CHAPTER – IV
SENSE OF ALIENATION AND REALIZATION OF MEANINGFUL DETACHMENT IN *THE FOREIGNER* AND *THAT LONG SILENCE*

The novel *The Foreigner* deals with the problem of involvement and detachment from the world, and the lack of courage to face the bitter realities of life and eventual resolution of the problem as an illustration of the *Karmik* principle propounded by Lord Krishna in the *Bhagavadgita*. The formative part of the novel develops against the backdrop of the West, and the later part set in India, brings in the element of acculturation at the end.

*The Foreigner* relates how Sindi Oberoi, an immigrant Indian, suffers in the course of his search for meaning and purpose of his life. Sindi’s alienation from the world is similar to that of one that many existentialist heroes in the West suffer from. The novel is an enactment of the crisis of the present in the story of Sindi Oberoi. He is an existentialist character. Thakur Guruprasad states in *The Fictional World of Arun Joshi* that Sindi is “rootless, restless and luckless in a mad, bad and absurd world” (Qtd. Dhawan 152). Meenakshi Mukherjee states in *The Twice-Born Fiction* that Sindi is a “perennial outsider,” (22) “an uprooted young man living in the latter half of the twentieth century” (*TF 207*) who belongs to no country, no people and finds himself an outsider in Kenya, Uganda, England, America and India. His rootlessness is rooted within his soul like an ancient curse and drives him from crisis to crisis. He has no roots as he himself admits, “I have no roots” (*TF 143*). Sindi is trapped in his loneliness, which is accelerated by his withdrawal from the society around him. He mulls over his foreignness which is almost kierkegaardian:
He himself thus admits in the following lines.

Somebody had begotten me without a purpose and so far I had lived without a purpose, unless you would call the search for peace a purpose. Perhaps I felt like that because I was a foreigner in America. But then, what difference would it have made if I had lived in Kenya or India or any other place for that matter. It seemed to me that I would still be a foreigner. My foreignness lay within me and I wouldn’t still be a foreigner. My foreignness lay within me and I wouldn’t leave myself behind wherever I went. (TF 65)

As R.S. pathak observes in *The Novels of Arun Joshi*: “His alienation is of his soul and not of geography” (Qtd. Dhawan 47). He leaves the impression of being an alien on all those whom he meets. June in one of her meetings with Sindi tells him that “I have a feeling you’d be a foreigner anywhere” (TF 35). Even Shielia once tells him that “you are still a foreigner, you don’t belong here” (TF 149).

Sindi Oberoi, born of a Kenyan-Indian father and English mother, is orphaned at the age of four when his parents met their end in an air crash near Cairo. He is brought up by his uncle who acts as an emotional anchor, and “the thought that he (Sindi’s uncle) moved about in that small house on the outskirts of Nairobi gave me a feeling of having an anchor. After his death the security was destroyed” (TF 65).

Deprived of parental love and affection in his very childhood, he becomes broken and anchorless. On being asked by Mr. Khemka as to how his parents died, he betrays Camus’ Meursault-like indifference, “For a hundredth time I related the story of these strangers whose only reality was a couple of wrinkled and cracked photographs” (TF 12). Actually, he is incapable of any emotional involvement with his social milieu. Meeenakshi mukherjee states in *The Twice-Born Fiction* that Sindi
is a born “foreigner” and “is an alien everywhere physically as well as metaphorically” (203). He is a ‘foreigner’ everywhere, in Nairobi, in India and even in America, as he himself puts it, that “And yet all shores are alien when you do not belong anywhere” (TF 92). June, in their very first encounter says, “There is something strange about you, you know. May be it’s an Indian characteristic, but I have a feeling you’d be a foreigner anywhere” (TF 33). H.M. Prasad writes in Arun Joshi’s Novels: “Denied of love, familial nourishment and cultural roots, he grows with a built-in fissure in his personality and becomes a wandering alien, rootless like Naipaul’s unanchored souls or Camus’ outsider” (29).

Totally isolated from the society, he spells out his predicament in his dialogue with Mr. Khemka: that he had no reason to be one thing rather than another to lead an ambitious life like Khemka. Like Camus’s outsider, Sindi is spiritually sterile as he is devoid of any faith in religion. He believes that “there is no end to suffering, no end to the struggle between good and evil” (TF 43). After coming to India, he gets a god-sent opportunity to redeem himself. When Mr. Khemka is sentenced to jail for committing fraud with income-tax accounts, Mr. Khemka’s business begins to collapse and the workers begin to starve. The workers persuade him to take over the charge of Mr. Khemka’s business. Sindi is still not sure but his visit to Muthu’s place changes his whole attitude towards life and others. When Sindi says that he does not want to get involved, Muthu replies: “But it is not involvement, Sir. Sometimes detachment is in actually getting involved” (TF 239). Sindi now sticks to Muthu’s words and confesses to having realized ‘detachment’ though belatedly: “Detachment consisted of right action and not escape from it” (TF 204). Usha Pathania writes in The Novels of Arun Joshi, “The Buddha teaches that in order to arrive at the highest stage of human development, we must not crave possessions and selfish
individualism” (Qtd. Dhawan 135). Sindi is now on the right path of becoming. As Richards Vyvyan remarks: “Every touch of kindness that opens one’s isolated self to others and theirs to us, begins to enrich and perfect our being” (11).

The small fortifications of detachment that Sindi had built around himself all his life are shattered to pieces when the redeeming episode of the crumbling of Khemka’s business and the appalled spectacle of the “bundles of soggy humanity” (TF 43). He identifies himself with them: “These are my people, I thought” (TF 198). Khemka’s arrest following income tax raid for swindling the Government gave him a god-sent opportunity to redeem himself. But Sindi, dreading involvement, refuses “to be dragged into the mess” (TF 199). He believes that one must accept the responsibility of one’s actions:

Mr. Khemka had to suffer for his own actions. In the past I had tried to put the consequences of my action on others, or presumed to take over their actions as my own. Both had boomeranged. In the end both had done more harm than good. (TF 209)

He tells Shiela: “Who are you and I to stand in the way? He must suffer if he wants to stop being a jackal and become humane” (TF 217). These sayings of him highlight the significance of the Karmic principle of the Bhagavadgita (no action of ours goes unrewarded or unpunished); S.Radhakrishnan says in Indian Philosophy “we reap what we sow” (244). Sindi, not being totally devoid of emotions, could not maintain his non-chalance for long. Sindi happens to visit Muthu’s one-roomed house in the slum where he lived with his tubercular wife and realizes the “accumulated despair of their weary lives” (TF 226). Muthu, an illiterate labourer comparable to Sindi Oberoi, a Ph.D. in mechanical engineering from the prestigious university of America ironically teaches him the distinction between detachment and
involvement: “Sometimes detachment lies in actually getting involved” (TF 225).

Muthu becomes for him the most appropriate example of the ideal man—the man of steady wisdom. Sindi has learnt from experience that it is not action or escape but right action or involvement that turns out to be genuine detachment, the state of ‘sthitaprajna’ of the Bhagavadgita, having the stability of mind and that ‘yoga’ and selfless action alone can redeem man.

Babu Khemka was an Indian student who died out of a road accident at Boston. He was an engineering student who did not perform well in his studies. Being born to a rich father Mr. Khemka and also an industrialist, he was sent to America for further studies. He was one of many Indian students brought up in a strict traditional background who found it really tough to come to grips with American free life style and the possible danger of getting diverted and ensnared into the vicious cycle of free sex without knowing its true intricacies that sex for American girls a matter of play but wrongly misconstrued as a bondage of true love initially and marriage finally. Infact Babu developed such a bondage with a girl called June Blyth. She took interest on him out of pity for his malady in not concentrating on his studies for which he was constantly bullied by his father that he would disown him if he did not prove well in his studies. It was in such a situation that his friend Sindi unravelled the mystery of his death through this book called Foreigner. Infact, the novel opened up suddenly in an epic dimension - mediasres- starting from the middle and the opening chapter itself struck the keynote of the novel. Police authorities started their investigation about the death of Babu and what was given to understand that he died out of a car wreck at Mass Turnpike, Boston. Police interrogated Sindi about Babu’s residence, about his engineering studies and also about his taste for Victory brand cigarettes. From the brand of this ciggratte they came to the conclusion that Babu
should be a man of the world. Ironically it was not so. He was not even a son of his father, a brother of his sister, or a husband to a wife, or a student of engineering or a friend. This accident had taken place a few weeks after his marriage with June Blyth, an American girl. She herself did not know about this accident. Comforting her for the loss, she had Sindi left for India to know the mysteries of Babu.

Many months later, Sindi took up a brave journey to Delhi to meet the father of Babu and his sister. According to him, Babu was a fool. He did not know how to break open the sad news of his death. It was Babu’s sister Sheila welcomed him and offered him a seat to sit. Then Khemka enquired about Sindi. He told him that his parents died in a plane crash near Cairo and he had been brought up by an uncle in Kenya. He was only four at the time of his parent’s death. After watching the ultra modern hall of Khemka’s house “Plush carpets, low streamlined divans, invisible lighting, bell buttons in every corner, and sculpture” (TF 12) he realized that these objects of affluence totally silenced him and found it difficult to express the sad demise of his son to him. From him, he was given to understand about his business acumen that it was his company that set up the first air-conditioner plant in the country and also started producing some electric appliances. He was such a type of person who believed in being served by others as if including the drinks too were to be kept at his hands reach. That itself shows how he was puffed up with the arrogance of an aristocracy and he blew his anger on the waiter who took a few seconds of his late arrival in serving him drinks. Then he explained to Sindi that his purpose of sending his son to America for expanding his business. He believed that his higher studies would make him know all about the expertise and technical knowhow of his air-conditioner business. But now all his imagination of grooming his son Babu to his taste was shattered to pieces. Then he enquired about Sindi who knew his son right
from his arrival for his studies. He also informed him that before his settling in America, he studied in London. Khemka told him that his son used to mention about him in his letters.

He offered him more costly drinks “stood in a resplendent display” (TF 14). He lunched with them and saw a “bronze figure of dancing shiva” (TF 14). Its beauty struck him and dancing pose revealed to him that whatever the place whether it be America or Egypt or India “His dance went on unheeding” (TF 14) and “his increasing rhythm” (TF 14) would comprehend all that had taken, taking and shall take that includes the death of Babu and also his own living now in company with him “keeping up his appearances” (TF 14). This element of keeping up appearances continued to stay in the novel as an integral element of wool in warp of the plot at various levels of interpersonal relation of all characters. As a business magnet, Khemka did not want to drown himself in the misery of his son’s death. He kept up his appearance as a practical minded person to make the best out of the worst. This attitude of him triggered him to offer Sindi a job according to his taste, “something challenging and productive” (TF 14). The job offered to him was personal assistant post that has duties of administration rather than of engineering. This offer was a boon for him since he had to have a shelter above his head. He was now a beggar that he had no choice to choose a job of his liking. He had come from America permanently and his going over there was a thing of impossibility.

After accepting his offer, he visited his factory where he found many who “considered him a misfit” (TF 15). In this connection what the author wanted to say was how difficult it would be for a foreigner to work in a place like India where senior officials were trained to work under rigid condition of authority on labourers and how they would have reacted to a person like Sindi, very casual in all his
movements, a typical American business man breed. His light heartedness in his approach to problems caused envy to some. But severity Khemka showed in the office was alien to him. He believed in doing things in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere but in his factory he saw men discharging their duties out of fear and compulsion. As his personal assistant, he slowly got into his grove. The Magon assignments given to him were to attend to social parties.

From attending such parties, he realized that all Indian businessmen were “grown fat with success came with their plump wives to parties” (*TF 16*). They had one business, one aim and one desire that was about money and “how to make more of it” (*TF 16*). They created an impression that they would buy anybody through money and got their things done. For Sindi their material gimmicks appeared to be meaningless.

The assignment of Sindi at States was to give all creature comfort to new Indian students arriving in Boston in pursuit of their higher studies. It was very interesting for him initially but as days wore by, it became a job of monotony without any room for any adventure. Still he clinged to this ferry boatman kind of job since it got him a few dollars that added to his meager financial resources. On one such cold September days he waited in Logan Airport in Boston to receive Babu from India. After his arrival, he took him to Y.G.C.A. on their way, Babu was very much in the state of excitement to see America more splendid than he had imagined. Such an opinion of him always figured in the expression of any Indian student reaching America for further studies. It was because many of them entered America at their prime youth wherein they were free to enjoy what was totally banned in India. For example, many young Indians believed drinking as a social habit in the States would give them all joy which was not allowed in India as a social habit. Free drinking is
possible only in States not in India. Free sex is possible only in States not in India. Freedom given to individual in such matters naturally attracted the attention of youngsters seeking either employment or higher studies in States. They believed that such a freedom for drinks and sex alone were matters of life enjoyment since these two factors were not available in India as freely, frankly and openly as in States.

From the looks of Babu, Sindi sensed he was not an ordinary student visiting States for the sole purpose of pursuing higher studies alone. He developed a wrong impression about States, especially American girls, who were ever ready for making love. Sindi aptly advised him that “Americans are a pretty good people on the whole” (TF 19). But he will be in for surprises very soon about them. Babu believed Sindi as a student studied in East Africa and London would be in a position to clear his doubts about girls. Being brought up in India under strict discipline, Babu felt his freedom given by his father to study in States would be to experience American gay life.

He knew well about his father, whose taste was only amassing wealth, more wealth and more. His zeal for wealth had a scheme for his sending him to States for his higher studies. With the knowledge gained out of his studies in States, his father wanted to expand, develop and grow the company as the very best in India. For such an expansion, he needed technical know-how and expertise. He would have visited States and joined in some university to get these things but age stood in the middle. What he dreamt he wanted to get it fulfilled through his son. This was the temperament of any rich father or at least any rich Indian father to grow his son worthy of making more money and thereby elevating the status that would fetch him another rich alliance for his son to be wedded, thereby his own personal business to get more and more flourished. That is why he wanted his son to concentrate on studies alone. He had no faith in all round development of his son to know about the
secrets of life- ‘Give, control and sacrifice’. He wanted him to study only the secrets of business expansion and not any spiritual expansion. In such an endeavour, he did not believe love, a factor usually such a lad like his son would have fallen into for his tie with the essence of life that is care, attention, concern, warmth, affection, humane feelings, etc… With dreams about free love and sex, Babu boarded the plane and with dreams his son’s return from States with latest scientific technical know-how essential for his business expansion, then material expansion of getting a rich daughter-in-law, thus paving the way for more and more money, his father Khemka sent him off to States.

In India, Babu happened to be a golden caged parrot. He had neither scope for his tastes to be fulfilled nor any allowance for his pranks to be realized. He had to go through the passage of time and space as it was designed by his father. His individualistic tastes, talents, skills, attitudes, likes and dislikes, were nipped in the bud and he was grown as a being of reflected glory, something like a robot to think, act, imagine, feel, sense, hear, see and smell only on such things as permitted by his father. To such a person like Babu, America let its chain of bondage for his father locked and now he felt unleashed from his filial fetters at the verge of running riot on the land known for all adventures and also known for inexplicable enigma of free sex. The first advice of Sindi to Babu was “Babu, don’t fall in love. It does nobody any good” (TF 20). Sindi’s advice came out of him naturally and he felt a compulsive urge in him “wanted him to be happy and keep away from mistakes which many others made” (TF 20). But for Babu what is the good of coming to America if one is not to play around with girls? “He was also fully aware of the face that his strict father would be angry if he found out that his son was running around with strange women” (TF 20). Sindi realized his state that was very common with Indian boys
coming to U.S.A for studies that out of their premonition and boredom indulged in playing around with girls but ultimately, they were being played around which could be finally fatal for them.

Sindi met June in one of the balls arranged by International Students Association. She resembled her earlier girl friend Kathy. From the party he found June very daring and dynamic. While Sindi had fallen sick out of asthma, June paid her visit to his room. This concern of June for his sickness was a balm to his depressed state that he “begotten me without a purpose and so far I had lived without a purpose, unless you could call the search for peace a purpose” (TF 55) saw in her the ray of promise for his living. His vaccum feeling of being a foreigner without any anchor now got cleared, since he got a grip in June for his stay in U.S.A. After his parent’s death, it was his uncle who gave him moral support. After him it was June.

Then they talked about Indian character of detachment. Karl was of the opinion that detachment for Indians was an easy matter since Indians did not have any experience of the two world was “If you were bombed every night for a year, why, even a month, I would like to see how many of you would still go around preaching the Bhagavad Gita” (TF 67). What philosophy of detachment preached in The Gita and many Indian like Sindi loved to follow was, according to him, due to inexperience of war of the dimension of total catastrophe. Further he criticized that the principle of non-violence is a sentimental matter. For this Sindi aptly answers that in a life of uncertainty where there is freedom and in an unassured life how can one enjoy freedom. Here this world offers only impermanent life wherein no room for complete freedom … “you had no choice in your birth nor do you even choose your death. And in between is a vast expanse of lawless sands that pile up where the wind blows” (TF 67). Brownian’s philosophy of the earth the broken arc was given expression by
Sindi. June came out with an answer that the choice of committing suicide lied with the individual. For this Sindi replied suicide is not a solution to a problem and a choice of one’s will to end one’s miserable life - “the end of a battered old road and not the beginning of a new one” (TF 68).

What Sindi experienced in the love showed by the old lady at London was pain that made him wiser. Thereby, Sindi realized that love for someone became a tool for elevating his mental stature bordering on wisdom and that the idea nothing is permanent but experience alone left a mark on the individual, steer his course of life especially if once again he or she caught up in the sea of love, he or she out of his or her past experience of love had to steer the course of the ship and land it safely without causing damage to the three factors-ship-symbol of love- lover and his lady love-passengers in the ship-sea-the sea of life. In other words the ship of love should not be caused to be broken. Lover and his lady love on board of the ship however the trials and tribulations caused on the stormy sea of life should be landed safely and on such landing what would happen to the bondage of their love was a matter of mystery and if united, good, if broken, should not cause them pain of experience but an experience in which pain might be one of many facets of such an experience in life.

After realizing this essence of truth out of the bondage of love, Sindi moved freely with June and even had his sex affair. But at the back of his mind, he knew well that in any eventuality in future this affair would become abortive. His experience of love, got him a strange feeling of bed fellows that the marriage resulting out of such love becomes painful out of the tenderly of possession. The illusion caused of marriage rooted on love shall result only in disaster. It is because of such a belief on everything solid, concrete and permanent, slowly enters the promises of love marriage wherein “Nothing ever seems real to me, leave alone permanent. Nothing
seems to be very important” (TF 92). For June, marriage is a worthwhile matter, loving somebody, being happy with that somebody, bringing up children … there by contributing to society. But for Sindi it is a waste. It is because everything ends up in death. “A big mocking zero” (TF 92). Thereby for Sindi “nothing is important” (TF 93) “Good things and bad things appear to be the same in the long run of existence” (TF 93). Babu Khemka failed in all his exams. He was at a loss to come to grips with the American system of education. Many Indian students undergo similar plight like him in their educational endeavour. Sindi helped him by means of seeing his Dean who happened to be his good friend. From him, he was given to understand that Babu attended all classes but found “constantly thinking of something else” (TF 95). Sindi requested him to consider his case on the basis of a foreigner unable to get himself adjusted with the exam trend of America and some time if graciously given, he would upon the thread and do well in the next exam. The Dean promised him to give another chance for his successful completion of the course. That evening Sindi, Babu and June went to a restaurant. In their conversation Babu told them how he had such mortal fear for his father who also loved so dearly. What was tragic to Babu was that his father recognized only who were clever and successful. If they failed “he became emotionally involved and he destroyed what little capability they had” (TF 97).

Such a trait of his father got on his nerves who had a deep respect for him. He told them that his sister was a broad minded person. Then Babu showed interest in dancing with June. He found improved in his dancing talents. He danced so easily with her that for Sindi it appeared that he had fallen in love with June. In Sindi’s flat, he told Sindi that he could not concentrate on studies. It was because of his homesickness. He was considerably disturbed by the thought of women. But before completing the course, he could not fulfil his desire of getting married. The thought of
getting an American girl as his life partner was possible for him but making her as his father’s daughter-in-law an impossible matter. It was because he sent him only to study and not to select his life partner. Steeped in traditional beliefs, the very thought of his only son preferred an American girl as his life partner was definitely a matter of doom for him. He would disown him and made him stand in street.

At the same time his wish to have a marriage with an American girl grew stronger and stronger in him. For this Sindi aptly replied that the culture of India and America are at logger heads with each other. In India, marriage is a sacred matter- a performance “only once in a lifetime. It is quite a serious matter” (TF 100). In America it is a matter of convenience. But Babu did not pay heed to his advice. After years of struggle of being possessed by a steady tranquility of being, alone he desired to experience “the ecstasy in a woman’s body” (TF 101). A letter from June added fuel to fire. She mentioned about weather and a new dress she bought recently. On the same day, Sindi left for Boston and reached her home. Her mother informed him that she was gone with Babu.

As Sindi’s job compelled him to stay away from June for more two months the proximity of Babu and June got closer and closer. From her mother, he learnt that June spent all evening with Babu, visited all costly restaurants, moved freely with him that got him the answer that she had fallen for him. With heavy heart, he returned to his lodging. He thought about his past relation with Kathy and his stay in Wales. He was a student at that time. He developed an affair with her while her husband was away. But it ended in disaster. Right from his adolescent period, love pierced his heart and did not cause him any happiness. Similar experience now surfaced. June stood at his lodging after knowing his arrival from her father. She urged him for a marriage. But he did not yield. She believed Babu grew so dependent on her. Just
like any other woman or especially American woman she grew pity for him. She wanted to play the role of comfort and try to rehabilitate him. At the same time, she could not get away from the memories of Sindi. For the last time she shared bed with him. After this, she once again implored him for their marriage union. But he did not believe in delusion to bank upon. She believed their marriage would be a happy one. For him, it was different. Having brought up in the land of liberty that promised her only happiness, she could lead a happy life. For him “many things are inevitable and what’s more, most of them are sad and painful” (TF 107).

“Whatever grief’s you (June) may have had in your (her) Private Universe, spring in America ruthlessly extracted its toll of gaiety” (TF 109). Very soon he heard her saying about her proposed marriage with Babu. Sindi did not realize till the end “the thought of offering her marriage as a price of retaining her” (TF 110). The visit of the income tax man Ghosh threw the office of Khemka out of gears for sometime. Khemka and his daughter disappeared from the scene. After sometime he reappeared with rejuvenated zeal. The talk of the lower classes was about his total ruin. When Sindi told him about such a talk of his financial doom, he replied that in India, especially poor, used to talk in such a manner but shrewd “business man (like him) takes them in his stride” (TF 116).

The wrath of Khemka turned against Sindi since such a foreigner like him could not either do good or atleast keep away from the income tax mess. He was also much surprised that Sindi had no ambitions to grow materially rich. For this Sindi replied that he had his own experience that taught him how to remain detached in matters. Where as Khemka alone did not know how to maintain balance in difficult circumstances. As a father, he expected his son to know more technical know-how for the progress of the company. But he failed to see that it was a land where sex was
a free matter. Any boy of his age would fall flat before sex and any amount of his goal oriented ambition of any father that to learn more in order to earn more in his native land would get thwarted. In his case, it was total failure and also death. He also accused Khemka that it was he who exerted in him “wrong memories” (*TF 118*) that ultimately killed him. For this he replied that he too during his youth period had experienced love but he did not make an ass of himself out of such love. Sindi’s reply to this retaliation was thought provoking “But you had a clear-cut system of morality, a caste system that laid down all you had to do. You had a god; you had roots in the soil you lived upon” (*TF 118*).

In the case of Sindi, he was brought up not in a clear cut system of morality, a caste system, no faith in God and ultimately no roots. All these things stood in his way that did not nurture to make him grow an ambitious man. But ironically Babu had all these elements. With these Indianness of character he flew to States where it did not work. That is why Sindi called them “wrong memories” (*TF 119*). Then he told them his mission of life … “to conquer pain if it was possible” (*TF 120*) loss of his parents, brought up by an uncared uncle, experience of love from an old lady and a wife of another man taught him only to remain detached, lonely and sequestered since ultimately everything would end up in nothing. His latest affair with June also ended up sadly. For Sheila the answer of making love and getting married accordingly resulted in pain. Sheila wanted him to try for love once again for which he replied “Life is not a business account, losses of which can be written off against the gains. Once your soul goes bankrupt, no amount of plundering can enrich it again” (*TF 122*). The pain of June leaving troubled him a lot during his stay in States. He realized that “past cannot be redeemed” (*TF 123*) and as a result he started spending more time in the lab.
After three weeks, June contacted Sindi through a letter. In that letter she informed him about Babu’s strange behaviour that caused her so much uncertainty about him to continue as a faithful husband. He often suspected her chastity and drove her crazy after constantly saying how lucky she was to become a daughter-in-law of his rich father. Miserably he failed in his exams and the varsity decided to send him out. In such a pathetic situation Babu used to sob like a kitchen-maid and cause her great concern. She did not see any male in her life sobbing during the hour of crisis. She slowly started realizing the mistake of having selected him as her life partner. She wanted Sindi to find a solution. Sindi felt that it was the dream of June about him, that was responsible for such a disaster. When she found Sindi adamant in his philosophy of detachment, her natural instinct of taking pity on somebody’s sufferings prevailed over her and thereby she selected Babu. In the case of Sindi, his physical ailment asthma made her surrender before him. In the case of Babu it was his mental imbalance to come to grips with his studies created a fancy for him that ultimately blossomed into love.

Sindi and June met to exchange their griefs. Here Sindi told about his history. After the death of his parent, his uncle in Nairobi took care of him. While at high school he grew tired of Nairobi and wanted to pursue his studies elsewhere. He told his uncle about his decision to commit suicide if compelled to study at Nairobi. Sensing the seriousness in his tone he allowed him to continue his studies at London. Even during his Nairobi days he felt a sense of emptiness within him. The question that bothered him was “to know the meaning of life” (TF 142). He did not get any answer from his classroom studies. At London he served in a bar. Here he developed friendship with Anna, thirty five years old but appeared young, a minor artist. She used to glance him during the period of his service in the bar.
It was in her studio that he learnt the warmth of a woman. She wanted him “to make love to her” (TF 143). She had no idea of getting married to him. Every time they made love she wanted him not to leave her. Both knew it was a meaningless promise. At one of her parties, he met another woman Kathy. Soon Kathy became his intimate love partner. She had a husband who was “a beast of a man” (TF 144). He wanted to help Kathy by means of giving his life as her partner. But it did not happen. Finally she too left him and started living with her husband. From these women, he realized making love was different from cultivating marriage. Kathy herself “thought marriage was sacred and had to be maintained at all costs” (TF 144). These love experiences caused him pain. To find an answer, he went to Scotland and served in a library. He made friends with catholic priest who tried his best to convert him. But it proved to be a futile affair on account of his scholastic questions. Here he read a lot. On one fine early morning, he climbed on the hills. Suddenly he developed a vision- on that sunny day that “all love- whether of things, or persons or oneself was illusion and all pain sprang from this illusion. Love begot greed and attachment, and it led to possession” (TF 145). According to him, Hindu mystics used to say that “there is a reality beyond all this illusion” (TF 145).

Further he explained that one must be of some use to some one. Even in the case of June’s marriage with Babu was an off shoot of her realization of Sindi, no use. This would have caused disgust. But June did not disgust him - June’s feeling of being a person of some use to other geared her to marry Babu and be of some use. But Babu did not know how to handle her. He also did not know how to make life happy. He infuriated her by means of doubting her honesty. Her faithful answer in spending the evening with Sindi was her reason of coming late. He could not tolerate this answer and enquired her if she had slept with him. June’s anger knew no bounds
and she told him point blankly that she had been sleeping with Sindi for more than a year. Shocked to hear such words, he left his flat and drove his car madly that claimed his life. His death took away all his positive attitude about life. What he experienced was pain “like a bomb shell exploding under my (his) nose” (TF 149). Now that he was left totally lonely without anyone to care for or anyone to care him after. Sindi chose to leave for India instead of Nairobi and in this choice of his flees, he depended on the superstition of flipping the dime into the air and called his stake beads for Nigeria but the coin showed tail- India.

At his lodging, Sindi got a letter from June that carried a bombshell that she bore the child of Babu. It was now four months old. She accepted it was her fault. Her mother did not know this matter. She also had no intention to trouble him through this news. She just wanted to share the secret with someone and she found him the most suitable person showing love.

From the postscript of the letter he understood her urgency to meet him. He also thought that out of despair alone she had decided to meet him. From the circumstance that her Babu died of accident, her mother not knowing her pregnant, no relief so far, she got from Babu’s relation from India, June had none in the world to share her griefs. From the angle of anyone mentioned above, she would be construed to be a bold but bad girl after a rich Indian boy for money for which she without shame stooping to the level of sharing bed with him thereby trapping him into the net of marriage. From these points of her tragic state Sindi’s anger from Babu grew wilder now. Right from the beginning he hated him who wanted all to help him in his problem. He never cared for other’s problem. He wanted June to be his friend first. Then he wanted her to be his bedmate. Then his fear for his father and fear for his studies made him to have her as her family partner. At the thought about this, he had
a strange feeling, June being an American would be liberal in her attitude of sex and should have lost her virginity. In this connection, he even suspected Sindi who was close in her association. Thereby June had every likelihood of sharing bed with him. Thus Babu’s confused mind and confounded conduct drove him to embrace the crazy end of driving his car headfast and hitting against a rock for his disastrous end.

Sindi thought of June what would she do at that rainy day crossed in his mind. The sweet thought of sex with her and her present prospects of having the child of Babu created a dilemma. That was the American way of life, women shared bed with one, derived sex pleasure but got married to someone and bore his child. There was an element of ambiguity and contradiction in such matters. In the case of June this was a thing of reality. Without caring for such foul weather, he set off to meet her. He rang the bell of her house. None came to answer. An old woman from the upstairs of a neighboring house enquired him about his futile attempt of pressing the ring while the door was locked. She told him June was dead two days ago on account of abortion. She was buried on that day itself.

Suffering caused out of death would be terrible but one should develop the temperament of detachment that one had to accept the reality “things have no meaning if they are not on time” (TF 164). Death of June had no meaning, still it occurred. The time did not come for such an occurrence. But it had come. Thus Sindi’s relations with women folks taught him detachment from others and in the case of June’s death it had taught him to break his attachment to himself.

It was this detachment that saved the life of Muthu, a servant in the broken company of Khemka. After seeing his living condition, and the pathetic plight of his family with a girl of eight having T.B. Sindi realized “detachment lies in actually getting involved” (TF 188) what needed at that hour of crisis was “to get organised
and start working systematically” (*TF* 190). He then took up the rehabilitating measures like dismantling the private office of Khemka to accommodate the marketing Department which was running so far in a rented house.

Such actions of financial crunches were brought into force for which he worked late in night along with his members of his staff. Fear of getting bankruptcy loomed large before them for the first month after his taking over the company. But his dedication and consorted efforts showed signs of improvement in the sales of products in the first month. He explained to Sheila about all the changes he had brought in like dismantling the cabins, closing down electric appliances division that sucked majority of the company’s capital without any appreciable return that made her look at him with wide mouth of wonder. His serious, drastic and timely actions to save the honour of the company as well as save the workers family of the company from the brink of collapse of utter poverty and starvation were proven matters for Sindi to practice work in a detached manner but attach his entire self for the upliftment of the wheels of industrialisation to move on the rails of success. What needed is not money, power, pride and arrogance but only commitment based on detachment, dedication based on purpose of protecting workers, and involvement that is service to humanity and not to amass wealth.

As Sindi is completely detached from life, nothing seems real or very important to him. His disgust with his own life is obvious when he cries, “twenty five years largely wasted in search of wrong things in wrong places; twenty five years gone in search of peace, and what did I have to show for achievement” (*TF* 80). And all that he has to show is “a ten- stone body that had to be fed four times a day twenty eight times a week. This was the sum of a lifetime of striving” (*TF* 80). He has built up a strong notion that people exist only for dying. Hence he is not ambitious. His
feeling of estrangement has made him absolutely indifferent. Though he has a good academic career in London University and Boston where he acquired his doctorate degree in mechanical engineering, he accepts a job in Khemka’s factory because it would keep “him away from himself” (TF 15).

Bruised by the thought of death, Sindi seeks the meaning of life. As he works in the Scotland library, he is provided with an opportunity to acquaint himself with a Catholic priest with whom he has been discussing on religion, God and mysticism. During Sindi’s stay in Scotland he has unforgettable incidents which become landmarks in his biographical accounts. One morning, as he is relaxing on a stone after his morning walk, he is enraptured by a radiant and resplendent light which removes the burden of his heavy love-lorn heart. In a trance, a new realization dawns in his mind infusing him with a new vigour. He comprehends: “There is another way of loving. You can love without attachment to the objects of your love. You can love without fooling yourself that the things you love are indispensable either to you or to the world. Love is real only when you know that what you love must one day die” (TF 145). So far he has been thinking that detachment means inaction. But now he begins to see the fallacy in it. He declares, “Detachment consisted of right action and not escape from it. The gods had set a heavy price to teach me just that” (TF 193).

Ultimately, Sindi Oberoi wants to do the right action and this enables him to set right Khemka’s broken business and he renovates its dilapidated condition to protect not only Khemka’s family but also Muthu’s, a low paid employee in Khemka’s business. Muthu convinces Sindi that “Sometimes detachment lies in actually getting involved” (TF 188). Thereupon, Sindi with the willing co-operation of the staff sets the wheels in motion and the business begins to prosper. Radha aptly comments in *Contemporary Indian Fiction in English*, “Sindi, the cynical exponent of
non-involvement became overnight as it was a warm-hearted and purposeful man of action” (88). When he resolves to infuse a new life into the ruined business of Khemka he takes the most heroic decision to transcend self-interest. Jha Mohan states in *The Fictional World of Arun Joshi* that “Sindi’s experience moves through the mazes of the past and the present and penetratingly records a grim but productive encounter with life” (Qtd. Dhawan 168). Sindi Oberoi’s ostracized self gets integrated when he is filled with the desire to serve others with goodness and gladness of heart and soul. In serving others, Sindi finds solace and peace. He realizes the meaning of existence in the world. Once he understands the meaning of life he gets an emotional stability.

If Sindi is the embodiment of detachment for all his experiences of love become abortive in *The Foreigner* then in the case of Jaya of *That Long Silence* experiences the same detachment in her personal life. Sindi puts detachment as his code of conduct. Jaya puts detachment as her code of conduct in her family life.

The novel *That Long Silence* which received Sahitya Akademy Award of 1988 is the story of an Indian housewife who maintains silence to cope up with the wishes of her husband. In the novel *That Long Silence*, the narrative is fabricated at two levels, one represents the inner world of Jaya’s consciousness reflecting her discontent of personal life and on the other, Shashi Deshpande reflects on the various dimensions of problems of women in the traditional society of India. The awareness of oppression, consciousness of self identity, ability to control the resources of economy, capability to make independent spaces, carving out unconventional mode of existence and the realization of rights and duties can mark the dawn of true emancipated existence. Jaya analyzes other women of her own family representing different generations (Jaya, her mother, her grand mother) also the women
representing different classes (Jaya, her cousin, Kusum, her widowed neighbour Mukta), who had all been trained in silence. The narrative begins at a crucial juncture of Jaya’s life when, her inner self revolts against her silent submission to the decisions of her husband Mohan. She introspects her own life conditions and resolves to break *That Long Silence*. The voice of Jaya becomes the voice of the entire humanity.

The conflict of Jaya intends to establish that in women’s life self-realization is a method of asserting her individuality that is often neglected and denied. Jaya proceeds with the panic, “Self revelation is a cruel process. The real picture, the real ‘you’ never emerges. Looking for it is as bewildering as trying to know how you really look. Ten different mirrors show you ten different faces” (*TLS* 5). The novel *That Long Silence* begins at a stage when after seventeen years of married life and prestigious professional status, suddenly Mohan, Jaya’s husband, comes in a state of financial bankruptcy. In this state of crisis Jaya instead of being nervous or being a silent pillar to Mohan’s failure, gets lost in the images of those experiences that she witnessed during her married life. The haunting memories of her bitter experiences with Mohan bring disappointment in her life. With her two teenage children, her failure as a writer, her impatience to seek safe mooring beyond the four walls of the house, render her cripple to take any desirable and prompt action. It is her desperate attempt to break her silence, registering her protest and asserting her self-identity against a system that compelled her to tolerate Mohan’s just and unjust decisions.

The turbulent flow of consciousness of Jaya in *That Long Silence* has become a metaphor for the silent resistance of all marginalized communities struggling against the hegemony of ruling class.

The central plot of the novel revolves round the character of Jaya, her father Appa, mother Ai and elder brother Dinkar known as ‘Dada’. The life of her paternal
grandmother Ajji, Kaka’s and Kaki’s affect the stream of consciousness of Jaya. Her maternal grandmother is other Ajji and maternal uncles are Chandumama and his wife Vanitamami and another uncle Makrandmama. All these characters are essentially related with the paternal family of Jaya and are certainly the inevitable part of her childhood memories and these impressions constitute a lot to give a direction to her thoughts and they work as ‘a foundation of future relationship’. If it was her past, her life with Mohan is her present but both type of images collectively work to sustain the unbreakable silence of Jaya. All through her life, she modifies her relationship with role models according to socially accepted images. But now she realizes that the apathy and reactions of others are the mirror that can never present a true picture of the ‘self’ because prejudices and personal expectations affect our observations.

Jaya recalls her childhood to evaluate her present crisis. Jaya accepts this mechanical mode of relationship without ever registering her protest. In the company of Mohan, she finds herself as a ‘pair of bullocks yoked together’. On the advice of Mohan, she shifts to Dadar flat but she develops an eerie sensation. The flat was not a comfortable lodge and it was full of trail of garbage, scrap of papers and bits of vegetable peel. Mohan finds the place intolerable. Nayana, the sweeper who comes to sweep the room is pregnant. Looking at Nayana, Jaya gets excited and cries out, ‘Poor Nayana, pregnant again.’ Mohan remained indifferent to the whole situation. He is preoccupied in his own failures resulting out of the accusation of embezzlement while Jaya is lost in the suffering of Nayana. She unconsciously identifies herself with the pain and suffering of Nayana. Silently she seems to wage a war against all humiliations those had already been thrust upon her by Mohan in her long span of married life. Since Mohan did never care for her problems, now the problem of Mohan makes no impression on Jaya. The little maladies of everyday like fighting of
Rahul and Rati, giggling with vegetable seller, all these ‘battle within families’ had never been a part of Mohan’s routine of life. Jaya calls it the ‘guerilla warfare’ of her life, “that was no sudden, cruel volt face on my part, not it was a part of the same subtle resistance, I had offered, the guerrilla warfare, I had waged for so many years” (TLS 9). Now her conscience provokes her to be fair to herself. For Mohan, the arrogance of status, the consideration of contracts, tenders and commissions were the basis of the successful married life. Apparently Jaya adjusts with it but gradually it becomes a burden to her. She confesses: “A pair of bullocks yoked together... a couple with two children. A family somewhat like the one caught and preserved for posterity by the advertising visuals I so loved. But the reality was only this. We were two persons. A man and a woman” (TLS 8).

Mohan remains absolutely insensitive to the terrible havoc going on within the mind of Jaya. For him Jaya’s consent is implied within his own decision. At this juncture the novelist maintains the painting of emotions within the text at two contradictory plains- one is of Mohan who has lost his position as a successful professional and has been forced to compromise with his failures. Secondly, Jaya is lost in her own war with the inner recesses of her self. In the company of Mohan she feels herself like two planets moving in the same direction but only for collision.

Indespondency, in order to avoid shame, Mohan conceives the idea of death along with Jaya. The idea of death obviously suggests that Mohan maintains the tendency of withdrawal. Jaya instead of being sympathetic ridicules the inherent insecurity of Mohan, “We who could not even decide upon a meal or movie without bickering – could we have chosen death in such harmony” (TLS 11). Mohan decides to shift to Dadar flat, to save himself against social shame. The idea of shift to Dadar flat makes Jaya more violent and further the exhortation of the idealism of Sita and Savitri seems
to her only a betrayal of personal relationship. She confesses, “I can’t fool myself” (TLS 11). The cover of idealism has been accepted in the traditional society of India to give a religious sanction to male autonomy. Shashi Deshpande anticipates that every individual possesses his own concept of self and its immensity can’t be estimated in terms of accepted ideologies. She asserts, “I remember now that he had assured I would accompany him, had taken for granted my acquiescence in his plans, so had I. Sita following her husband into exile, Savitri dogging death to reclaim her husband. Draupdi stoically sharing her husbands travails” (TLS 11).

Regression is adopted as a device by Jaya to rationalize her present crisis. She recalls her childhood experiences comprising Makrandmama, Ai, Dada and his friends. She reminds the memories of Saptagiri where Ajji lived with Kakas. In the retrieval of memories, she recalls the situation how after her marriage, her name was changed according to the desires of Mohan’s family. Her childhood name was Shivani. The change of name itself brought considerable change in her thought and attitude. She refers to a crow and sparrow story of childhood days and this story is still rooted in the subconscious of Jaya. She identifies crow with male ego and sparrow as a female: “In sufferable priggish sparrow looking after their homes, their babies... and to hell with the rest of the world- stay at home-lookafter your babies keep out the rest of the world and you are safe” (TLS 17).

Jaya does not identify herself with the loss of Mohan and shares her seclusion with the music of the dashing of waves. This attitude of Jaya in That Long Silence may be unconvincing but obviously justifies that each individual has autonomy of self beyond gender determined roles. The image of Kusum suddenly haunts her mind and she recalls the poignant suffering of innocent Kusum, the niece of Vanitamami. Kusum was condemned as ‘mentally sick’ and nobody did care for Kusum as poor,
tightly entwined and defeated woman whose urge for destruction turned inward. Kusum was a deserted and neglected woman who was despised by every woman. Her husband was jobless and she was the mother of three daughters. One day suddenly Kusum becomes impatient to go back in the company of her children. Such crucial decision obviously is the index of the complexity of the consciousness of feminine sensibility and Shashi Deshpande manipulates such situations within the text to seek a more balanced argument for the man and woman relationship. Jaya condemns this move of Kusum because she was no longer desired and demanded in the family. One day it was communicated that Kusum had been dead throwing herself into a well. Kusum had lost her purpose inside the family and the loss of belongingness in her life brought alienation resulting in unconditional death. With her death, Jaya suffers and admits, “I could feel her anguish, her fears, her despair” (TLS 20). With the madness and death of Kusum, Jaya becomes conscious of her own blessed sanity. In the narrative, the death of Kusum works as a foil to give a direction to Jaya’s consciousness.

For Jaya, the routine of life in cooking, sewing and arranging household seems to be meaningless. She becomes impatient for a release from the conditions in which she has been placed. In this process of reconstruction, and reinterpretation, she recalls the life of Ajji, a shaven widow. The past is represented by Ajji as a shaven and humiliated widow and present is represented by Nayana who carries the burden of undesirable and unborn child. Jaya is amazed at the strange desire of Nayana who in spite of persistent humiliation by father, brother and husband expresses her longing for a male child. The analysis of the life conditions of different women helps Jaya to conclude the appropriateness of her own decision against the authority of Mohan. In the novel That Long Silence, Deshpande adopts the technique of regression. Against the crisis of Mohan, Jaya seeks pleasure in the childhood game of ‘house keeping’ at
Saptgiri where they used to play the game of cooking food and waiting for male members. These childhood games now have become the reality of her life in that ‘waiting game’. In this state of complex and contradictory counteracting emotions, she exhibits her aversion to bear the burden of being a partner in the crime of embezzlement committed by Mohan. Besides this idea of ‘waiting game’, the image of sheltering tree also haunts her consciousness. Vanitamami in her childhood used to exhort her, ‘A husband is like a sheltering tree’ but now she interrogates that even sometimes the roots of sheltering tree gets lost and it becomes dangerous. The first part of the novel *That Long Silence* consists of experiences of Kusum, Nayana and Vimla but they contribute to a common and ultimate conclusion about the silence of women and their separate submission to established social images.

In the second part of the novel *That Long Silence* the narration is focused around the life of those characters who are absolutely devoted to conventions of feminism. Jeeja, the maid expresses no resentment against the decision of her husband’s marriage with other woman for the sake of child birth. She feels that giving birth to a child is the whole secret of feminine existence. Jeeja admits, “How could I blame him for marrying again when I couldn’t give him any children? How could I blame that woman for marrying of him? With whom shall I be angry?” (*TLS 52*). For Jeeja the vision of life is confined only to get food and shelter and in her vision, there is no space for the concept of intellectual adjustment and emotional identification. Besides, through the suffering of Jeeja, Jaya also reflects on the tragedy of Tara, the daughter-in-law of Jeeja. Tara her daughter, had no reticence and stoicism of Jeeja and she cursed the apathy of her husband. Jeeja still holds, “stop that? Don’t forget, he keeps the kumkum on your forehead. What is a woman without that” (*TLS 53*). If Jeeja is a voice of tolerance, the voice of silence, Tara
represents the voice of revolt against convention. In the meanwhile, Jaya’s flow of consciousness turns to the days of early married life when Mohan used to be overenthusiastic with the glamour of his power and position while as she was left to meditate her own problems of periods, bleeding, pregnancy and undesirable abortions. Mohan never tried to console her against those turmoils. Pregnancy was a personal trial of Jaya instead of a collective responsibility of Mohan and Jaya. Once she rushed to the doctor in plain saree to consult about the sudden bleeding but Mohan was conscious only for fine dress suitable for the lady of her status than for the pain of bleeding. In this respect Shashi Deshpande makes a bold effort to reveal the complexity related with experiences of femininity. Mohan changes his profession from Lohanagar to Bombay for better professional perspectives without even giving formal information about it to Jaya. Jeeja’s philosophy of the absolute negation of personal life was no longer suitable for Jaya. Her innerself revolts against the self imposed ego of Mohan. She interrogates: “If Gandhari who bandaged her eyes to become blind like her husband could be called an ideal wife, I was an ideal wife too. I bandaged my eyes tightly. I didn’t want to know anything” (TLS 61).

Jaya also recalls the life experiences of Neelima, a young girl from the neighbourhood. Neelima is a young girl and is having her regular periods but she expresses her disgust for the torture without any guilt and shame. She declares, “I don’t want it, why can’t I stop having it? Isn’t there any drug, I can take to stop it” (TLS 63). In the novels of Shashi Deshpande, the gynic issues are represented from women’s angles beyond the social idealism and myths associated with them. Rati and Neelima, the two teenagers of modern times take the issue with a rational vision but in contrast of them Jaya is neither in a position to compromise nor to neglect those idealism. She finds herself sandwiched between two extremes. One extreme is Jeeja
and other extreme is Neelima. She cries out: “My body had seemed to go berserk at my attempt to control it. It had stimulated pregnancy. There had been queasiness, early morning sickness, the same wretched feeling of being at war with my body…” (TLS 64). Under the pressure of such obsessions, Mohan’s presence becomes oppressive in her life.

In each event, Jaya finds the shameless display of Mohan’s ego in which her identity has been exclusively denied and neglected. The dream of ‘educated and cultured wife’ inspired Mohan for marriage but Jaya had a vision of personal life beyond the paradigm of luxury and comfort. She unconsciously seeks contentment in the company of Mohan that is only a realization beyond any purpose and aim. Shashi Deshpande through her protagonists carves out those reflections of personal relationship that can neither be defined nor estimated in externally thrusted social codes. It is not a question of social security but self fulfilment, a state of absolute identification determined by love. She admits:

For girls, for me anyway and for most of girls I know will, it had been a vague and nebulous search. We are looking for something for we did not know, or if we did, we were unwilling to give it a name. If we had been forced it, the thing we were trailing, I suppose, we should have called it love. (TLS 91)

Jaya’s reconstruction of her own life is a witness to the fact that Shashi Deshpande never presents the imbalance of gender construction as a super observer but investigates the inner recesses of woman’s consciousness as a partaker. The microscopic elaboration of each incident beyond and within the family suggests that the realization of male- female binary is not a matter of social ideology only but its fabric is constructed in each and every event of every day and every moment of life.
The marriage of Jaya was settled and organized according to the choices of Mohan. As soon as she got married with Mohan, the different dimensions of personal relationship including sexual relationship were settled. Jaya’s consent was implied in all the choices of Mohan. The crisis in the personal life of Jaya is a manifesto of the sensibility of all those cultured and educated woman. Jaya and Mohan share the common bed but not the common thought and common ideology. The conflict of Jaya for getting an emotional contentment in the physical relationship with Mohan highlights Shashi Deshpande’s attitude towards the reconciliation of love and sex. The contrast between reality and imagination has been suggested by Jaya, “First there’s love, then there’s sex- that was how I had imagined if to be. But after living with Mohan I had realized that it could so easily be the other way round” (TLS 95).

The myth of purity and the success of a woman to practise detachment in matters of sex and emotion for women, are not practicable for a woman. Every woman has craving for male companionship because the mating between man and woman is inherent in the scheme of things. Jaya records her own reactions in those moments of supreme and irresistible pleasures. The candid confession of her personal desires obviously decodes the honesty of expression that is essential for socially committed artists. In the traditional society of India, a woman is expected to maintain silence and stoicism in the matters of sex desires. One day in a state of sexual ecstasy when Jaya was restless for the passionate response, Mohan withdrew himself from Jaya’s contact and did not care for her heat of passion. Jaya was still warm and throbbing for the contact of Mohan. She was impatient to wake up Mohan to pacify her agony. She was restless but that too was suppressed in the silence of night. Jaya is frustrated not only at the external level but also the inner core of her heart implying her sexual desires and emotional needs. The silence adopted by Jaya is not a natural
response but a forced prohibition against urge for self expression. In the context of Freudian ideology, such sort of suppression makes persistent efforts for the expression of energy and it can transform either ways positive or negative. Jaya is frustrated but instead of being destructive, she endeavours to sublimate her suppressed energy. She decides to revive her career as a journalist.

Jaya interprets each experience of her life and tries to summarize the essence of her married life in the following words:

These odds, almost flippant charges and such deadly anger-what was he getting at. It was as if we’d been silently weaving the threads of guilt, anger and resentment between us all these days. Now the fabric was complete and yet I had no idea what the overall design was. (TLS 118)

Jaya finds herself trapped and lost in the maze of doubts and confusions. Lost in her own world, she recalls the pathetic madness of Kusum. In the life of Kusum, madness, like the madness of Hamlet of Shakespeare, becomes a defence mechanism against turmoil of personal life and personal relationship-the image of ideal family, an everlasting illusion of ‘being’ and ‘belonging’. In the company of Mohan, either in sexual intercourse or in real conditions, Jaya was expected to make mechanical and pre-assumed responses with little scope for her personal choices. The consistent suppression generates in her, retribution against the eternal silence. She becomes restless to construct her life beyond the paradigms assured by the choices of Mohan. Her marital life was the creation of Mohan in which she was not permitted to move at her own accord. She admits: “I had to think of Mohan and me of what had happened to us. Deceptions, lies, evasions- was this all we had been able to offer each other in our years together” (TLS 132).
Jaya’s mother belonged to an Ambegaeon family. Her father belonged to a Saptagiri family. Jaya’s father was a follower of Gandhi in the freedom movement, a devoted member of Hindu Mahasabha as a champion of Hinduism and a believer in convent education. His faith on Hinduism and his practice in sending his three children to convent education are at logger heads with each other that shows how the emerging India is to grow on two opposing faith amalgamating and polarising into a single entity by combining the best of India and the best of England. His mother who belonged to the traditional background was already angry with him by marrying a Marathi girl instead of a Kannad girl, also opposed to his idea of sending his children to English schools. She had said “No good will come of sending your children to a Padre school. They’ll forget all our customs, they might even become Christians” (TLS 90). After sometime, Jaya’s father bought a separate house for himself and shifted there with his family. It pained his mother as she wanted the joint family system to continue. Other members of the family also complained against the fission. Nevertheless her father had great love for his family. In order to maintain harmony between his family and his mother, he used to pedal three kilometres daily to see his mother and three kilometres back to see his wife.

He named her Jaya meaning victory. He instilled in her a sense of superiority. He once pulled out his daughter from the circle of her friends, saying that those girls “asked for nothing more than the destiny of being wives and mothers” (TLS 136). Jaya, he said, was to go to oxford after her graduation. Later Jaya, blamed her father for keeping herself aloof, for her suffering due to being unsocial in her moving with others. A girl advised her to go back home since her father was not well. She did not believe her. When she went to her home, she found nothing wrong. It was calm and peaceful, but to her horror she found the door locked. After some time, her elder
brother Dada came to inform her that their father was no more. She was shocked “my jaws seemed gripped in a painful cramp that made it impossible for me to open my mouth” (*TLS 155*). It was a sudden death. Soon after her father’s death, she and her younger brother Ravi were to be sent by her mother to live with her uncle Chandu mama at Ambegaon. Afterwards she sold the house and paid off the debts. Jaya felt she was homeless. Her elder brother Dada went to Bombay. She became lonely but determined to complete her studies.

Mohan’s childhood was even worse. He also grew up at Saptagiri. His parents were too poor to pay his school fees. He never complained about his poverty since he had a sense of self-respect, but his brother Vasant, had no qualms in speaking of those days of penury existence. Vasant told her that whenever there was any function, his mother was called out to help in cooking. And all the family would reach the place at the right time to eat except, of course, Monamma, their sister, who would never go. He had heard Anna raging at Ayya for taking food home for him. Monamma never touched the food that their mother used to bring. Mohan was not fussy that he would eat all that was brought by her mother. Mohan had to suffer humiliation due to poverty. His father didn’t have money to pay his school fees. He felt relieved when he found a patron who paid his school fees regularly. Mohan must have felt the ignominy of accepting charity from a stranger to complete his schooling. He smiled when he remembered that he had to bear weekly grilling and hear long insipid sermons of the old for a fee of six rupees a month. Thus the charity came not without a price.

But it must have been dehumanizing when he felt compelled to go to attend house warming ceremony at cross-word house which was so named because the second son of the house had built it with the prize money he received in the cross-
word contest. The old man, his patron asked him to go with him. Mohan had to bring a Tonga and help the old man into it. When he reached the cross word house, the old man asked him to go and eat food and find a place for him. As he already knew his place, he sat down to eat with Brahmins, who were served with indifference, that bordered on undisguised insult- the leaf bowl over burned when dal was stopped in from a height. The poor boy could not help noticing that the rich English speaking women were given warm reception. The temptation to earn money by hook or crook entered in to his subconscious mind at an early age and it came out with a bang later. He managed to get both- a convent school educated girl as well as English speaking wife and money. In course of time, Mohan became an engineer. Both Jaya and he belonged to Saptagiri. He found that his wife Jaya exactly responded to the image of a wife he had already conceived in his mind. She could converse in English fluently. And Jaya’s family felt that Mohan was a good match for her.

When everything was nearly settled and Jaya had felt after hearing the description of Mohan’s personality, that there was no reason for her from not marrying him, her mother came out with a vehement disapproval of the match. She said, “Jaya can’t marry that man” (TLS 93) but her Dada was a clever pleader. He brought round his mother, saying he was fairer than Jaya ‘a point which weighs with women’, had a good job, and his family well-known as a family of old fashioned orthodox people. Moreover he did not want any dowry which mattered a lot for Jaya as they did not have to look to the Kakas and Chandumama for it. These were the considerations which led to decide in favour of the match. Jaya had dreamt like other girls of her age that there would be love and romance after marriage as she had seen in the films of “Raj kapoor and Nargis Cary Grant and Deborah kerr” (TLS 91). She had imagined that her husband would say to her “I love you” (TLS 91). But soon after
her marriage, she realized that it was a marriage, not a love affair. She thought that they would achieve intimacy gradually by degrees or stages of courting and love making. But Mohan thought that they were husband and wife. Soon after marriage, he had taken for granted that Jaya also thought the same way. But she was taken by surprise when physical link culminated not in mutual intimacy but bore two children- Rahul and Rati.

Love had come to mean nothing for her and Mohan but an urge for sex. The emotions and responses of love were redundant meaningless things. They had their own definition of love. Jaya remembered

What else could I call it but love when I thought of how I had longed for his physical presence, when I remembered how readily, almost greedily, I had responded to his touch? What else could I name it when I thought of the agony it had been to be without him, when his desires, his approval, his love, had seemed to be the most important thing in my life? (TLS 95)

Thus they had learnt to play the role of husband and wife ‘flawlessly word-perfect’. She had to yield to his desires, his approval and his love. The strong desire for sex had not only obliterated the desire for romance or love making. All that she had read in women’s magazines about keeping husband’s love alive, keeping romance alive, maintaining the charm of woman, was found redundant, meaningless. She observed that Mohan slept with her twice a week whether she had brushed her hair or not. The desire for sex had grown like a monster. The thought of living without him had twisted her innerself. “His death had seemed to me final catastrophe” (TLS 96).

But in the course of time, she began to think that her need of him had decreased. She
could stay away from him without twinge or sleep with him without desire. She was fed up of doing it with the same person, in the same positions and movements.

She realized that it was sex which affirmed loneliness of man. Perhaps it was so because they had never come together but only on their bodies had done that act of sex. Nevertheless she always sustained and supported him. Cruelty to him was impossible. In spite of the fact that love as a factor that never found existed in their relation. She continued to be a wife without passion of love. Mohan was serving in the steel plant at Lohanagar, but he and one, Swaminathan, got into trouble when they took action against a worker. There was an injury which upset him so much that he decided to quit the job. It was this matter that Jaya had gathered from the circumstances while the real story was different. He explained that he had made up his mind to quit that job earlier than that of the incident of strike of the union in support of the worker. He was, in fact, not satisfied with the salary he was getting—it was too small to meet his expenses and ambitions. He recounted that his father had pestered him to send some extra money; either for Vasant, or Sudha (his sister). But Jaya was to go to Ambegaon with Rahul. He felt that he was short of money. He felt that after years of struggle he had improved only a bit in his financial condition. Earlier he hadn’t enough to pay for clothes and school fees and now he hadn’t enough to pay for gas connection, for brother’s clothes, for sister’s fees etc. Living frugally was not the solution. He had learnt that simple living was looked down upon by the society. Once Jaya had to go to a doctor in a simple and crumpled saree for she had started bleeding during her second pregnancy. The doctor ignored her, thinking she was not rich enough to deserve his attention. It was when the chief medical officer recognized her that the doctor attended on her. Gandhi’s principle of simple living was contemptuously disproved by the society.
Mohan left with no option except find a more lucrative job and he succeeded in his effort. Jaya did not know how he came by the job. The new job brought them to Bombay, enabled them to send their children to good schools and get all things they needed, decent clothes, a fridge, a gas connection, traveling first class. There was enough money flow to send home for Sudha’s fees, Vasant’s clothes and even for Sudha’s marriage. The windfall was not without a price. He had to resort to some unscrupulous practices, which were bound to put him in a soup. And when the new minister got annoyed with him, he was advised to shift to some other place to save himself from ignominy and punitive action. He shifted from Church gate residence to Dadar, where her uncle had a flat. She was not new to this place. She had come to live in this flat with Kusum, her aunti Vanitamami’s niece, who was abandoned by all for she had become insane. But she alone was sympathetic with her. Kusum ended her life by jumping into a well when she went to live with her apathetic-in-laws.

In his bad days, Mohan became irascible, irresponsible and vituperative. He said to Jaya that she was responsible for his present problems and predicaments. He thought that Jaya had never taken interest, nor co-operated with him in his profession. Though she had been doing what he wanted. It was at his insistence that she had gone to live at Dadar. But Mohan added that she even did not know what C.E. stood for. Even the stupidest of wives know that it stood for Chief Engineer. And she could not befriend C.E’s wife. He further alleged that it was for her that he got type C quarters with the help of CE who would not do any favour without getting some advantage for himself in return. He asked Mohan to do something unfair which ousted Mohan out of his mercy. But he felt that it did not matter to Jaya at all. In a sweep, he said that he had heard Jaya and her elder brother Dada laughing at his mother, showing but little regard for his own mother. How then he could expect any regard or feelings of
him from her. He went ahead to say that it was he who had spoken to an editor of women’s magazines to publish her stories. He accused Jaya of not caring about the children, of isolating herself from him and his concerns and of being a false wife, good in hay days and indifferent, if not hostile, in evil days. Still Jaya was a caring wife. She knew that he was speaking like a child who was hungry. She felt like laughing at him “poor Mohan deprived of the ripple” (TLS 122). Jaya tried to speak in defence, but continued to cringe under his anger. Her body became rigid and she could not speak anything. Mohan left the house, without saying anything to her, and he did not return for several days. This led Jaya to think in a different way. She first thought that Mohan would never leave her since she knew him very well. She waited for him the whole night. When he did not return, she started having fear about his life. When her child Rahu said that he wouldn’t return as he was dead. She slapped him so hard that her fingers left their imprint on his face. She imagined to console herself that he would return to her repentance, and hold close and say that he didn’t mean that. But it was a mere imagination, while in reality he had not returned to her. She thought that even if she had asked him not to get away, not leave her alone, he would not have stayed because it was, she felt, the end of the journey, the retribution, which as her Ajji had told her in her childhood, was bound to come.

As her husband had left, she thought she was like Kusum who was also rejected by her husband. She remembered that Kusum had sought her company inspite of her rude refusal to go with her. But she felt that fate had bracketed them together. She thought it was the retribution for leaving Kusum alone. Kusum had requested Jaya not to leave her alone but Jaya left her weeping, saying to her that Jeeja, Lata, Mukta (all Kusum’s sisters) would come to her whenever she wanted. Now Jaya herself was left alone. Jaya had the feeling that she had not been true to
Mohan. When she became pregnant soon after Rahul’s birth, she got the child after Rahul’s birth, she got the child aborted without bringing to Mohan’s knowledge. She thought it was her great act of treachery against him. She had concealed the fact from him but not without any sense of guilt, without a sense of loss and repentance. As she was alone without him, she remembered the words of Vanitamami that “a husband is like a sheltering tree” (TLS 32). Ramukaka also advised her that her husband’s happiness solely depends on her conduct. Dada also tells her to be good at Mohan. Her repentance was that in spite of all these exhortations she could not keep her husband happy.

She had now the big question before her what she should do after Mohan’s desertion. She had a doubt that Mohan would return. In order to get her clue, she considered the examples of ladies who had lost their husbands. The first case that struck her was of Kusum, but she thought that her example was of no use to her. Kamalakaki was totally broken after the death of Lakshaman Kaka, she wept without stop though her son Jaanu had taken her away with him. Jaanu and his wife Madhu were kind to her. This led her mother, Ai, had left Saptagiri to Ambegaon. She had retained nothing of her married life, except one large framed photograph of her husband. A sandalwood garland was placed round. When Jaya removed it, she found a swarm of mosquitoes buzzed out of it. Jaya removed the garland, but her mother did not notice it. In the opinion of Jaya, there was something positive in her mother’s widowhood. Jaya had a mind to live like her own mother if Mohan was dead, or not to return. But her sense of being alone overtook her “A wave of sickness overcame me and I found myself longing for someone to come and comfort me. To tell me it was all right. To reassure me that I had done no wrong. I longed for a soft,
motherly breast to cry on” (*TLS 139*). It was not first time that she had felt being deserted.

On one occasion, Mohan had failed to take notice of Jaya’s presence. She went with him to an executive function. Mohan went in and got lost in conversation with other persons as much that he forgot he had Jaya’s pass for entry with him that she was left behind. It was his children reminded him that Jaya had been left behind. She felt alone and deserted on one more occasion. Ramu Kaka had prepared the family tree but she was not shown anywhere in it on the pretext that she was no longer a member of the family after marriage. Her Kaka Vasu and her mother too had no place in it because they were born in other families. Thus she took to her sense that women as a class left high and dry, without moorings, lonely and deserted. She feared that Mohan like her hostel-mate Leena, would pass by her, with his face and closed up. None of the women characters like her, Nayana, Manda, Nilim, etc. enjoy no comforts as wives. Jaya realized that they were all made subjects of drudgery due to male, male violence. It was Jeeja and her like I needed; it was these women who saved me from the hell of drudgery. Any little freedom I had depended on them” (*TLS 52*). All these women including Jaya were made miserable by their men-folk.

Jeeja did not have a child, so she let her irresponsible husband have a second wife. She died leaving her children to be brought up by Jeeja, her step-son Rajaram was a drunkard, yet he was married to Nayana. He had given her the ultimatum that he would throw her out if she did not give birth to a son. Nayana, the sole earning member of the family did not care for his threat. He got involved in a quarrel and received injury. He was admitted to the hospital. Inspite of he, an irresponsible man Jeeja, his wife Nayana and his daughter Manda took care of him. Jaya approached the doctor and requested him to have better attention to him. All these women discharged
their duties and looked after him. Their endurance, sincerity and diligence are remarkable but the society in which they all live does not treat them with sympathy.

The other female character Vanitamami, among Jaya’s Kakis and mamis, deserved a special mention. By nature she was humble and submissive. But her mother-in-law treated her cruelly. She was not given even freedom to buy sarees of her choice. Such was her marginalised state. She bravely opposed the views of her family members when she decided to bring her cousin Kusum in her family. Her own husband Chandrasekar a doctor too did not like her approach. With the help of Jaya, she kept her cousin Kusum in her Dada’s flat. She also requested her to get a job for Kusum’s husband. Jaya too helped her in a big way. Jaya’s sole consideration was that Kusum was her mami’s cousin. Like her mami Jaya too bravely gave Kusum shelter. When she died a miserable death, it was her Vanitamami who consoled and helped her inspite of opposition of everybody around her. Vanitamami and Jaya were the only two persons who had sympathy for a neglected girl that Kusum was. Thus both deserved to be praised for their honour shown for their love for the neglected, the defeated and the innocent Kusum. Similarly Mukta, a young widow and her daughter Manda were very co-operative and helpful to Jaya when Mohan walked out of her.

It was Mukta who gave all her support when Jaya went to see her husband at churchgate flat where she did not meet him but found out her son Rahul too disappeared. Her daughter Rati spoke to her indifferently. Crestfallen Jaya returned to her Dadar flat in tension and high fever, unable to sustain herself. It was Mukta who got the keys, threw open the flat, got her to change and got her into bed. Jaya was as much upset that she had been speaking hysterically about Rati. Mukta felt she had temperature of nearly one hundred and four, Jaya could recollect nothing except that she had got into the train and a woman sitting there was embroidering something
when she woke up next morning. She found Mukta sitting beside her reading. Nilima and Manda prepared tea for her. In her care and attention Jaya saw the love of her father that alone gave her life back from temperature. Mukta had a great quality of remaining greatful to all that always did a good turn to her.

In the opinion of Jaya, it was Mohan who was in the wrong. He has misunderstood her on various occasions. He was devoid of feeling and responsibility. He had no qualms of conscience. When women like her were beings of love, service and forgiveness, persons like Mohan did not have any positive gesture of appreciating them. After reading the story of her in the magazine he became wild that he had publicly brought out their ill matched relationship without realizing the fact that what she wrote was nothing but transmuting the facts of her experience into something quite different. When Jaya received a soothing message from a missionary woman that those who accept the love of Jesus Christ which would get her eternal happiness and that none of her dear ones would die and they would be with her for ever. Jaya wondered if that would be the case then the world would be over crowded if none died since she took the statement of the lady literally. This innocent attitude of hers did not make her ask her husband when he knowingly enters into unholy alliance with the contractors, engineers and bureaucrats. The fault lies with him and not with Jaya. It was also her fault to accept him when he unabashedly said that he had done nothing except getting some favours from the public except okaying the substandard material and hoping his counterpart Agarwal would get his enquiry put off. In this area what Shashi Deshpande brought to light was there are Mohans in India who have been amassing wealth by unlawful means and thousands of Jayas are enjoying the riches with their eyes closed to the moral lapses of their husbands.
Mohan had managed to get a job. I never asked him how he did it. If Gandhari, who bandaged her eyes to become blind like her husband, could be called an ideal wife, I was an ideal wife too. I bandaged my eyes tightly. I didn’t want to know anything. It was enough for me that we moved to Bombay, that we could send Rahul and Rati to good schools, that I could have the things we needed. (TLS 61)

Such a bondaged wives like Jaya promote the lapses of their husbands and finally appear in tears. Jaya needed such comfort. Mohan had to provide it. But he did not care for the means through which they got their pet desires. But Mohan’s blunder was much deeper and broader when he shamelessly said that he had to do all that for the sake of his wife and children and walked out on them, without caring how lonely and miserable his wife and children would feel his absence.

Jaya’s freedom to write was strangled to death by Mohan. In order to be obedient, sincere and devoted to her husband, as a true Indian woman, Jaya tried her best to gag her thirst for writing. But the driving instinct in her compelled her to put pen on paper. She wrote under pen name which was appreciated by kamat, a neighbour of her. Mohan did not know about this matter of Jaya. Kamat’s frankness and openness won Jaya’s confidence. He gave her advice for not to loose heart at her stories get returned. These suggestions of him were modern and forceful. He became very friendly with her. She became too intimate with him to tell all her domestic woes, without knowing his true colour. All she needed was a friendly companion to share her grief. Her husband never cared to hear her expectations. He thought he was not grateful for all he did for the family. He cared for material comforts but failed to recognize that a woman, though a wife too, had feelings and emotions of her own that she needed to share with or shoulder with. In the absence of such shoulder to share
with women like Jaya took up the shoulder of persons like Kamat who embraced her to console. But the traditional Hindu instinct of chastity moved her away from him, rejected the body’s response. At the same time, there was no anger in her. Kamat used to call her Jaya, and she felt guilty of being untrue to Mohan. At the scope of Kamat taking undue advantage on her by trying to embrace her physically. “It had annihilated Mohan entirely” (TLS 157). Jaya’s moral departure though much against the traditional values surfaced due to her husband’s lack of understanding. But Jaya did not succumb to his evil design which shows she is not a woman craving for the union of flesh.

This novel deals with relationship between husband and wife. Mohan-Jaya story betrays the truth that Mohan is still an appendage to man. She is yoked with man but the direction is always decided by man. Despande has proved her point by referring to the examples of the highly respected mythological figures like Sita, Savitri, Draupadi and Gandhri. All of them went following their husbands to jungles. Similarly in this novel, Jaya goes from churchgate flat to Dadar flat in compliance of the wishes of her husband Mohan. The woman has no right in her own home. Jaya was obliged to her husband in her filial ties.

She though a wife of Mohan, mother to Rahul and Rati, became lonely. Mohan spoke daggers at her as he said it was for her and children that he had to resort to dishonest means and absolved himself of the guilt. But it was not like that. He said to his wedded wife that she was well till he had job but everything went wrong after she came to know about his predicament as if she had been taking care of her own comforts. Mohan did not realize the real worth of Jaya whose care for him and for their children stood in her course of action. Without appreciating her worth he chose to abuse her physically and verbally. Rahul, her son, also acted in the same manner.
Both failed to come to her in her hour of distress, and her daughter Rati, too talked to her indifferently. That is why she felt alone. She thus moaned “Mohan’s wife, Rahul’s and Rati’s mother- I can crawl, into that hole, I had thought, a warm and safe hole” (TLS 173).

This shows Jaya’s sense of ascetism, a true Indian woman’s instinct, when she went to the hospital to enquire about Rajaram’s health condition, she was made to realize whether she could exist without him. Though she was brought up by her father so independently, Jaya’s true ascetic spirit and her interdependence with Mohan did not leave from her. She wrote stories. She moved freely with Kamat. She looked after her family all alone. She cared for Kusum. But the advice she got from her pet Vanitamami “Husband is like a sheltering tree” (TLS 167). Carved a niche in her hearts of heart that she did all acts, however boring, or monotonous or tiresome or enervating or mechanical, they may be because she became yoked with Mohan who gave her no freedom to go away. It was this tendency of Jaya, abiding by the limitations set by the husband, is the meaning of true Indian Hindu domestically spun women who all long for freedom like peahen with their feet tied to limited domestic scores like cleaning, arranging or rearranging putting back in the place and tied that ruled their lives for many years. It was in the domestic freedom of cleaning and up keeping home in a tidy manner, Indian women enjoy the fruits of their existence.

Thus for Jaya as well as Indian women alike her though wanted to get away from the routine and at the same time they never had guts to soar high in the firmament of a liberated woman from the fetters of their husbands. All Indian women like her realized the fault of not keeping their husbands under their pet grip not due to husbands lapse but due to their drastic failure. “He (Mohan) expected something from
me, from his wife, and I’ve failed him” (TLS 185). All wives like her come out with repentance:

All these years I thought I was Mohan’s wife; now he tells me I was never that, not really. What am I going to do? What shall I do if he doesn’t come back? Mukta, I was so confident, so sure of myself, I felt so superior to others …Kusum, yes, and you too …And now, without Mohan, I’m …I don’t know, I don’t know what I am.

(TLS 185)

When enquired by Mukta why Jaya had in her the feeling of emptiness due to the death of Kamat, she immediately replied what she had said noting to do with Kamat- She was waiting for Mohan. However, she made it clear there was nothing between her and Kamat. “But after his death, nothing between me and Mohan either. We lived together but there had been only emptiness between them” (TLS 185). Thus Indian women even after their long innings of domestic life with their husbands ultimately made to feel their essence of existence with their husband’s emptiness.

Jaya like any other Indian women, though led a life of nothingness with her husband in such a companionship, there existed a meaning of life- remaining as a wife to her husband spiritually, socially and morally, too significant, at the same time keeping a companion with a stranger like Kamat, a passing cloud in some Hindu women’s lives but no significant moral, spiritual or social entity in it. Passing through the memories of past, Jaya as the last resort for her suppression, turns towards a extramarital relationship. She reflects upon the moments that she had passed in the company of Kamat who encouraged her to write on the issues related with the suffering of a woman in society. Jaya is conscious that in gender based social system even basic human sensibility and emotions are classified on the basis of gender
assigned roles. Kamat’s suggestion to express female anger through her writings baffles Jaya and she ridicules the whole issue, “A woman can never be angry, she can only be neurotic, hysterical, frustrated. There’s no room for anger in my life, no room for despair either” (TLS 148).

The anticipation of the reactions of Mohan, Rati and Rahul scared her of writing and therefore instead of searching a space for herself in the outer world, she withdraws herself to her private world. In order to expose the reality of society and the futility of personal relationship, she starts writing under the disguised name ‘Seeta’ and after it, she becomes free to write without guilt and shame. It was a self chosen shield to avoid the blow of despair and conflict. Company of Kamat becomes a consolation because he acknowledges and accepts her potential as a creative artist. Kamat and Jaya relationship became a model of relationship that was beyond the accepted social images. Shashi Deshpande here too, affirms that woman’s emancipation no longer implies the idea of negation of male companionship. Love and sex are complementary to each other and love requires a pure understanding of individual needs. If sex is a part of biological need, love is meant for emotional satisfaction and it is the fusion of the two that can ensure the balance in pattern of man and woman relationship. She confesses, “the relation to man to woman is the most natural of one person to another Natural? That’s only treachery, only deceit, only betrayal” (TLS 158). Jaya too frankly confesses her sexual needs like Indu, the protagonist of the novel Roots and Shadows, If Naren for Indu comes as a substitute of emotional chaos, Kamat is positively a substitute of Jaya’s quest for self expression that she had never achieved in the company of Mohan.

If this is found missing in man-woman relation, then the sacred union of them cemented on the religious ritual of marriage bearing all stamps of traditional and
social values would be of no use. If traditional women led their lives detachedly without lisping the agony of their loss of emotional satisfaction of making love and sex fearing for they being branded as vulgar women of low taste then they would never enter into the world of self-expression. Love and sex are matters to be released through right actions confirmed out of social values of marriage. But if not denied or not offered, then the fruit of action of sex and love is not to get it from other male but to find a means of channelising the sex energy for the selfless service of humanity. The choice of Jaya to take up the job of Journalism is a meaningful detachment and right choice of action that she suffers from the agony of not getting emotional satisfaction for her own self but trying to sublimate this satisfaction to the entire humanity by taking a public service – Journalism. Her sex satisfaction becomes a tool for public satisfaction- in this sense her traditional detachment becomes social attachment with a tag of meaningful detachment.

Having lost his parents at an early age Sindi’s life trode on the path of briars that made him realize that with the tool of detachment alone he could get along with others. Similarly Jaya practiced detachment as a tool to save the honour of the family. For Sindi there was no scope to cultivate a family tie. On a larger level he was made to practice this tool that is serving others without caring for any gain, the true Bagavad Gita philosophy, practicing detachment for an activity of attachment that earned him to lead a balanced life. Similarly Jaya realized that women folks in India to enjoy the fruits of freedom had to identify an area of self expression without hurting or damaging the image of family honour and prestige. In Sindi, detachment helps him to serve poor labourers. In Jaya, detachment helps her to find a way voicing women’s pleasures and pains for which she has selected the path of journalism.