

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS

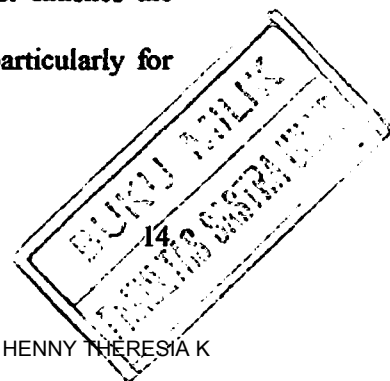
A. THE TRADITION IN BASUDHA'S LIFE

As an Indian, Basudha lives in many traditions since she was born. The writer will explain about tradition in Chaterjee's family where Basudha was born and in Sanyal's family where Basudha lives after her marriage. The explanation focus on the culture surrounds the character and the character's lifestyle in the middle of the culture.

1. CHATERJEE'S FAMILY

Basudha was born in a high caste family, in the same day when Anju, her cousin, was born. They were born in the same day when their fathers passed away, their mother were very shocked until the babies born earlier. As Indian tradition that when babies born they serve sweetmeats in the baby cradle for Bidhata Purush, the God who decides the babies' fortune. The god of faith will write down the babies' destiny in life so people also pray to keep the devil away and they believe "If the child is especially lucky, in the morning it will all be gone."

Pishi, their aunt, tells that their sweetmeats are not all disappear. She told Sudha she is not that lucky, Pishi even says "Maybe the Bidhata Purush doesn't come for girl-babies" (6). That Bidhata Purush has never come nor finishes the sweetmeats for girl babies showing appreciation for girl babies particularly for



woman that since early woman birth is lowering and cannot be pledged in family. The myth about Bidhata Purush is part of Indian tradition and also about belief that the God bless girl less than son has reflected the patriarchy that considers women as inferior since women were born.

The opinions that they are daughters who bring misfortune also represent the reflection of patriarchal society's view. Since news of their father's death come almost at the same moment of their born, in society arise belief that they are girl babies are bad luck although the fact is their mothers are so shock so that baby born premature, but myth in society creates the wrong presumption. The firm traditions dominated by the man have made the belief that woman was born to bring the bad luck as proved that women are value less than men. Even in their growth there are so much seclusion and restriction arising out according to society habit because they were born as women.

Sudha lives with three mothers and all of them educate her about how to be a woman. In some ways they teach her differently but it has one purpose to raise Sudha as a woman from high caste family. Pishi is her aunt, she always takes cares Sudha's and Anju's. Sudha feels so close with her because she loves to hear Pishi's story tale. Pishi is a widow, her husband died when she was 18 and she was sent home. Since that time she serves her brother, Anju's father, and his family. Realize it or not Pishi has influenced Sudha about her submission on fate. As a widow, there are many rules in tradition that must be obeyed by Pishi, such as "dressed in austere, her graying hair cut close to her scalp in the orthodox style.... (4)"

Unlike Nalini and Gauri Ma, Pishi is very strict to herself about what is proper or not for a widow. She lost her husband in 18 and it causes negative opinion in society that she brings bad luck for her husband. Upon divorce, women have no rights to their home or to other property accumulated during marriage; in effect, their contributions to the maintenance of the family and accumulation of family assets go unrecognized and unrewarded. Pishi obeys every traditional rule about widows' attitudes without any complain. Pishi's submission on fate as a woman more or less influences Sudha's life.

Nalini, Sudha's mother, always told her about how important a woman to become a good daughter in family and a good wife in the husband's family. She wants Sudha knows that as a daughter she has an obligation to bright her family name and one way to do it is by obeying all tradition in society about how women should act, otherwise she is considered as a daughter who destroys family name. Nalini always says, "Good daughters are bright lamps, lighting their mothers' name; wicked daughters are firebrands, scorching the family's name" (10).

Reputation in society is the most precious thing that should be kept by a woman. If she loses her good reputation means she lost her future. That is the reason why reputation, especially for high caste family, should be kept carefully, once a woman is considered bad, she will be bad forever. Reputation should be kept whatever it costs. Women are restricted to marry with men from lower caste, women better stay at home than go to school, women should not go with men except her family, and widow should not marry again. All of them are some examples of tradition that convey women.

The Indian cultures have a preference on women's innocence, especially on virginity. One of the greatest fears Indian parents have is of their daughters gaining a bad reputation. Indian families are very concerned with their daughters' relationship with male friends. They have a tendency to restrict daughter's friendship because they are afraid their daughter will be considered as a woman who has many sexual partners. Parents are well aware that female virginity demands are the most important in the marriage.

Nalini always teaches Sudha about how important for women to expert in domestic job. She told Sudha to embroider her bedsheet with words *Pati Param Guru; husband is the supreme lord* (49). Nalini's expectation to Sudha is obvious to teach her how to be a perfect wife, a way that common in tradition is to keep Sudha's reputation so the reputable family will propose her and teach her to obey and do housework perfectly in order to satisfy the reputable parents in law.

Nalini considers education for women is something unimportant because education is considered as useless and misguides women. Education will extend knowledge, but for women, this is very wasting time because it is women's destiny to become wife and it is better for them not to have high education. The traditional roles say that women do not suppose to be smarter than men. Nalini sees that education can be bad opportunity for women. When someday she knew that Sudha skip the school for watching cinema and sit next to a man, Nalini is very upset, she is afraid Sudha reputation will broke and she decides Sudha should marry as soon as possible before Sudha dares to do things further. She

decided that education has no benefit, even harm Sudha, so she must marry to a man, as every woman should do.

Gauri Ma is Anju's mother but Sudha also considers her as her mother. As the wife of Chaterjee's heir, all responsible fall into her when Anju's father died. She promised her husband to raise the children as honorable family. Gauri Ma takes both into nun school that only accepts female and forbids men to enter the school. She never allows Sudha and Anju to wear fashionable clothes or make up because she is afraid it will affect their reputation. Gauri Ma takes over responsibility on economic problem in family and she is quite aware of modernization; she lets Sudha and Anju enroll to college in the future and she promises to Anju that she will inherit the bookstore, although Anju is a girl. However, Gauri Ma has shown the modern world to Sudha but she never let it affect the daughters' life, her open mind about education is lost with her view about marriage. "I can't take such a big chance. What if I die? Who else is there to take care of you and Sudha? To make sure you have a good match?" (95).

When Gauri Ma knows she has to have bypass surgery due to her heart attack, she decides that Anju must get married. She doesn't believe Anju can be independent and take care of herself. Gauri Ma also agrees with Nalini's decision, earlier, about Sudha's marriage. It is better for her if both of daughters get married as soon as possible. She also assumes about her daughters incapability to choose a husband based on their own decision, she believes that parent should arrange their children's marriage.

Caste is the important thing in wedding tradition. The existing demand is men's caste has to be equal or above women. The example is in Basudha's marriage; she married Ramesh, son from old respectable family. From many marriage proposals for Basudha, she has never been asked about her desire; all decisions are in mothers' hands, which man is reputable and qualified enough. Like Nalini said the most important in this case is family's good name, Basudha's desire and feeling as a woman is not important. Ashok, Basudha's lover, proposes her but her mothers refuse because although he is very rich his caste is under Chaterjee's family. Although modern society enables the improvement economy that is significant in low caste, however tradition of marry with the higher or same caste still exist.

In India tradition, people have dowry system, a form of wedding gift prevalent in India according to Vikas Kamat, it is also sometimes called "*price-of-the-groom*" (Online). It is women's obligation to bring dowry when she married depending on men's family demand. Usually the sums of dowry depend on the man's caste, the higher the caste the greater the sum. The dowry system in India has been demeaning on women, such as in Anju and Sudha's marriage where they should pay dowry. There is view in society that the lack of dowry will bring humiliation to the family and the wife will be treated badly in the parents-in-law's family because the groom also starts demanding more and more. Some people go to the extent of deciding such matters as love, status, and prestige in the society depending on how much dowry a family could bring (or afford), and those who

could not afford an expected dowry are subjected to humiliation. As mention when the Chaterjee wants to pay the dowry,

a good family doesn't said a particular amount of money or certain list of items. That would be too gauche. And so the bride's party has to anticipate their wishes and go beyond them because if they don't, it may affect their daughter's future. (95)

Because all of Chaterjee's daughters are getting married means they should prepare more money for dowry. The mothers tried to find men from the same caste but have less demand for dowry, especially for Sudha because in the family the heir is Anju not Sudha. Nalini finally decides that Sudha will marry Ramesh Sanyal, a man from an old family in a small town and there is no dowry demand at all. However, to make sure that the daughters will not be treated badly because of men party's dissatisfaction on the lack of dowry, Gauri Ma decides to sell Chaterjee's bookstore. Dowry is a slippery issue; the women party sometimes needs to sacrifice all their wealth in order to keep their family especially their daughter's prestige.

Mrs. Sanyal likes Sudha because of her beauty; she thinks Sudha will give Sanyals handsome grandsons so she does not mind about dowry. This condition reflects how Sudha's parents-in-law appreciate their daughter in law. Mrs. Sanyal considers Sudha only because of her physical appearance. Sanyals doesn't mind about the dowry system because they know Sudha very pretty while Sudha feeling is not important. They demand her for handsome grandsons. However, this condition has been a tradition that in patriarchal society women are considered

based on their reproduction and wife's main duty is for regeneration, it is her obligation for women to have children especially sons. In this case Mrs. Sanyal wants handsome grandsons so she needs beautiful mother, and that is the reason she chooses Sudha.

For Nalini, Sudha's mother, this condition is very acceptable even pleased her. She does not think that her daughter has been underestimated. She even thinks that this is a perfect proposal. In family tradition, male always play as dominant side that means men should take control on everything even in marriage proposal although women have paid the dowry. "The Sanyals arrive a whole hour late. 'That's nothing.' Aunt N will say later....'It's just to show who's in control' (105) the domination of male not only about dowry but also in many things, the groom's family has rights to treat the bride's family. They take control because women are very expected to marry and if the marriage fails, it is the women's fault. Because of this, men's could treat wife as they like the significant example is when Ramesh wants to see his future wife, he and his family visit Sudha's family. Although Sanyals arrival is late but Sudha family considers it better than they do not come. The male domination has brought much harassment to women, especially to wives, because their husband can underestimate them only because of small things, such as lack of dowry, or even lack of honor when they come to visit and this harassment usually happens after the marriage. The absurd demands from men's family toward women's have brought harassment for female in India.

2. SANYAL'S FAMILY

Sudha starts her new life as a wife who does not love her husband. She married Ramesh only because of her obligation to Anju, as her dearest cousin. She wants to runaway with Ashok but she is afraid Anju will not marry because of the domination from men's side; Anju's future parents-in-law do not want a girl with scandal in her family. Sudha chooses to leave Ashok and married with Ramesh.

In Sanyal family many obligation as wife should be done by Sudha, she does all of domestic works; take cares of Ramesh's brothers, watches the servants and does households. Mrs. Sanyal has given Sudha keys of every door in the house and she trusts Sudha to do all domestic jobs. For women the most important is to have a lot of sons, not daughters, because only men can continue family and inherit all, while women are considered as burdens. The Indian constitution grants women equal rights with men, but strong patriarchal traditions persist, with women's lives shaped by customs that are centuries old. In most Indian families, a daughter is viewed as a liability, and she is conditioned to believe that she is inferior and subordinate to men. Sons are idolized and celebrated. Sons are also desired because they are considered a source of support during old age and for performing Hindu religious rites at the time of cremation, there is also the practices of dowry and daughters being viewed as somebody else's property are among the reasons why sons are preferred over daughters. It is also Mrs. Sanyal's biggest hope to get grandsons from Sudha as soon as possible, as reflected in traditional words, "May you be the mother of a hundred sons" (179). This answer

is a very common Hindu blessing in India for married women; however it is also shown about how women are regarded.

After three years married Ramesh, Sudha has not pregnant yet. This makes Mrs. Sanyal very disappointed. She underestimates Sudha and not considers her as fully family members. After three years Mrs. Sanyal still calls her *Natun Bau* – new wife. This proves that Sanyals only regard Sudha in the matter of reproduction, and she is worth not more than that, although Sudha has managed all of duty and cares Mrs. Sanyal well, she is still regarded as outsider or unfamiliar because she is considered fail in wife obligation to get child. The primary duty of a newly married young woman, and practically her only means of improving her position in the hierarchy of her husband's household, is to bear sons.

Mrs. Sanyal blames Sudha because she is not pregnant for years and forces her to visit doctors. She refuses any possibilities that there is something wrong with Ramesh although the first doctor and the next ones said Sudha is normal and can have baby (198). It is shown about male domination in marriage, husband is always right just like Nalini education to Sudha that husband is a supreme Lord. Sudha realizes that it is not her fault and she tried to ask her husband visit specialist in secret.

Finally Sudha pregnant after her husband sees a doctor and all of family affection fall in her because of this. Her mother-in-law calls her *Bau Ma* – wife – and makes sure Sudha get what she wants because she is expecting a baby. Sudha's housework has been taken over and she is served very well. This is

because Mrs. Sanyal very glad Sudha has done the most important duty as a wife, giving child.

However new humiliation appears when the medical diagnostic show that her baby is a girl. Diagnostic teams with ultrasound scanners which detect the sex of a child have helped many couples in having male children. From her childhood, a girl is taught to consider man a superior being. When the girl turns into a woman, it gives her a sense of achievement to bear a male child. Since the desire for a boy is so deep-rooted, in the absence of this test, family will go on producing babies till they get a boy. As Mrs. Sanyal displeasement,

“My mother-in-law said the eldest child of the Sanyal family has to be male – that’s how it’s been in the last five generations.” (238)

B. BASUDHA’S STRUGGLE RELEASING TRADITION BOUNDARIES

There are some reasons why Basudha wants to release the tradition boundaries in her life, from her cousins, Anju and from her love experience also because her daughter, Dayita. It brings struggles inside herself and also with her surrounding.

1. ANJU’S INFLUENCE

Sudha and Anju grew in the same house, educated by the same mothers and went to the same school. However, they have different attitudes in facing life. Anju is brave and smart; she hates injustice and fight for what she wants. Sudha in the other hands is an obedient girl. Basudha believes that God of faith, “perhaps he writes goodness, for though I am not as obedient as my mother would like, I

try hard to be good.” (9) Sudha believes that all of rules, tradition and restriction that she has through all of her life is comforting and all of it is natural, she tries hard to be a good woman that follow it. Both of them see future in different ways, Anju does not want to bound herself in a marriage; she would have brilliant career in college and visit many countries that she likes. Sudha’s dream is only a magnificent marriage and beautiful children.

While Sudha always obeys her mothers, always tries to be a good woman by accepting all of the family rules and tradition even feels comfortable with every restriction and consider it as something natural, Anju always questions about the restriction in order to keep their reputation as women. Anju love to read about women freedom, it is obvious that she is inspired for letting go from her condition and feel the freedom from all books she read. Her flavor to women liberation causes her questioning every restriction in Chaterjee family. Anju realizes that as a woman she was bound in many rules and she is dissatisfied about it. Anju feels that she cannot have all the opportunity and freedom because she is a woman. She realizes inequality that happens between male and female. That is why she is angry when her mother tries to match her so she can marry as soon as possible. “Or is it because I’m a daughter that my happiness doesn’t matter?”....”I bet if I were a boy you wouldn’t be saying no to me all the time like this” (53).

Anju protest the culture that tells her she's less of a person than a son. Women in India are restricted by double standard; Indian families are far more concerned with their daughters' sexual behavior than with their sons. Sons are frequently allowed to date or to stay out late while daughters from the same households are

not. Women's brothers see no contradiction in dating freely themselves but forbidding their sisters to go out with anyone. According to Vij, "Indian culture goes further than sexuality when it defines what it means to be a good Indian woman. The traditional roles say that women should be smart, but not smarter than men" (<http://www.vij.com/clash/essays/gender.html>).

She is questioning family where her achievements and self-worth are constantly assaulted because of her sex. Anju hates the fundamental principle that day and night women be kept in dependence by the males of their families. For her happiness is when she lets to decide what she wants.

Sudha may have submission and obedient but her relationship with Anju is very close. Anju never forces Sudha to follow her opinion or action but Anju brings the first inspiration for Sudha about her own wishes. Sudha realizes this when her cousin asks about her dreams,

"Yes, yes."... "I want a happy family too. But surely there's something else you want to do – for yourself."

"I want to design clothes."

Sudha's wish never spoken to somebody else because she realizes that her wish is not appropriate, first her mother will object even upset about it and then it is very uncommon for high caste women to work especially as tailor or designer. Her dreams to design clothes are a reflection of her struggle inside herself about life that she has through in Chaterjee family. A reflection of objection toward every restriction in her life, Basudha wishes not only a family with working husband and beautiful children that she cares every day in the rest of her life, because this

dream only follows the culture about what women should be, deep inside her heart – like Anju said – she wants something more for herself as individual.

Nevertheless, the tradition during her life still bound Sudha. It is not easy for her to admit that all the tradition has bound her freedom because Sudha always believes that she is a good girl and always tries to obey her family. Further, Sudha very cares about her mother, Nalini, she knows her mother will be very disappointed if

Now even her daughter, the one person, surely, that a mother should be able to depend on – the one person she had done it all for – was spreading her wings, called away by other songs. (71)

Actually deep inside her heart, she wants to refuse to accept all of boundary, especially about arrange marriage. Her mother matches her with Ramesh and Sudha does not love him. It is not easy for Sudha to do it but she has lived in her family and all of their rules without knowing the outside, so it is hard to leave it for her individual desire.

Sudha decides to marry Ramesh instead of runaway with Ashok and her reason to do it is to defend Chaterjee's reputation as respectable family. Sudha suspicious that her father has deceived Anju's father and caused both of them were killed.

Anju's father in law is very strict about family honor, he does not want any scandal in women party, and he does not care although his son already marry Anju he will send Anju back home if he knows there is a scandal that ruined Chaterjee's reputation. Pregnancies, secret relationship, runaway girls are

including in big scandal that ruins reputation. Vij said that the norms has demanded that,

Traditional Indian women should be beautiful yet innocent, adorned yet inexperienced, attractive yet abstinent. There's a cultural preference for female innocence and, by extension, virginity. One of the greatest fears Indian parents have is of their daughters acquiring a reputation for promiscuity (Online).

Due to the men party domination, Sudha realizes that Anju will be sent home in great humiliation if she runaway with Ashok. Anju loves Sunil, her future husband, very much. But nobody cares about women's love if her family reputation is bad the male party could do anything only based on family reputation. They can send the bride back in humiliation and this will cause bigger humiliation in society because the bride is consider ill luck and nobody will ever marry her. Marriage is very important for women status in India because woman is considered fully depend on men, according to Manu codes (some religious works and accounts written by travelers and missionaries) in James Mill's History of British India,

Women be kept in dependence by the males of their families. Her father protects her in childhood, her husband protects her in youth, and her son protects her in old age; a woman is never fit for independence (Online).

Due to the norms, women take the blame and inferior position. Women should keep the purity and good reputation in order to get men's protection while men

have rights to dominate and control women. That is why a woman who fails to marry is humiliated because society considers her unsuccessful in obeying the principle.

Sudha has reconciled herself to her sufferings. At least it is what she tries to convince herself. It is her obligation to do the right things for her family, and Sudha cannot take the risk to destroy family tradition. Sudha follow her family's wish to marry with Ramesh Sanyal. Sudha accept it as her destiny and she convince herself it is women nature to be submissive. Although deep inside her heart Anju's rebel attitudes has influence her. Sudha remembers that one night, "When she (Nalini) pronounced that I must stay home while Anju goes to college, I had eerie sensation"(69). Basudha desires freedom from tradition's obligation when she sees Anju gets her freedom to enroll education while she traps in Chaterjee's house for wife education. Sudha desires her personal wish; more than tradition demand her to be good wife who does domestic jobs only.

B.2. SUDHA'S LOVE TOWARD ASHOK

Sudha has been inspired about freedom from Anju, and her love toward Ashok has opened her mind about the world outside the Chaterjee family. Since she was born Sudha has lived in narrow confines of the Chaterjee and as that long, Sudha only understands and do things according to family rules and tradition. Sudha never realizes that she has bound until she meets Ashok,

The Prince came. He carried a jewel which made the lake waters part so he could reach the underwater palace. It was by chance, really. It

wasn't as if he was looking for a princess. She was sleeping when he arrived. When he woke her, she couldn't believe her eyes. When he spoke, she knew she'd been never be satisfied with the wordless songs of her serpents companions again (86).

Ashok is the prince, the man whom Sudha in loves with, they meet by accident but now Sudha loves him very much. Their love as if jewel that parts the confine of Chaterjee and brings Sudha awareness about life. Love toward Ashok has woken Sudha from her sleep means Sudha has realized that all of the tradition and rules is not her own will; it is only obligation that she must obey. Now Sudha understands and never be satisfied only by her obedience toward tradition. Love toward Ashok is the form of Sudha's personal desire. She knows that according to tradition, family has rights to arrange their daughter's marriage, most of it with completely stranger without any love at all. But now Sudha doesn't want to obey the arrangement marriage tradition, she wants Ashok to be her husband.

Sudha recognizes her personal desire, a part from family desire that she always obeys all her life. However, the tradition has rooted so deep inside her and it is not easy for her to leave it behind. Sudha wants her own happiness can happen in the order of tradition. So, when Sudha's mother told her that she will arrange marriage for Sudha, Ashok sends his proposal to Sudha's family but it is rejected.

As mentioned before, according to Indian tradition women should marry men from the same level of caste or higher. It is easier for men to marry women from lower caste than women marry lower caste. Anupama Rao discusses,

If it is the case of low caste men having sex with high caste women there is the risk of social mobility. Thus, high castes try to contain and discipline this possibility in the most violent way. Since upper caste women are not "*permitted*" to choose a partner outside of the convenient caste (Online).

Sudha is very sad when she knows her mother has rejected him. She is disappointed because she realizes that there isn't any chance allows her and Ashok to marry.

Sudha has chosen with whom she marries but her own decision still depends on men's strength. She still believes that it is male duty to be proactive. Instead of refuses her mother's decision, she stays still and only hopes Ashok will do something for fighting their love "if Ashok really loves me, if he really wants to marry me, he's got to make the first move." Sudha still captures in traditional role that woman should wait, submissive and passive and let men do everything. Sudha still depends on Ashok as a man. Although she already has wish to break the arrangement marriage tradition but she still bounds in traditional roles.

Ashok finally asks her to elope, Sudha agrees with Ashok's decision, like a princess who is saved by a prince. It is the fact that since the beginning Sudha has already considered Ashok as a prince and like the fairy tales, which is told by Pishi when Sudha is very young, the prince will save her from tower or castle where the princess is trapped. The plan of elope is all Ashok's idea. Singji, Chaterjee's driver, helps him while Sudha only follows Ashok, Sudha even refuse the opinion that she helps Ashok, "But we didn't help. I just got the news of my

troubles to him...” (107). Her love toward Ashok brings new vision about how she sees the tradition that restricted her in family but the tradition has become Sudha’s nature to be dependent to man.

Her sense of duty once again obstructs Sudha to get her own desire. Sudha has big sense of duty to her family, when she must elope to avoid the arrangement marriage she feels guilty. She realizes if she only considers about her own will her family, especially Anju, would have bad reputation. Sudha does not want to sacrifice Anju and her family for her own desire, so Sudha decides to marry Ramesh and left Ashok although it means sacrificed herself. After she releases her duty to be good daughter she has new duty as good wife.

3. SUDHA’S DAUGHTER (DAYITA)

Sudha must let go her love and follow the tradition to marry Ramesh, son of high caste family. When she enters the Sanyal family Sudha as a wife and daughter-in-law should do many obligations. Sudha’s mother-in-law, Mrs. Sanyal has give her responsibility of every housework and as mentioned before the reason why Sanyals wants to have Sudha as daughter in law is because she wants a handsome grandson.

Child is very important for Sudha although her reason of having a child does not to fulfill her obligation to Sanyal’s family. Sudha has big desire to have baby to fill the empty spaces because the love that she left behind, a baby will fulfill her motherhood feeling as a woman because her wifhood has taken by the arrangement of marriage.”...every cell in my body yearning toward motherhood

even while I resent the way my worth measured by it" (197). Sudha knows that her value as a woman in Sanyal family is only measured by her ability for having a baby. The Sanyals never considers Sudha as a person but they only consider her as a body for regeneration. When Sudha has not pregnant for years, Mrs. Sanyal blames Sudha and insists that she must have medical check up. Mrs. Sanyal does not care when the first doctor said Sudha is normal, she still force Sudha to have other treatments. Sudha must feel violation while lying down in examination table, the awkward helplessness of her splayed legs, the doctor's callous hands searching and prodding inside her (192). Sudha recognizes that in Sanyal's family her role is only considered as the womb for reproduction but she does not want a child for that purpose, she wants a child as her own as an expression of her personal desire.

For Sudha who was born and educated to obey tradition, the awareness about women's worth brings new vision about the tradition. Anju has inspired her for freedom and her love toward Ashok has opened her mind about the boundary to her freedom, her pregnancy has strengthened her awareness about the boundaries of tradition especially toward women. At the moment she get pregnant her mother in law's anger and all humiliation in Sanyal family turn back,

Sweetness, Sweetness all around and yet why do I feel dissatisfied? Why does the inside of my mouth pucker up as though I have bitten into a sour plum? ...All of this love and caring, I want to shout, is it for Sudha, or for the carrier of the new heir of the Sanyals? (226).

Sudha's dissatisfaction is her recognition of tradition boundaries. When she was young the tradition especially about women's role never disturbs her, it even comforts her but along with her life a new vision has come, all tradition that seem natural no longer comfort her, it even restricts her. She realizes that as a woman she is only considered as a carrier for a child, a mean for reproduction, her will and her personality are not important. Sudha finally understands that all of her obligations never bring appreciation of who she really is.

Sudha's dissatisfaction turns into rebel action when her mother in law wants her to have an abortion. Mrs. Sanyal wants to kill the baby because the baby is not a male. After all pressure she is putting on Sudha to get pregnant, she said that according to Sanyal family's tradition the first child must be male. In addition Aunt Tarini, Mrs. Sanyal's sister in law, would have grandson. Mrs. Sanyal considers that Sudha's daughter will bring humiliation to Sanyal family. Soon after the test showed that it was a girl, Mrs. Sanyal told Sudha to have abortion.

There is sentiment in many Indian families that trapped between the traditional bias toward male descendants and the modern need to limit family size, end up aborting female fetuses after getting sex-determination tests. Ultrasound machines, a common diagnostic tool is useful in detecting genetic abnormalities, readily reveal the sex of the unborn fetus and doctors have developed ways to discreetly reveal results without compromising themselves in the eyes of the law. In India the preference for sons is influenced by many socio-economic and cultural factors, such as the son being responsible for carrying forward the family

name and occupation. According to Anyar "Sons are also desired because they are considered a source of support during old age and for performing Hindu religious rites at the time of cremation (Online).

Sudha refuses the abortion; she decides to protect her daughter no matter what. She knows that her baby would not be safe in Sanyal's house; they will force her to kill the baby. Sudha's desire to have a baby has made her rebel against the Sanyal without any doubt. Sudha doesn't care about the honor obligation and role of good wife or the most humiliation consequence for women, divorce. In India divorce is not a possible option. Divorce is rare, it is a considered a shameful admission of a woman's failure as a wife and daughter-in-law. Anyar discusses that "Upon divorce, women have no rights to their home or to other property accumulated during marriage; in effect, their contributions to the maintenance of the family and accumulation of family assets go unrecognized and unrewarded" (Online).

Sudha's daughter has give courage to Sudha for deciding what her truly desire is and what really important for her, she no longer wants to life in tradition restriction. Sudha wants to keep her baby although the patriarchy allows killing the baby; because for Basudha baby is very precious.

A child is yours in a way even the most solicitous lover can never be.

Carved from your bones, borne into the world upon your breath, the
flame you cup carefully in the palm against the coming dark (217).

Sudha loves her baby very much and insists to have it because she thinks that a baby is part of herself, a baby is more than anything or anyone in the world.

Ramesh Sanyal finally decides to divorce Sudha. According to what she had been brought believing, divorce is the final disgrace for a woman but Sudha doesn't feel disgrace; she only feels tired and sorrow; she realizes how hard she tried to be a good daughter in law and good wife and how useless it is. After the court delivered the divorces papers she has a huge relief and a small hope for her and her daughter. Sudha recognizes that she is now free to be anything that she wants because there are no roles charted out for them by the society.

The tradition has bound Sudha for long time, after she finds courage to fight for what she wants no matter how miserable the situation; fight for herself and her daughter no matter where she is. Sudha and her family realize the restriction of tradition has bound so deep until it can sacrifice human being and happiness. The patriarchal rules has led to say it's find to kill a baby girl, but it is wrong to the mother to run away to save her child. "A pregnant woman without *sindur* in her head is shameful names for her child" (247), but it is the restriction for women in patriarchy to keep women inferior while men superior. Many rule that keep the female's inferiority in India tradition; men whose wives died could marry as soon as a year had passed. They didn't stop their work or schooling. No one talks about their bad luck. But for women; they should mourn for all their life, forbid to remarried, does not wear jewelry and good clothes, always pray and fast. Women are marginalized in every aspect of life even the baby who are still in the womb, just like Sudha's baby, has less right to live.

After she decides to be what she wants to and to free from traditional role, Ashok comes again to Sudha's live. He wants to marry Sudha and does not mind

with her previous marriage. The love has come again to Sudha but Ashok has a condition; he cannot let Sudha's daughter stay with them and he demands Sudha's mothers take care of the baby. Sudha has decided to leave the traditional role for her daughter and after hearing Ashok's condition she also decides to be independent. A marriage will save her face in public but a marriage means she is once again depend on man and neglects her baby.

I want the man who is to be my husband to love my daughter unconditionally. Perhaps it is too much to ask. But having settled for too little once, I'm not willing to do it again. (271)

Sudha has decided that she will never take her happiness to someone else's hands; she will find her own happiness by her own hands. If she must remarry, her husband must understand her and accept her daughter completely. She knows that it is not easy to find such a husband but for her, does not marry is better than accept a man who does not understand her at all. She already left her former husband who cannot understand her desire to keep her baby. She has decided to be independent; no roles can shape and control her again. So, she would not give her happiness on Ashok, she no longer depends on man because Sudha believes that she could find it by herself.

Having through all struggles to find her own freedom and her own happiness she comes to a decision to go to America. She has a plan with Anju to start a boutique together. She finally understands the journey is the new start from her freedom. She lets go all tradition that makes her lost her happiness, to give Dayita (her baby) a free life, to give Anju's spirit and the most important, it is the

journey where Sudha finds her consciousness that she will fight for her own life, she will get her own life in America, she will create her own future. Ashok asks for apologize and second chance before Sudha goes but she has set up her mind that she would not return and does not sure that she would be happy tying her life to a man's whim again.

C. FEMINISM'S VIEW ON SUDHA'S REASON FOR RELEASING TRADITION BOUNDARIES

As mentioned before, Sudha has to obey many traditions since she was born. The Chaterjee's family raises her in very strict tradition which controls her attitudes as a woman. The most important thing for a woman is her reputation and Sudha's family always tries to protect her according to the tradition that occurs in society. This happens until she gets married and moves to Sanyal family but Sudha finally decides to release all of traditions that convey and gain her freedom.

Sudha's decision comes because of her consciousness about tradition in her life. She realizes her own desire as a person and she struggles to get it. Through Anju, Sudha's cousin, she learns about freedom to create her own desire. She learns that as a woman, she can have her own dream beside women's traditional roles, get married and raise children. Sudha realizes that all of comforting surround her have turned into traditions that bound her. The basic norms of women's rules, according to Anyar, come from Manu Codes, and old religious works that stated, "Her father protects her in childhood, her husband protects her in youth, and her son protects her in old age" (Online).

This is the beginning of norms that grow in Indian society about women's position; they believe that women should be protected from childhood until old age. However the protection mentioned before is not to keep or defend women from harm or injury. The protection has tendency to restrict women's activities in society in order to keep men's domination. Women are placed under the protection of men, from father, husband and the last is son – traditional beliefs in the absolute superiority of men. The fact that women are "meant" for wives and mothers is strongly emphasized by avoiding the duty as an abnormal aim for women.

The restriction is covered in the protection, so gradually people do the restriction as something commons and comfortable with it. To transform a familiar, comfortable, but terribly unfair culture into a just and strong blend won't be easy, it won't be familiar, and it definitely won't be comfortable. As happened to Sudha when she falls in love with Ashok, a man from lower caste; Sudha knows that norms would not let her marries Ashok and she must choose between follows the norms of caste or breaks it by marrying Ashok. Although Sudha already has self-awareness to choose by herself but she still bounds in the familiar protection offering by patriarchal that men suppose to take decisions for every problems and women's duty, as the submissive party, to follow it. In this case, Sudha does not want to do anything to safe herself from arranged marriage until Ashok takes the first step.

The unhappy arrangement marriage with Ramesh Sanyal brings awareness to Sudha that she has lost herself and her happiness. As daughter-in-law, she is

only considered as a body for regeneration. The only reason why Sanyals chooses her is to have handsome grandson. Patriarchy regards woman's body only because of the function of reproduction; patriarchal has controlled women as means to keep domination. Patriarchy is said to secure the subordination of women and the empowerment of men. Thus, according to Renee Karl,

Women are considered to be essentially passive and emotional, suited to child-bearing and home-making. Hence they are confined to the private or domestic sphere, resulting in their marginalization. While men, who are thought to be naturally active and rational, are dealing with important role in the public or political sphere. (Online).

Sudha becomes conscious that she has lost her happiness and her rights to her own body and lives. She must let go her love and follow tradition for marriage arrangement. In her husband's family, she wants a child to fulfill her emptiness but her mother-in-law considers her only a beautiful body that will give Sanyal's family better descendants. Without considering Sudha's own desire, Mrs. Sanyal orders her to have abortion because her baby is not a male. Under the name of Sanyal's tradition that always has son for the first child, Mrs. Sanyal instructs Sudha to obey her.

In Indian culture, tradition plays a major role in different aspects of life. Both women and men are culturally oriented to believe that male fetuses are preferable to female as males can continue the family line and will be economically beneficial to the family whereas females are economic burden

because it is the parents' responsibility to marry their daughters and during marriage bride's parents are expected to provide the groom's family with dowry which can take monetary form or commodities. But at the same time, one needs to consider if the culture or tradition is improving the condition of a powerless group, namely, women in this case.

Feminists argue that women should be included in the human rights protection system. Some cultural feminists call for the reorientation of human rights towards the concrete. Krishna Mallick stated that "They do not claim that the existing human rights framework should be rejected, but on the other hand these feminists believe the revision of existing human rights framework by considering woman's differences"(Online). They propose that reproductive rights, sexual autonomy rights and similar other rights need to be added to the existing framework.

Cultural conditioning of determining women's social worth by the number of male children they bear is the primary cause of this unpleasant sex ratio. It is the woman who contributes the most to the regeneration as well as for the survival of the child by carrying the baby in the womb, providing the fetus with the nutrients from her own body and breastfeeding after birth. For the women, sex-determination test through amniocentesis has been used as an instrument of discrimination against the female fetus. There is no doubt that this is a violation of women's rights.

Sudha realizes her rights to have her own wish. She decides to defend her right for carrying her baby. She chooses to leave her husband's house and break

the tradition where women should always obey for her baby's life. Sudha demands her freedom as woman, she wants to choose what she really wants and what she wants is the control of her own body. It is not her husband's family that should decide whether she wants her daughter or not but it is her right as a woman to the reproduction by carrying the baby in her womb and nurturing after birth. She does not to let go her privilege to have a baby and she does not want to go against the rights of living for her daughter.

Sudha does not dare to break the tradition for a long time although Anju has inspired her and her love toward Ashok has motivated her, but her own awareness for own independent has encourage her to left all boundaries in patriarchal culture. She is ready for the consequences if a woman dares to express her desire for independent, because there is tendency that "men might punish them for their self-assertions through violent retribution (rape) or emotional revenge (divorce or spinsterhood)" (Tong 297). For women in such a heavily coded society: as a daughter you are second best, as divorced wife, you do not exist at all. For Sudha, independent is more important than social code that underestimates divorce widow. She gains her independent and releases herself, especially her body, from patriarchy control. She realizes that as a woman who has privilege for carrying a child, she can decide by herself about how she uses the right and none can interfere it. Sudha dares to refuse Ashok proposal because he only wants to marry her if she give her daughter to her 'mothers' after her daughter is born.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION