CONCLUSION

By questioning the two concepts 'sex' and 'gender' and viewing the difference between them, so that 'gender' is a cultural concept and 'sex' a biological one, our attempt in the first chapter is to establish how gender relations have historically formed into gender dichotomies. Both in the Western capitalist social formations and in colonial India in the 18th and 19th centuries, the process was related to the emergence of the middle class, although in India it was a far more complex one involving the factors of colonialism, caste, nationalism. In both cases, education religion, normative literature helped create a new identity for women.

Detailed studies on the material ideological structures which have influenced the development of 'the family' in the long process of capitalist development also bear out how its forms have changed in various stages of capitalist development and the close connection between class and gender.

Thus, in the second chapter, we see that while, on the one hand, western feminism and western feminist literary criticism has mainly dealt with issues of gender antagonisms, the material and ideological reasons for women writers' exclusion from mainstream literature, their lack of a literary tradition and the search for a new language or
with attempts at defining women's writing or ways of writing (Schreibweise), instead of developing a criteria catalogue for women's literature.

Feminist literary critics in India, such as Susie Tharu and K. Lalita have questioned the validity of such an approach on various historical grounds. Firstly, their questioning of the ideological processes that led to women's subordination was limited since it confined itself to the social construction of one section of women only, i.e. to middle class women. This, Tharu and Lalita maintain, ignored the inter-relations between class, race, nationalism and women's oppression in post-colonial societies in particular. Thus, we see in the third chapter, that both the feminist literary criticism of Bachmann's later prose and her own representation of the gender problematique mainly remained restricted to issues of gender antagonism and gender roles, the 'place' of women outside the symbolic order and the search for a new language. Both western feminist critics and Bachmann, by their valorization of the 'feminine' as envisaged also by the French theoreticians Kristeva, Cixous and Irigary, reinforced rather question gender dichotomies, thereby limiting women's choices.

The fourth chapter indicates how for a woman writer in Punjab, India, other factors those of caste, class religion as also the nationalist creation of an identity for
women, have shaped her own subjectivity as well as that of her protagonist. The novel 'Pinjar' and the two short stories analysed here bear out the fact that women's subjectivity and sexuality in India exist at the interface of caste and class.