of life'. She demonstrates that for Freud the work of civilization has become increasingly the business of men. It confronts them with ever more difficult tasks and

compels them to carry out instinctual sublimation of which women are little capable. In the end, she maintains that Freud refused, in spite of the denials of the feminists, to regard the two sexes as completely equal in position and worth.

But Sayers is equally careful to note that Freud had situated his theory of sex-differences within the Darwinian tradition. Darwin had believed that the behavioral sex-differences, which were the effect of sexual selection, did not appear in the infant. They only developed later, in Darwin's opinion, when the individual reached sexual maturity. Freud did not believe contrary to the opinion of some behavioral scientists, that boys and girls are primed by biological factors to be masculine or feminine by birth. Freud had asserted in the matter of psychology that sex differences to itself. Sayers insists that it was on the basis of this logic alone that factors to be masculine or feminine by birth. Freud believed that believed that these traits developed as a result of the way a child comes to interpret that fact of biological "Anatomy is destiny". She concludes that, if we look at Freud's actual A/c of the development of psychological sex-differences we find that he did not subscribe to a biologically determinist account of female psychology. Instead he regarded the development of the characteristically female and male personality as the effect of the way the child constrives her(or his) biology. He did not regard psychological sex differences as the mechanistic effect of biology." (Sayers, 1982, 125-129).

Before we proceed further we must state a wellknown fact. As is wellknown, Freud introduced the concept of the death instincts in his formulation of the instinct theory in his writings after the World War I. It led to a distinct conceptual development in theory and practices. All Freud's later work after 1920 assumes this dualism of sexual instincts and death instincts. In the latter death instinct theory is seen as a progressive step in psychoanalysis theory, the first twenty years of Freud's work need reinterpreting in the light of the later theory. (Bocock, 1981, 16-18).

Jones Klein and Horney:

Freud was aware that some of his fellow-psychoanalysts attempted to circumvent the phallocentrism of his account of female psychology. He had anticipated that some analysts with feminist view would disagree with what he had said about the origins of psychological sex differences in the Castration Complex. Freud's anticipations in this matter proved to be correct. Within the year of Freud's wellknown essay on "Female Sexuality" in 1931 Ernest Jones rejected Freud's account. Jones argued that a girl's femininity develops progressively

from the prompting of an instinctual constitution. Malenie Klein and Karen Horney had already argued that female and male psychology have distinct and independent biological determinants from birth. Horney for example rejected Freud's theory on the grounds of its male bias. Horney rooted femininity in women's specific biological nature. These writers thus wanted to dislodge the penis-envy from the central place in any account of female psychology.

Sayers notes that these two different traditions in psychoanalysis (Freud on the one hand and post - Freudians rejecting phallocentrism on the other) have proved to be a battleground for the contemporary feminist debate over psychoanalysis and feminism. Whereas biological essentialists seek social changes that will enable women to assert their supposedly biologically given essential femininity, other feminists point out that there is no evidence that biology has endowed women with an essentially different character from men. (Sayers, 1982, 131-132; Cf. Freud, 1979, 367 ff.)

Marxist sociologists and Freud

There was bound to be a reaction to Freud's Sociology of culture based on a death instinct. Some thinkers were perturbed by the implicit suggestion that human beings have an innate set of destructive urges. Marxists in particular wanted to avoid the implication that wars and conflicts arise out of man's innate impulses to be destructively aggressive. Thus they criticized Freud's death instinct theory for being ahistorical and apolitical. The writings of Wilhelm Reich, Erich From and Herbert Marcuse, for example, fall in this tradition. They too provide a background to the contemporary feminist debate.

Reich

Wilhelm Reich (1897-1957) had been both a Marxist and a psychoanalyst. From 1924-1930 he was the director of the Seminar for Psychoanalytic Therapy. Charles Rycroft, a psychoanalyst and a psychotherapist who is very critical of Reich, acknowledges that some of Reich's papers on problems of treatment are to this day recommended reading for students of psychoanalytical institutes. Reich claimed to have discovered not only the truth about the nature of energy and of love, but also that these truths were demonstrable by the techniques of the natural sciences. Rycroft thinks that "He (Reich) Might after all have been wrong in supposing that all truths are natural scientific yet have arrived at insights of value."

(Rycroft, 1971,14-16). Rycroft adds: "In so deceiving himself he (Reich) developed an absurdity a tendency which was also present, in Freud, who consistently converted the insights into human nature which he gained through his self analysis and from his professional association with neurotic patients into objective and impersonal sounding theories which were intended to satisfy the criteria of the natural sciences." (Rycroft, 1971, 15-16).

In any case, Reich's originality consists in linking Freud's ideas on sexuality, guilt and the authority of the father with those of social control and character. He argued in The Mass Psychology of Fascism (Reich, 1970) and in The Sexual Revolution (Reich, 1969) that a strict sexual moral code imposed on young people saps their inner resources and gives rise to guilt, worries and anxieties about their sexual feelings and behaviour. These guilt-ridden people become anxious about ever experiencing pleasure. They therefore become dependent on external authorities. Social elites control these compliant people in a totalistic manner by subjecting them to an anti-sexuality moral code. Reich thought that there was no need to posit innate death instincts. Once compulsive sex moralities were done away with by the society, aggression would disappear from social life. A necessary pre-condition for such a step is the abolition of private property. Only then the family could change and not need to control sexuality in the way it does at present. (Bocock, 1981, 25-26). In other words, Reich did not use the notion of death instincts along with the sexual instincts, but only used the idea of sexuality as biologically given. As Rycroft puts it: "The sexual revolution envisaged and proclaimed by Reich would consist therefore in the social recognition of the importance and value of 'permanent sexual relationships', existing solely for the mutual orgasmic gratification of the two partners to it, and clearly differentiated from marriage as a social and economic contract." (Rycroft, 1971, 66-67). Reich's 'synthesis' of Marxism and psychoanalysis has attracted feminists of all varieties from time to time and yet the inherent weaknesses of his analysis have left open his thought to varying and even contradictory interpretations on the part of his feminist followers.

Marcuse:

Next to Freud and Reich, Marcuse has played an important role in the formulation of contemporary feminist thought. He emerged as a prominent spokesman and the theorist of the New Left in the 1960s and early 1970s. Born in 1898, Marcuse died in 1979. A key member of the Frankfurt School Marcuse made important contribution to modern thought about

contemporary culture, authoritarianism and bureaucratism. Hegel, Marx, Freud and Heidegger provide a theoretical backdrop to all his writings.

Like Reich, Marcuse started with the libido theory. In his opinion, it possesses a revolutionary potential. However, he drew a distinction between basic repression that is the modification of the instincts necessary for the perpetuation of the human race in civilization and surplus repression, the restrictions necessitated by social domination. Similarly Marcuse introduced a sophistication in explaining Freud's reality principle, Marcuse argued that in different historical epochs the reality principle takes different historical forms. (The reality principle is concerned with the restrictive force of reality on the sexual desire.) Marcuse was of the opinion that mankind has now reached such a level of material and technological development that the very necessity of repression implicit in the reality principle could be removed. The reality principle was based primarily on the need to overcome material scarcity. The technological advance thus weakens and destroys the basis of the performance principle. This development in turn would release libido from the reality principle. The decline of genital sexuality in favour of polymorphous sexuality will abolish the present dichotomy between eros and civilization. As a result, the super-ego and the accompanying sense of guilt which had become central features of the human condition in historical societies would disappear in future. Now the institution of the family was devised to condition the strength of super-ego and thereby the senses of guilt. Since the latter two will become superficial in a society of true affluence, family will also follow a path of its progressive abolition. In Marcuse's opinion, the abolition of the performance principle would not mean reverting to the stage of pre-historic savagery. He argued that "..... the emergence of a non-repressive reality principle would alter rather than destroy the social organization of labour: the liberation of Eros could create new and durable work relation." (Marcuse, 1970, 128).

In the heady days of the radical politics of the 1960s and early 1970s, it was therefore no accident that the young people and, in particular, feminists turned to Marcuse in a big way. They came to believe that Marcuse had provided to them an analysis as identifying the strategic link between women's liberation and proletarian revolution. A more objective student of feminist politics like Ann Foreman was of course aware of the stark fact that "In attempting to reconcile the irreconcilable Marcuse found himself in an ironic situation. He had turned to psychoanalysis as a reaction against the reduction of Marxism to economic determinism. But in basing himself on a force, the libido, that acted outside of the

individual's conscious activity and replaced it as the force for social change, he put forward a form of psychological determinism. In short, Herbert Marcuse had failed to renounce the dualist heritage." (Foremen, 1978, 61).

Laing:

Contemporary feminist thought has also been influenced by the writings of R.D. Laing. Laing was born in Glasgow in 1927. As a psychoanalyst and psychiatrist, his research and therapy has focussed for some years on very disturbed types of interaction in institutions, groups, and families. Naturally he had to probe more and more deeply into the foundations of modern Post-Freudian thinking about man and society. He has questioned the thought and 'madness' and 'sanity' of our time as fundamentally as the founders of psychoanalysis and psychiatry. It was inevitable that some feminist writers would get drawn to a growing body of his influential work. At least one feminist author under our consideration namely Juliet Mitchell has paid a major attention to him. In Mitchell's opinion, the emergence of triad of femininity, sexuality and the family on the agenda of contemporary feminist analysis, led some feminist authors denouncing Freud's theories of femininity to Reich's work on sexuality and Laing's on the family. (Mitchell, 1976, xv). In her opinion, Laing became one of the chief spokesman, at least within the Anglo-saxon countries, of the preponderant 'personalism' of 1960s radicalism.

The very title of one of Laing's more recent works The politics of the family gives an indication of the direction his thought has been taking. Edger Z. Fridenberg has summed up Laing's argument as follows. In Laing's opinion human personality develops in each of us as we respond to the particular power situations in which we find ourselves; our personality comes to be largely defined by our customary ways of coping with the demands that impinge on us and with the anxiety aroused by those demands and our anticipation of possible failure or punishment. Now social institutions develop primarily in order to impose the constraints required by those who are powerful. And there is no institution of which this is truer than the family. Each of us joins his family as its weakest member. The neonate is powerless and must accept the family as he finds it. Of all its members the infant is least able to formulate and impose its will on the others, though this is doubtless more nearly self-evident to babies than to their parents, who find that the infant presents new problems and awakens old conflicts that often make them feel threatened. Still the power is actually theirs. And the most important power is the power to define reality. To Laing the way in which

experience is validated or rejected by powerful others-ordinarily parents-is the key to subsequent development of personality (Friedenberg,1975,32-33). Laing is primarily concerned to demonstrate how distinctions develop, so that they may be undone. In other words, he wants us to undo the mechanisms whereby the ego is formed and whereby the self becomes a discrete self. His whole position is based on the logic that "Generally, we are very aware of our distinctions but not nearly so aware that we make them." (Laing,1978,92).

Friedenberg is a strong admirer of Laing. But he does not fail to draw the following conclusions about the implications of Laing's philosophical position. "Whatever his personal politics may be, the thrust of Ronald Laing's work, as well as much of its substance, has been the very stuff of the counter-culture's vision. ... It is finally no paradox, but a near classic example of the relationship between yang and yin, that his prophetic insights into the political character of , first, mental illness, then of experience should have led Ronald Laing to a position from which politics itself can only be seen as absurd."(Friedenberg,1975,109).

(d) Feminism and French structuralism

Contemporary feminist thought has also utilized the work of Jacques Lacan, and Louis Althusser. These French structuralist were also concerned in general with Sociology of culture and in particular, with the relationship of ideology and culture and also the determination of sexuality organized for reproductive purpose. They tried to eradicate Hegelian ideas from the sciences, Althusser felt that Lacan has re-stated Freud in a satisfactory manner. Yet, both Lacan and Althusser believed that Freud has founded a science with a distinctive object and a distinctive method for investigating the object, the methods of the analytic therapeutic encounter.

Lacan:

Lacan has been an influential figure in French intellectual life during the 1960s. He treats Freud as the discoverer of an important new area for scientific investigation. It consists of the symbolic, not of psychological drives, or instincts. Lacan insists that our instinctual wishes and desire are unknowable except through some form of symbolism. The realm of language and culture thus becomes crucial in understanding human life.

It is the introduction of culture to children which is central to their development. If they do not find a satisfactory means of relating to language and culture they will become

problematic to themselves and others. They themselves may find that they cannot cope with life. They become those likely to be labelled mentally ill. Words do not mean to the psychotic what they mean to the other in culture.

Now child's access to the symbolic, cultural order is to begin with only through the mother. The mother does this by referring to the 'other', the father, who may be the biological father of the child, but need not be. Lacan's appeal to feminist movement is precisely based on this point. As it seems to offer a materialist theory of the subject as constructed in relation to social relations-Lacan's above position means that men enter the symbolic order, the order of language and culture, and leave the realms dominated by the imaginary with the formation of the super-ego at the resolution of the Oedipal crisis. As Coward, Lipshitz and Cowie make it clear: "The analysis proposed by Lacan deals with the construction of the female position as subject in symbolic relations where the phallus is the central term in the entry into these relations. In other words the relations are established around the possession/non-possession of the phallus. And this dialectic allows the child to find a position in which he or she can use language in a way ensuring social communication. These positions are only achieved by the organization of sexuality under the dominance of the genital, and as we have mentioned, the unconscious formation of this imposition is the Oedipus complex..... This privilege is based on the theory of the phallus as a signifier, that is, as in the linguistic sense of the word, as the material form of language distinct from the concept. He refers to it as such not because it appears in speech, but because it functions in the same way as the signifier, analysed by modern linguistics. This analysis is based on the work of Saussure, ..." (Brake, 1982, 285). These authors have spelt out the implications of the Lacanian theory for the feminist movement in following clear terms: "Thus the Lacanian position indicates that there is a structural necessity, in all societies concerned with the production of goods, which is to ensure its reproduction in having it regulated by the relations of production. This masculine power has to be maintained by keeping hidden what in woman's sexuality exceeds the organisation belonging to the social power of men, i.e. phallic power. 'Pleasure', repressed in the mother, is only allowed to appear in a certain form. That is, in its contribution towards production: Reproduction. Forms of descent that prove always in the last instance to be dependent on phallic power (organization of the law by father or brother) are a manner of subordinating procreation and unproductive expenditure of pleasure that goes with it and is inseparable from it, to the needs of the relations of production. As soon as there is a form of descent, therefore, there is paternal law, built on the genital (maternal) organization of

sexuality and ensuring the procreation of the species on the vital condition that the importance and centrality of the mother in all this remains hidden or as some kind of mystery" (Brake, 1982, 288).

Althusser:

Contemporary feminist authors were as much drawn to Althusser as Lacan in their search for new ideas and theories offering a new conception of the subject in the context of sexuality.

Althusser, a French philosopher, was a non-Hegelian Marxist. More importantly,

he represented the dominant structuralist point of view which flourished particularly in France during the 1960s and 70s. In his understanding of psychoanalysis the category of the subject is ideological. Althusser rejects the notion of subjective consciousness. He, therefore rejects the notion of the subject as the conferrer and creator of meanings in the world. In Althusser's opinion, the roots of the notion of subjective consciousness lie in Christianity in the notion of soul. It is the central notion of the ideology of capitalism as well. Althusser argues that we learn to see ourselves as subjects, but really we are not this. We are constituted by a structure which has no "centres". He follows Lacan in asserting that the unconscious is structured like language. It is a structure but not a subject "This is why", Bockock argues "Althusser want to make use of the science of psychoanalysis in developing the science of ideological formation, the culture of modern capitalism." (Bockock 1981, 33-35).

Feminist valued Althusserian conception of the relationship of ideology to the imaginary and narcissism as it apparently justified the argument that since both sexes experience a similar process of ego-construction, there is no way in which women said to be narcissistic, can be seen as fixed prior to symbolization and condemned with pity or admiration to be like primitive men or children. Althusser's approach logically means that women's negative entry into the Symbolic Order is the crucial factor in creating their narcissistic image.

A combined review of women's situation from the 17th to the 20th centuries, of women's movement from the days of French Revolution to the end of 1970s, and of the social science thought of the last one and half centuries having a bearing on the women-problem provides us with the necessary background to situate the thought of feminist writers

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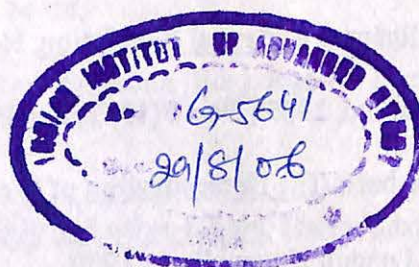
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