A bout many typical characterisations, often contrary ones, of the Bengalis in literature, sayings and local mass media, I, being an insider, have experienced most of them true, but partially, as the generalisations are superficial though based on empirically representative facts about their stories. The facts come from everyday participatory exposure to the people, principally dominated by the urban milieu. My lived experience during the fieldwork and otherwise with the Bengalis, strictly with those, who identify themselves as Bengalis, has taken place in urban space. Even in the villages, where I meet and met the Bengalis apart from my empathetic probing, I could not escape my urban position to the interactions. The psychoanalytically interpreted data of the cases were transcribed, interpreted, analysed ethnographically and after that incorporated in this chapter. I would like to use the generalisations consciously as my own, rather than externalising them as absolute. Both subjectively and inter-subjectively the chapter deals with urban context of self.

The earlier chapters converged on the understanding that as Indians the Bengalis are focused on their traditions of the past, whose traces might be unfolded in different layers of the culture. The study of self in this chapter points out how the traditions have been rooted and mobilised in the inner layers of self in the family or intimate relations, how the ideals are acquired and how they handle the private and the public spheres. On the basis of the understanding of the childcare, the facets of relationships among family members, the marriage and post-marital situations in the families, the establishment of new families, the problems of the family members and other aspects of traditions as an insider
to the society, I would like to discuss the aspects of self as inter-generational transmission of culture. In interpreting my experience I try to be illustrative with the examples of cases that I probed for my psychoanalytic enquiry. As explained earlier, in this chapter, I shall centralise the issues of traditions in the contemporary families of the Bengalis. In other words, family has been chosen as the context of the cases, which have been probed, of the questions, whose answers are sought to understand self in relation to the culture or traditions.

The Scenario: Fields and Spheres

Before setting out the analysis of the self situations in the Bengali family, I would present some general observations on the two hundred and fifty families I studied. The observation hinges on my reflexive understanding of my culture. Broadly four generations are covered by the study. The children of the eldest generation are seen to vary from three to twelve. The number sharply reduces from the next generation. In the former families initially the mother and subsequently the maternal figures were the closest caregivers, though the grand parents had their substantial contributions in this respect. In the subsequent generations the parents are closer to the children, especially the mother. Mothers started determining the entry of father in care giving to the children. In a contrasting manner, in the latest generation, where both the parents are working, the parents jointly decide their roles as care givers.

Breast feeding varied from one and half year to three years in all the generations, though in cases of the succeeding generations, occasional breast sucking continues to later years of age of the child. Sleeping with some caregivers, never singly, is general. Absence of any transitional object is conspicuous and contrasting with the rise of some objects, like big dolls and teddies in the latest generation. In earlier generations, stories, tales, rhymes and poems contributed to the ‘transitional space’. Television as mass media has also the contribution of the similar space in later generations.
In the eldest generation, toilet training was not generally guided by the parents or anybody specifically. Children learnt it as their own issue of autonomy and control. It has changed in the later generations, though not strictly done by the caregivers, except in the latest generation of nucleated or vertically extended family usage. Care giving of the parents and availability of direct access to both the parents have been the result of the joint decisions of the parents in the latest generation.

Formal education is considered as the most valued cultural capital in all the families. There is a growing desperation on behalf of the parents to provide the best and diverse opportunities of education to their children. The latest two generations are also interested to invest in providing the education of other skills of performance, which they were not provided with or they had desire for. Since infancy the children are occupied with the daily schedule of education. The parents of the later generations can hardly manage to give their children any scope for privacy and personal leisure, except in sports. The socialization of gender in terms of role performances is gradually diminishing, though some emphasis is shown in assigning petty jobs of the family. The boys are preferred by the care-givers more for outdoor works and the girls for the domestic jobs, especially in the earlier generations. Except dress and cosmetics the socialization of gender distinction is not made conspicuous by the parents in food, hair style and demeanor in later generations, unlike the earlier ones.

The marriages of the eldest generation are arranged, except a few being done otherwise without the consent of the parents. The parents and other parental figures of the joint families would determine the right partners / families to marry with their sons and daughters. Marriages before adulthood are also reported. It radically differs from the marriages of the later generations, where marriage largely depends on the consent of both the marriageable adult sons and daughters and their parents, either it is arranged or it is ‘love-marriage’. In the patrilineal system the brides are supposed to settle in patrilocal families leaving her parental houses. Neolocal families are reported mostly in cases of
distant place of job of the groom or in marriages without consent of parents of either or both the bride and the groom.

The distinction between the private sphere and the public sphere emerges from the observation. It is really difficult to generalize whether they perceive uniformly these two spheres. The seven fields emerged from the study. The constitution of the fields may be clarified as (a) The family, in which they live, (b) the institutional attachments developed by education or broadly socialisation; (c) individual and familial religious/idological beliefs and practices; (d) both consanguineal and affinal relatives and the personal friends; (e) The associations emerged from the personal and familial voluntary participation in the actions of social service, politics, creative, performative, ceremonial, recreational and political contexts; (f) profession of earning: the actions of economic pursuits and (g) Rest of the affairs of wider civil life, in which individuals and groups get occasionally associated. The content analysis based on the semi-structured interviews on the fields produce the following order of fields:

Figure 1. The fields and the spheres: The ideal-perceptual construct of cultural meanings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIELD</th>
<th>SPHERE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(order of cultural attachments in terms of personal meanings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialisation (Education)</td>
<td>highest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Religion or Ideology</td>
<td>Outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(order of cultural attachments in terms of impersonal meanings)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kinship and Friendship</td>
<td>lowest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Voluntary Associations</td>
<td>highest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Profession of Earning</td>
<td>Outside</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Affairs of Wider Society</td>
<td>lowest</td>
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The figure 1 suggests the ordinal constitution of the spheres composed by the fields of everyday life. It is nothing but the conscious articulation of ideal cultural reasons, which
are obtained from their ideal-perceptual understanding. The profession and other affairs of civil society are outside the private sphere, as it is guided by the impersonal rules or distant from everyday association. In the culturally ascribed private sphere, the attachment is highest in family of living. The stake with socialization/education, religion/ideology, kinship and friendship, other voluntary association comes consecutively in order of private attachment. Similarly the public sphere, which is guided by the impersonal meanings, is constituted by all the fields, but ordinally the cultural attachments show the reverse picture. The family of living is outside the public sphere. This construct is dismantled by the individual personalization of the actions and situations of the fields. From the case studies and depth interviews of same participants it has been unearthed that the constitution and attachment of the spheres depend on their situational and idiosyncratic attachments with the actions in each field. Consequently all the fields become their both public and private spheres based on their personal attachments. If the personal attachment is high to engage a Bengali, it is given more personal priority and treated as private sphere. Similarly one's own family issues do not much engage a person privately, they are treated as public sphere governed by impersonal rules of society. In many situations the Bengalis do show strong self attachments with their professions as well. The things are different in conscious and unconscious engagements with the spheres. In terms of personal attachments, the spheres constituted by all the fields are interdependent and interchanging in terms of personal attachments. The impersonal meanings of public sphere are personalised in situations and actions of persons involved.

The generalisation below (figure. 2) based on the nature of situational engagements with the fields at the personal level differs in the range of the earliest generations to the latest one. In earlier generations, the Bengali persons, in spite of the distance of the self with the public sphere, would attach higher significance and publicly defined value that has declined in the later generation. For the earlier generations, the professions are to be differentiated as the 'traditional' type and 'modern' type. The traditional type represents
both self-employed and other employed jobs, which are not governed by the 'modern' rationalistic authorities and not under the control of known culture. The private would go with the traditional professions. The traditional types include family business in both agriculture and trades.

Figure: 2. The fields and the spheres: practical-situational construct of personal attachments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FIELD</th>
<th>SPHERE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
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<td>Other Affairs of wider Society</td>
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Therefore, according to the practical-situational construct, all the fields are both private and public depending on the actions and situations. It is specific to the person, action and situation. In all the fields, if anybody feels impersonal, it is thought to be guided by the rules of the 'others'. It is true even in familial space. For the fluid nature of the practical and situational understanding of the spheres, I have used more often the ideal-perceptual construct in the discussion of later sections. According to the Bengali psyche, though there is distinction between the two, but there is no absolute identification of the fields as private and public. The data on personal attachments with the actions of the fields show that the extension of self and personalization of the actions take place in every field, where the attachment of public rules are superseded by personal attachments. The defense mechanisms are strong against the acceptance of the facts, i.e. one does not initially agree that his/her indifference to the family affairs is due to the lack of attachments or why one's
professional jobs occupy too much space of one's life or why one is always very serious about issues of ideology while one's wife is not so. In the later generations, the Bengalis are becoming more focused on their personal needs and attachments; hence the narrowing significance of the public sphere, constituted by impersonal meanings is becoming obvious. Simultaneous to it the personal attachments are getting priority and potentially intensive. The families are becoming smaller, either nucleated or vertically extended than remaining horizontally open as it was the case earlier. The active space for kinship and friendship, other voluntary associations and professional engagements are becoming more self-focused.

A new field of consumption is taking shape by partial substitution of all the spheres. The issue of consumer self is becoming conspicuous among the young urban Bengalis. The personal involvement as consumer is getting priority. Self is getting more attached to what one is consuming.

The Bengalis, consciously or unconsciously exchange between the spheres, in which the Bengali children are socialized, learn to remain personally open and easily receptive. If the practices in the private sphere, which is rooted in traditions and early socialization, cannot help connecting to their public spheres, which is governed by the technical rationality, it affects the actions in public sphere. If their culturally assigned private practices and beliefs do not enrich them with the development of insight about reality principles, the influence of their private sphere impedes their personal attachments with the culturally defined public sphere.

**Traditional Authority and Inheritance**

The Bengalis, like other such Indian self-identified communities, had been living in the extended family; continue to live in it and additionally with its nucleated off-shoots. They were majorly collateral joint families. The married brothers with their spouses and children lived with the parents. Residentially they were principally patrilocal, though
avuncolocal association, especially as the alternative space of growing up of the children, were noticed. Keeping the history of the changes suspended for this purpose, I have seen parallel to the unavoidable reasons of urbanising fragmentation of kinship units, there is a large number of vertically and collateral extended families that show pride of making the reasons of fragmentation marginalised. At any rate, extended family is a pride when it is full-fledged and easy-going. Otherwise, the fragments of the ideal of the previous generation, if suitable to succeeding generation are favoured. The fragments may be nuclear, vertically extended including the parent/s of both or any side of the spouse, nucleated but with the support from the parents and the brothers and the sisters of any or both the kinship lines of the spouse or at times supplemented nuclear. People are seen to suffer when their decision due to any choice or condition takes them to any vulnerable situation, which might not be caused for the same decision. The ‘ideals’ of each person in each domain of life varies widely across the Bengalis, thus conferring particular psychic process on each individual. Not for the statistical support, but for the exploration of the diversity the results on some general issues remain the same. Let me illustrate with the issues.

Let me characterize first the tradition of customary inheritance pattern of property and the eventual pattern of family among the Bengalis. The customary inheritance followed among the caste people in Bengal is known to be Dayabhaga system. The Hindu law really emanated from books called the Smritis e.g. Manusmriti, Yajnavalkya Smiriti and the Smritis of Vishnu, Narad, Parashar, Apastamba, Vashisht, Gautam, etc. These Smritis were not laws made by parliament or some legislature. They were books written by certain Sanskrit Scholars in ancient times who had specialized in law. Later, commentaries (called Nibandhas or Tikas) were written on these Smritis, e.g. the commentary of Vijnaneshwar (who wrote a commentary called Mitakshara on the Yajnavalkya Smiriti), the commentary of Jimutvahan who wrote a book called the Dayabhaga, which is not a commentary on any particular Smriti but is a digest of several Smritis, Nanda Pandit (whose commentary
Dattak Mimansa deals specifically with the Law of Adoption), etc. Commentaries were then written on these commentaries. All law was originally customary law, and there was no statutory law in ancient India, for the simple reason that there was no parliament or legislature in those times. The problem with custom, however, was that it was often vague and uncertain, and did not go into details. Customary rules could of course tell us that when a man dies his property should go to his son. But what would happen if there is no son and the deceased only leaves behind him several relations who are distantly related to him e.g. second cousins, grand nephews, aunts, etc. Who will then inherit his property? This could obviously not be answered by the custom. Hence text books were required to deal with this subject, and this requirement was fulfilled by the Smritis and commentaries in ancient India. Custom no doubt prevailed over these written texts but for that clear proof was required by the person asserting its existence, which was not easy.

The Hindu law, as we all know, got divided into two branches—the Mitakshara and the Dayabagha. The Mitakshara prevailed over the whole of India except Bengal and Assam, while the Dayabhaga prevailed in Bengal and Assam. What was the basic difference between the two branches? The difference arose because two different interpretations were given by the commentators to one word 'pinda'. To understand this it is first necessary to know that according to the traditional ancient Hindu law approach, the person who had the right to give Shraddha to a deceased had the right to inherit the property of the deceased. The Shraddha is a religious ceremony to satisfy the needs of the spirit of the deceased. According to the ancient Hindu belief, when a man dies, his spirit had still some needs e.g. the need for food and water. Hence, after his death, he has to be offered rice cakes (called 'pinda') and water. There is a shloka of Manu stating that when a man dies his inheritance will go to his nearest sapinda (vide Manusmriti Chapter IX, Sloka 106 & 187). What is the meaning of the word 'sapinda'? That will depend on the meaning of the word 'pinda'. According to Jimutvahan, the word 'pinda' means the rice cake offered in the shraddha ceremony to the ancestors (vide Dayabhaga Chapter XI, 32-33 &
Thus, according to the Dayabhaga, the person, who has a right to give ‘pindas’ to the deceased (i.e. the person who has the right to give shraddha to the deceased) has the right to inherit his property.

This brings us then to the question who has the right to give shraddha? The answer to this question is given in the book called ‘Parvana Shraddha’ (which is also in Sanskrit). In this book a list of persons is given who have the right to give shraddha. At serial No. 1 in the said list is the son, at serial No. 2 is the son’s son, at serial No. 3 is the son’s son’s son etc. The rule was that if any one higher in this list is alive then one does not have to go below the list, and the list terminates there. To give an example, if the deceased died leaving behind him one or more sons, then one does not have to go below that list and the entire property will be inherited by the son (if he is the sole son), and will be shared equally by all the sons if there are more than one sons (because if there are more than one sons each of them had the right to give shraddha to his deceased father). It is only if a deceased dies leaving behind no son, that one can go lower in the list. In that case, if the deceased left behind him his son’s son, then the property will go to that grandson, because he is at serial No. 2 in the list in the Parvana shraddha, and one cannot go further below in such an eventuality. The customs of living in a collaterally joint /extended family are the following. Head of the family (Karta) takes all decision regarding financial and economical aspects of family. All members live under one roof. They share the same kitchen. Three generations living together, though often two or more brothers live together, or father and son live together or all the descendants of male live together). Income and expenditure in a common pool- property held together. The place and arrangement of worship is common. All decisions are made by the male head of the family. No division of property until the death of the Karta (head of family or older male person).

Thus the Dayabhaga has followed the traditional ancient Hindu law approach that the person who has the right to give shraddha to a deceased has the right to inherit his property. It is for this reason, there is no inheritance at birth in the Dayabhaga (unlike in
the Mitakshara). For the same reason, there is no concept of coparcenary property in the Dayabhaga, because in coparcenary, there is inheritance at birth by the son in the ancestral property of his father. In Mitakshara, however, Vijnaneshwar takes a wholly different approach. According to Vijnaneshwar, the word ‘pinda’ does not mean the rice cake offered in the funeral ceremony at all. It means the particles of the body of the deceased. In other words, inheritance is by nearness of blood or propinquity, and it has nothing to do with the right to give shraddha. This was a completely revolutionary approach adopted by Vijnaneshwar, as it was a complete break from the traditional Hindu law view that the person who has the right to do shraddha has the right to inherit the property of the deceased, and it is a good example how the law developed. Mitakshara is a much more secular law as compared to the Dayabhaga, since, according to the Mitakshara, the right to inherit has nothing to do with the right to give shraddha. Thus we see that by giving two different interpretations given to a single word ‘pinda’ Hindu law got bifurcated into two different branches. The Dayabhaga, on the other hand, preferred Manusmriti because in it law is not separated from religion and the Dayabhaga takes a religious approach towards inheritance. Such absolute focus on the head of the extended family creates turmoil in the present individualising social milieu.

Family and Ideals

The judicious handling of authority becomes essential to keep the individual members of such family together. The families I met for the fieldwork were fewer, if they were considered aware of the Dayabhaga system by its name and as body of customs, but the practicing remnants in the extended families could recall it in this context. It is true that the head of the family is attributed with the authority, which the members of the family submit to. As the joint family is centred on the head of the family, the personality of the head had much to do with the conditions of the families. In fact, the families observed during the research, the wife of the male head of the family takes a pivotal role for keeping
the family together. In all the varied two hundred and fifty patrilineal families the familial and individual ideals are found to vary regarding the range of compromise the individuals are ready to make between their ideals and desire. The ideals are based on the social acceptability and desirable is based on personal perception of happiness. All the families have descended from extended family of different compositions. In all the joint families, the financial responsibility takes up the central concern for the adult members. One of the elderly positions, at least, has to look after the interest of all in a convincing manner. If the male head of the family can perform the altruistic duties for others, especially in financial aspect, the family develops the potential for making the members loyal to the authority. Justice in the domestic sphere becomes the next determinant of the loyalty to such a kind of living. Especially, if the financial control of the family is safe in the custody of the head of the family, the members require somebody in the family, who would provide and support the modes of indisputable distribution of resource and service to the members. Therefore, the capability of meeting the needs in the two major aspects of the family may ensure the continuity of the traditional joint families, which are reducing in numbers in its original and ideal form of remaining collaterally joint, i.e. extended both horizontally (with married brothers) and vertically (across generations). Most of the collaterally joint families in the purview of the present research are primarily dependent on family business; at least the male head of the family is professionally businessman. The common personality features that I have seen noticeable in the families are the following ones:

(a) Altruism, patience, tolerance and insight about the conditions of the other members of the families are the most commonly present in the successful head and his spouse, who maintain the bonding of the members. Coping with varied circumstances is learnt by the members. Personal and familial interests have to face compromises for the sake of ideals of living. In some cases of the collaterally joint families, many social event of personal choice and personal sphere are not held in the space of family.
(b) The obsessive persons being the heads are common. The cultural focus on standing by the traditions is the precondition in the joint families. In the name of traditions, disciplining the family is a regular feature of such a family. The head of the family tries to discipline the family by the customs, he has inherited from the ancestors and he has felt to introduce newly, prevail over the everyday life of the members of the family. Not only in the major decisions of the family in the financial, the religious and the social contexts, but also regarding how the routine of everyday life may be maintained the disciplines or customs are the last words. The authority for the discipline rests on the head of the family. Other family members are also imbibed by the 'traditions' as such. It has been observed that some heads of the families have been obsessive about the disciplines and customs of the families. It is functional and productive till all the other adult members accept and realise the advantage of such rigidity, but in a time, when the options/choices for any decision are many and other choices besides the customary one are not less realistic and rational, some members get reactive to such authority. The reactions are seen to take varied consequences. After pursuing their own options for themselves or for the family, if they fail repeatedly, they are in a position to cope with their resistance. Manipulation, irritation, passive aggression, stress, anxiety etc. are the commonly found consequences manifested in the behaviour of the other adult members of the families.

(c) Another common outcome of the absolute authority of the patrilineal joint family is the regular reinforcement of the narcissistic position of the authority. For pursuing the interests of the adult members of the families and for giving support to the position, the head is given high attention and admiration regularly. The members make it appear that every major and minor thing happen for and by his authority. The head may start hankering after more assurance for receiving appreciation about his position in the family. The narcissistic desires help bolstering
the ego for becoming more functional that may both be productive and destructive for the family and its members.

(d) Another situation, observed in three joint families, where the authority suffers from indecision and lack of assertive effort in solving problems and directing the family affairs. It is principally because of the stress, ensuing from the growing loss of financial control of the family. It becomes difficult to sustain a joint family, if the eldest man in the family remaining engaged in earning cannot substantially contribute to the financial support of running such family. It has also been observed that the earning son in service of a head of the family, whose profession of business cannot sustain the family, jointly run the family.

In the cases of the extended families with more than two sons revealed varied patterns of self: The eldest son is very responsible toward his duties toward family members and have been sacrificing for the cause of the families and loyal to the familial hierarchy. The brothers have the options of becoming similar and different from the eldest one. But in all such cases none of the younger brothers was seen similarly altruistic, but supportive to the eldest ones. Rather the younger brothers are very much aware of the interests of his profession, wife and children. When the eldest brother is very rigid obsessed and rigid about his roles and expectations from other siblings and could not keep the family together in collaterally joint form. The families are broken into vertically extended or nucleated form. Some of them are seen to live in the ancestrally inherited house separately. Every family tries to retain other suitable family ideals. In another variation, the eldest son is simple and indifferent toward family, depend on the brothers to handle the issues of the family to keep the family joint. All the above hold true for the commoner split of the collaterally joint families into vertically extended families, which have narrowed the horizontal span to include one or both the parents living with unmarried daughter, one or more than one married or unmarried son and their children. With growing industrial-urban expansion, the sons of any extended family establish their neo-local families in the
city for their professional engagement with services. His family may incorporate his parents at their old age or before. Due to the ideal of living together with the children, the family may extend to succeeding generations. Among all the adult male heads of the extended family, the extended family is both ideal and desirable. For all the wives of the heads of the families only ten percent has confessed that since pre-marital age they had desire for nucleated families, though seven percent of them now believe that the extended family is the ideal family, because the social support system, significance of any social event and individual respect and authority they enjoy are high. The other adult couples of the extended families differ in the issue of authority. For them, the authority and freedom in decisions regarding any affair of family may be enjoyed more if the extended family is split into nuclear families, they are more accustomed to the support system, traditional dignity and comfort in the extended family. Among the couples of younger generation the responses are mixed. For the men, the differences in the opinion of the individual members of the families may damage the intra-familial relations and everyday decisions that become unmanageable at times. For the married women, the problems are more regular and nuanced because of their higher engagement in the domestic affairs. Varied compromises are made at individual desires to remain part of the extended family. The success of the extended families depends on the distribution of authority among the members, especially to the married couples.

**Marriage and Ideals**

According to the specific patrilineal customs, the married women are supposed to leave parental home to settle in the patrilocal residence and abide by the rules of her husband’s family. Since independence the women are increasingly capable of taking decisions of their own life, even in submission to the patrilineal structural rules of family and marriage. It is not the case for the marriageable women to prefer neolocal and nucleated family. Neither it is real that the women brought up in joint family would
primarily prefer the same nor women brought up in nuclear family would primarily prefer nuclear family. In most of the cases the ‘ideal’ is a choice based on the lived experience of any particular individual in her particular setting. However, the fragments or adaptable part of ideal patrilineality serves as a safe-guard. For instance, any post-marital residence happens to be nuclear and away from the patrilineal/patrilocal family, consistent accomplishments of the duties toward the family become the priority among the social duties towards kinship. Any post-marital nuclearisation of residence and/or family is favoured when it is approved by the earnest consent of the groom’s/husband’s consanguineal family members. Otherwise, nuclearisation is a post-conflict resolve in the families concerned, either before or after marriage. Usually the parents are more focused on the sons as the future of the patrilineality and on the girls as somebody to leave the family to join and keep up the patrilineal descent of another marriageable family. Complying with this traditional action the people are now rational in judging the issue of choosing ‘marriageable’ family and / or the groom/bride for their daughter/son. This parental consent for marriage is also a part of the fragment of ideal inseparability from the family of orientation. On the male/groom side in post-marital patrilocal family it is the sharing of the groom by the rest of his family relative with the new comer bride and her side of the kinship. On the female/bride side it is suppression of emotion resulting from separation from the daughter or sister of her family of orientation. On both the sides it involves all the specific psychodrama, part of which is consciously surfaced, others not. Each psychodrama has its history of the familial environment built up by the inter-mingled space of the relations among the family members. If the groom has less emotional and other dependents in his parent’s family the sharing becomes easier, which is infrequent, if not his upbringing would have taken place independently. In the bride’s case the marriage and the consequent separation leads to immediate rationalisation in terms of parental duty, which surfaces again in the intervention in her married life in the name of duty. The interventions of the bride’s family in the early years of marriage are either regular or consciously restrained by
the original family of the bride in order not to cause any trouble from their side. Both the responses are rooted in the habit of considering another (the married girl here) as the part of one's self. It is similar in case of the groom also. The groom's family considers the new bride as the 'other' to the self of their family and expect the bride to internalise the traditions of the family with uncritical acceptance. Even if, the family is neo-local in its post-marital residence, the family of the groom sustains a gaze at the attitudes of the bride towards the expected role-performances of the bride, which is principally focused on the well-being of the consanguineal extension (the married boy here) of the family.

Therefore, in a marriage the newlywed boy and girl are the extensions of their families of orientations. In fact, before marriage, the parents do rarely practice to identify the sons and daughters as distinct individual selves. They always treat their children as the extensions of their own self. The comparable distance of mother and father with the children does not confer on the degrees of the extensions, rather, they form two different qualities of attachment with the children. Paternal distance and maternal proximity with the children result in the differences of interpersonal attachments. This extension has two major dimensions.

Socialisation, Aspects of Self and Ideals

One is the familial aspect of self and the other is inter-personal aspect of self. Every family that I have observed, learns to internalise certain tokens of beliefs and practices, which may change from time to time, but at any point of time become the core defence of tradition in face of any critical opposition. The beliefs and practices are used to rationalise the favourable and untoward moments of actions. The children are socialised with the all the traditions of beliefs and practices of the family. They internalise them as their own. The symbolic meanings of the practices regarding social relationships and of hierarchy/priority in all fields of practices of own family function as the core of their familial aspect of self. The other inter-personal aspect is not exclusive from the former one, rather seeks support
of the familial traditions in order to consolidate the inter-personal chemistry of self. The dyadic relations between the parents and the children, the relations between the siblings and the relations of the children with the grandparents and other relatives, all constitute the interpersonal dimensions of self. In a patrilocal extended family a newlywed husband would expect her wife to understand his beliefs and practices connected to the social relations, which he thinks as his own. This expectation emerges from the inter-personal aspect of self, in which one member of family has some specific expectation toward oneself from other members of the family. Similarly a husband expects his wife to internalise the relations accordingly with uncritical acceptance, so that she can grow up her aspect of her familial aspect of self in that new family. The asymmetry of the patrilineality is revealed by the fact that the same familial aspect of self is viable for newlywed wife that is relegated to that of her husband, as she is symbolically included in the patrilineal family and excluded the family of orientation of the wife. It depends on the strength of the self of the wife to make her husband communicate it successfully. In the vertically extended families a newlywed girl feel discomfort in the condition of uncritical acceptance of the familial self of her husband and the inter-personal expectations of her in-laws from her husband and herself while suppressing or relegating the same on her side and her family. The better condition emerges in a neolocal post-marital setting, whose distance from the patrilocal family of her husband and of her own makes the accommodation manageable. Any newly established marital relations cannot thus lead to a relationship, which is both consciously and unconsciously independent of the earlier relations. Similar is the fate of any neolocal nuclear family.

In order to illuminate the two aspects of self, I would like to focus on certain aspects of child-rearing that are found and reported at earlier and at present generations in the families studied. Generally the mother is supposed to look after in all the early months of the new born. Fathers were supposed to be distant from the bonds at earlier period. Rather other female relatives were supposed closer to mother-child dyads. In certain cases, the
fullest attention of the mother to her new-born and withdrawal of her husband from the wife could be confirmed as the reasons of complaints and reaction of the husband toward the wife and even to the newborn. The husband feels to be deprived of attention of the wife that he cannot manage for a longer period. The unconscious prevails over the consciously taken decision about the distance of father from the mother-child dyad. One of the reasons of the distance is the culturally imbibed concept that the fathers cannot handle newborns and may come as a disturbance in the maternal care to the child. Consequently the trouble is felt on behalf of the father for long loss of sexual pleasure and attention of the wife that in most cases have troubled the father. Even a sort of rivalry develops between a father and his child. The husband has to face a hard time in cases, when one’s wife for the growing pressure of meeting the need of her child. Irritation and petty disputes become common during this period. This practice of swinging proximity between the husband and the wife before a conception and immediately after birth of a child may be explained as the reason of growing distance between the spouses. The fathers, who are not close with the children since their births, adapt themselves with the distance from both their wives and children in his access to minute psychological states. The wives also accept the distance for her convenience of giving care to their children and looking after her husband otherwise. It does not mean that the distance may necessarily lead to any problem of the marital relations, because the husbands become demanding only for the attention of their wives in everyday life. In their busy outgoing daily schedules, they adjust the distance at the cost of provision of all the needed domestic care for themselves and may remain free of any anxiety about the children. In fact, instead of sexuality and psychological proximity, the regular pampering by the wives some husbands express their energetic and productive output in the professional life. The wives also take the pivotal roles of engaging the children with the father in effective exchanges of care. Such control over the life of husband and children are found more in the nuclear or vertically extended families, in which the wives are non-working and effective home-makers.
In the earlier generation, when the children were more than two and usually so, counting as high as twelve in the observed joint families of that generation, the maternal care would be more limited to the period of breast feeding, till the age of one and a half to three years, if not interrupted by the next child birth. The lack of enough breast feeding result in different manifestation of oral fixation, more so in the families, where mother's breast is available for a brief period. Growing up in the family means the care of all the maternal figures and the grandparents, even at times of elderly sisters. Discipline was more of the paternal purview. Submission to the paternal concept and consent was a must for the children. Toilet training was not any hard fast disciplining of the care givers, rather learnt as an act of autonomy and control that would persist in the adulthood as a practice of autonomy and control over individual affairs, not even subject to shared consensus with the spouse. The gender roles are transmitted as a body of unquestionable beliefs and practices. In minimum, it means the domestic works are for the women and the works outside are to be done by the men. They would be more or less compartmentalised. For that reason, the working women are reported not to complain for their combined workload of profession and domestic care. The children of the working parents of that generation have come across the scope of understanding the need of sharing the domestic works. In their own generations of becoming parents, both genders are easy to share the domestic work and job of child rearing. The involvement in child rearing is sharply distinct from that of the earlier generation, where the father was introduced by his wife to the jobs of looking after the children. For the children, the difference in the process of engagement could matter with respect to the mother-determined access to the father. But when the access is more direct to both the parents, the children are more directly open to the ego-ideals.

For almost all the parents of the present and the last generations the children are less used to sleep in separate beds. They share the bed with their parents or other care givers. The use of transitional objects is rarely conspicuous. Patting, swinging and stories at the later age and sharing the bodily proximity of the care giving adults help them sleep.
The shift from the joint family to vertically extended and nucleated family made the children closer to the parents. The felt lack of direct parental care in their own lives in the last generation made the parents more obsessed with the urge of giving enough care to their children, especially in the middle class families. The number of children readily reduced; the intensity of intervention in every action of the children inclined in a contrasting manner to their own socialisation. The intervention ranges from strict disciplining to minute pampering with the wish of fulfilling all the unmet personal desires in the life of the children. It could take place due to the unconscious practice of considering children as the extension of the self in both familial and inter-personal contexts. It is still valid in the neolocal nuclear families. The inter-personal extension of self in the children is manifested in almost every decision of rearing them. The familial extension of self in the children is partially replaced by the personal wishes of the self to be extended to the children, even in cases after their adulthood. The recognition of the children as separate individuals in most cases comes in a later age of the sons and daughters, especially when they get married. The children also get used to the safeguard provided by the parental care.

They feel it safer in their arranged marriage, in which the parents and other parental figures decide the right matches for their sons and daughters. In spite of inclining incidence of neolocal usage of the post-marital family in the urban milieu, the couples wait for the parental consent to maintain the safety of comfortable inheritance. On the contrary, the patrilineal interventions, resulted from their sense of extension of parental selves, the spouses react to each other's parental interventions. In cases of patrilocal families, the female spouses, if unable to compromise with the desires of her in-laws are found to assert their wishes for neolocal choice of the nucleated family. The preparedness of living as an independent self is more in the adult women than men, as the women are socialised with the belief of separate family after marriage by severing her relation with her family of orientation. Any young man, who starts living in a distant place for his education and / or for his profession becomes more adjusted to live separately from his family of orientation.
Thus, the psychodrama of the unconscious extensions of self, either or both in the familial and inter-personal aspects, and compromise with the traditions in pursuing and maintaining the adjustable fragments of the ideals are the two basic dimensions of self of the Bengalis that I have come across during the study.

The extension of self has been interpreted above with illustrations. It has also been mentioned that the Bengalis incorporate the adjustable fragments of traditional 'ideals' in their social life. The adjustable fragments of the ideals may or may not belong to the inheritance from the family. The persuasion of the ideals is seen to have two dimensions again. It may accrue from the socialisation of the immediate family and its surroundings and also from outside it, anywhere from the world of individual exposure. The possibility of collective unconscious of any community as contributing to the ideals may not be ruled out by the fact that since 'enlightenment' period of the colonial past, the Bengalis are socialised with the thoughts and practices of the 'ideal' persona described in the last chapter, whereby the exemplary personalities tried to internalise the fragments of the 'foreign' (here western) culture. Thus the educated middle class has already considered incorporating the historical personalities in their collective unconscious, so to speak, who had regular exchanges with the western culture and could make their own ways of thoughts and practices. The anticipation of getting into trouble with ideals too much different from immediate everyday surroundings also abates the Bengalis to be more adventurous in managing the ideals for living their life. The ideals are found in the composition of the family, the hostage to the guest relatives, the food and attire in the customary occasions and the daily life, the ideological sphere of maintaining the rituals and religious practices according to the previous generation. This is also the part of the extension of the familial aspect of the self. The critical acceptance of the fragments of ideals from outside the immediate surroundings of social network is restricted to 'personal' ideals. In this connection the practices in the religious sphere may broadly be classified into three. The first one is the suitable fragment of their traditional ideals of family. The second
comprises of the means to confront vulnerability, for example, astrological services, Bastu, other security seeking ritualistic practices, most of which are not inherited from family. The third includes the occasions of consumption, especially the festivals.

Spheres, Hierarchy and Understanding

The oft-cited reference to hierarchy (Das, 1976; Inden and Nicholas, 1977; Kakar, 1978; Roland, 1982), which are based on age, sex and social position on the one hand and personal attributes on the other, is seen to be eclipsed to some extent by the technical rational ideals, borrowed from the public sphere. In other words, traditional hierarchy in the form of the fragmented ideals of tradition has become ambivalent in their relations with the technical rational public ideals of hierarchy. In private sphere, within these structural kinds of hierarchical relationships, there may be varying degrees of differences between the inner feelings of the person and the overt attitudes and behaviour displayed, as considerable ambivalence may be present. At times, the inner feelings and the social roles are highly congruent - that is, the loyalty and the deference expected by the one lower in the hierarchy are genuinely felt and given, as may be the case of the one higher in his or her inner feelings and behaviour of responsibility, guidance, and nurturance; but in other circumstances the actor and the action are by no means one. Quite frequently, the overt attitude is deferential, but the actions are subtly non-cooperative. Passive aggression is more frequent in the earlier generation than the latest. Certain cases of troubled relation between parents and children were psychoanalytically elicited. It revealed varied negative inner feelings toward the parents. In four cases of the adults the inner feelings were (i) bitterness and anger for two, (ii) confusion, (iii) loss of trust. A commoner inner complaint about the parents is lack of acceptance and understanding. For the younger brothers, if the elder or the eldest brother is not similarly protective like father, the hierarchy does not function productively. Unlike, most of the Indian provinces the hierarchy in terms of caste functions in a very restricted way in both private and public spheres, especially in an urban
context. The general scene of hierarchy in the culturally understood private sphere of the Bengalis is much disrupted by the decline of impersonal meanings associated with personal actions. The Bengalis of the later generations are more inclined to personal meanings and attachments in their beliefs and actions. If they fail to address hierarchy with meanings at the personal level, they do not bother much to associate with the impersonal value of hierarchy. Hierarchy is the example of unconscious personal learning of impersonal meaning in the private sphere. Due to lack of empathy and acceptance to the principle of hierarchy at the personal level, it is being replaced by the personal understanding of relations in the private sphere, where personal meanings may tell the last word. In spite of the overt behaviour remaining deferential, conforming to the expectations of the situation, the inner scene is contrarily different and usually fragile. This also escalates the break of extended families into nucleated units. The deference and loyalty reciprocated in the kinship structure has been restricted to the viable fragment of everyday life. For example, at present the mutual relations of the elder and the younger generation are viable in the boundary of the relatives, who are directly connected to the everyday circle. In positive sense the traditional structural hierarchy of the private sphere is gradually substituted by non-hierarchic mutual understanding.

The important distinction held ideally and deconstructed practically by the Bengalis, between the private sphere and the public sphere of individual participation, produces confusions and conflicts regarding the adjustments of personal attachments with the actions of the spheres. For instance, it is difficult for a Bengali person, who cannot detach her/his self from the professional actions, to share the same actions with the family, which is also her/his private sphere. The unavoidable crisis of bridging the two fields or bridging actions of different fields over time and space in private sphere is usually overcome by certain compromises, which enhance inner stress, though reduce the phenomenal difficulty of the person. It does not only mean the accommodation and management of varied positions of subjectively engaged self in different fields, but a
question of resolutions of desires of varied subject positions. It inevitably has led to the reduction/narrowing of the fields and their actions, where self is privately immersed. There is scope to study the spheres in both ideal-perceptual sense and practical-situational sense more intensively to explore how the finer differentiation of and exchanges between the spheres involve individuals and groups into actions.

In earlier generations, the families had to accommodate within the domestic-private sphere other people and actions emerging from the necessity of voluntary social- and political-ideological spheres of services of individual member/s, commonest being the male head of the families. The extension of the familial ideals of hostage to kin guests could easily attune the other family members to the readiness to actions in that. The ego-ideals for such services would arise since their education and internalisation of the ideals for national freedom struggle or similar such contexts, where the relevant assimilation of western contacts since colonial and post-colonial period were considered to be incorporated as 'own'. However, it has taken a longer period for the traditional ideals and private sphere to adapt to the changing rules of public sphere, which is guided by the rules of 'others', i.e. market, the calculative and technical rationality. The urban-industrial sphere, in which the Bengalis join, has introduced the technical rationality into the practices of the public sphere. The Bengalis have tried to be selective in incorporating the rationality as their ideal in the private sphere. The private beliefs and practices of the individuals participating in the larger proportion of time in the public sphere are increasingly getting influenced by the later. Rather the rules of the public sphere are used to achieve and acquire the desirable things in life. The adults are conscious to appropriate the rules of public sphere in achieving goals of wealth, status and power of their families and their members, especially their children. The most conscious source of stress and vulnerability lies in the public sphere, in which the people chase the goals of achievement for which they involve every means of private and public rules of the ideals, both traditional and technical-rational. The religious beliefs and practices, which formerly were maintained in the private traditional
sphere, are employed for the assurance of goals of achievement in the public sphere. The religious worships are done for the wellbeing of the members of the family, which does include at times specifically the achievement of individuals goals in public sphere. On the other hand, in the public sphere of formal participation, the Bengalis are seen to submit to the technical rationality as demanded by the structure and the situations. In most of the cases, they try to remain less emotionally engaged with the authority. In the public institutional participation, the non-transparency between the overt practices and the inner feelings is regular and the coping mechanisms vary according to the structure and the situation of practices. But the inner psyche of the private sphere is extended into the public sphere, when it becomes the concern of hierarchy. The irrationality unresolved in the private sphere is reflected in the public sphere. The bargain about boundaries of role performances is high in both the hierarchic structures and situations of action of the public sphere. It has often reported during the study, the Bengali employees feel non-conforming to the reasons of hierarchy in their profession. Personalisation of the hierarchic public sphere is not uncommon among the Bengalis. Failing to the private bargain in the public sphere, consciously the Bengalis try to remain value-indifferent to the use of the rules of public sphere. The situations are different when their personal-private internalisation of 'ideals' developed during socialisation in earlier private sphere accord or discord strongly with the structural and situational impulses of the public sphere. In that sense, if the socialisation extends to the period of their participation in public sphere, they internalise the public sphere as their own. Such coping mechanisms help them becoming productive in the public sphere, if ego principles work flexibly according to the demands of participation. In other words, the public sphere has been so diverse and changing compared to earlier generation, the Bengalis feel to be safer to reduce engagement of the self. It goes to the extent of submission to technical rationality according to the demand without being bothered about the aftermath for inner psyche. Otherwise, especially when the participation in ideal-perceptual public sphere is guided by ideals and desire, the
participants feel more productive. The development of insight is stronger and self-engagement is more intensive. The Bengali parents of the later generation, though unconsciously feel their children as their own extensions, prefer to let the children choose and determine their attachments to public sphere when they feel them able to be so. It might have resulted from the subjective experience of the parents in their own participation of public sphere.

Conclusion

The extension of self in both the familial and the interpersonal dimensions, the changing relationships of the self with the private and public spheres, the internalised cultural hierarchy and the transformation of hierarchy into mutual understanding are more unconscious emergence from the process of socialisation than the conscious cultural prescriptions. They are all associated with the culture of relating with the suitable fragments of the past/traditions in all the fields. The past is alive in phenomenal contexts of living with ideals and traditional behaviours, all of which help them clinging phenomenally to some old body of meanings that the people may not bother to decipher consciously. They only look after the compromise with the fragments of tradition, so that they may live in socially approved way. The phenomenal lifeways of Bengalis do not generally reflect any search of the roots of their traditions, until the historical reasons build up the ground to revive it, as it was the case in its crucial encounter with the colonial 'others'. The outcome has contributed to the ego-ideals, but with more urge of rational accommodation of the phenomenal 'otherness' and 'own' tradition than the urge of unearthing and reconfiguring own tradition at present. But the extensions of the self reflect the attachments with the past at the level of self. Among the Bengalis the emotional attachment of self with any phenomenal domain is still called 'maya', illusion. The commonest response regarding the meaning of maya is that anything which appears real, but is not actually real. It does not mean that they are close to the understanding of any
ego-attachment as unreal, but it is an anticipatory mourning of losing all attachments over time and specifically at death. There is no cultural understanding of a desire for the transcendental consciousness of self. The only concern with transcendence of self is in rebirth, which is phenomenal and an ambivalent conviction in the result of ‘karma’ of the present life. The anxiety over achieving and losing ‘socially approved’ virtue is more ‘displaced’ to and ‘condensed’ in ritualistic actions than in other actions. The persons, though embedded in traditions/past, they enjoy their individual freedom in the attachments of the self with all the fields of life. In the growingly self-focused fields—where the distinction between private and public spheres is fluid, situational and action-specific—the ‘own’/tradition and the ‘other’/new are engaged in closer encounter. The self extensions of the parents and family endured and enhanced since early childhood to the late adulthood are precursors of their unconscious adherence to the past traditions. The images of self emanated from the ancient Indian thoughts are nevertheless emphasise on the productive self-engagements in the fields of life, essentially to be followed by the deconstructive urge to disengage from them in order to reach moksha, the consciousness of self beyond everything. Developing objective insight from the productive and realistic self-engagements may only offer the means for decolonising self historically and enriching the continuing horizon of Indian self.