CHAPTER IV
WOMAN’S ALIENATION FROM FAMILY, SOCIETY, NATURE AND SELF.

Alienation is basically a western concept. Always the family which is social institution where struggle has taken place. Females’ remains all the time kept into four walls in the earlier days. They fears about the social as well as cultural rules and regulations. In the mail dominated society women have always been socially and psychologically oppressed. There is no single by a woman to rise above the oppressive forces rooted in the middle class. Female characters always try to know their identity in the society. She examines the double colonization under imperial and patriarchic condition. She had the confidence as well as daring to challenge the bad trades of the society. There is need to develop the good relationship in between male and female. Man should try to understand the problems of the woman. The writers should pay attention towards the establishment of good relationship by creating dialogues with the characters. The Woman should crate by them with the spirit of rebelliousness as well as developing the good relationship. She does not reject any type of her duties and follow the god path which shown by the society. The female character who does not look spiritual base then she must be banished from the society. Women lead a life of conformity either out of personal choice or out of compulsion. Women want libration from the glossy and attractive trapping of womanhood, since they have experienced the limited space within the trap. This is not peculiar to the Indian woman. It is a condition prevalent all over the globe. In spite of much struggle, women even in the West can hardly claim to be liberated. Woman is confused between idea and action. For the majority of Indian women, it is a question of sheer survival. The patriarchal system affects both urban and rural women in different ways. Both women are victims of feudal and patriarchal structures and norms. The women took part in the movement to fight against the authority of sexist oppression. There is a struggle to finish the rude as well as rustic life of the female characters. The first wave of awakening of feminism started in mid 19th century up to 1920’s. It was when woman could not tolerate the humiliating sense of non-existence in a man dominated world; she yelled her voice demanding the right to vote. The second wave of awakening started
in the late 1960’s up to 1980. It demanded equal rights between woman and man without a discriminatory look at the gender. The third wave of feminist awakening started in 1980’s, which stood against the idea that woman was considered the other. It fought against all the binary oppositions, which were created cliffs between a man and a woman. Indeed, these inculcated, well-maneuvered and biased social rules and regulations, which are the sweet ingredients of capitalism, create the sense of domination in a society. Society generally teaches men they should dominate, it teaches women they should be submissive, and so men have the opportunity to dominate women. More and more, however, women are reacting against the ill effects of being dominated. But the battle of women to be free need not be a battle against men as oppressors. The choice about whether men are the enemy is up to the men themselves. After all women is the source of affection and emotion in any family. The main characters in the novel by the writer show their intellectuality as well as their growth after getting success. They try to improve their status in the society as well as to maintain good relationship with family members. Female characters all time rebels against patriarchic hegemony. In this new world of the modern and the postmodern, where every conventional idea and concept undergoes change, even the ideas of family, gender roles and the politics of power within the family undergo a phenomenal change. The writer has often tried to explore a woman’s world, most often, through the conventional stereotypes predominant in her times, of women pitted against patriarchy. Yet even in these powerful conventional representations we find some undercurrents of change, a change which intends to break free from the typical and the quintessential norms of womanhood or manhood. Family is not an individual’s private territory as it appears on the surface it is part of a larger social system. Apart from being the most essential part of an individual’s life it has to constantly work with other subsystems of the society. In a world where woman, as a helpless creature, is targeted by a man who fights tooth and nail in order to get advantage from her and gain control over her in a specious way, all attempts for woman's rights and her emancipation seem to go astray. In 19th century, a woman was only expected to get married, and care for the babies without being allowed to participate in social activities and consequently had a dim chance to dream for a promising
future. Living in a world where most of its citizens seem to be silent and indifferent toward woman. Besides the Indian women who actively participated in India’s struggle for independence were also guided to a considerable extent by the feminist zeal. However, the Indian women’s struggle for emancipation could not mimic its western counterpart for obvious reasons. Due to historical and cultural specificities of the region, the feminist movement in India had to think in terms of its own agendas and strategies. In the Indian context, several feminists have realized that the subject of women’s emancipation in India should not be reduced to the contradictions between man and woman. The woman, in order to liberate herself and advance, needs to empower herself to confront different institutional structures and cultural practices that subject herself to patriarchal domination and control. The problems and predicaments peculiar to the Indian women found artistic expression in the Indian literature in English since the 1970s. In their creative writings, the women writers like Kamala Markandaya, Kamala Das, Nayantara Sahgal, Anita Desai, Shashi Deshpande and others started discussing openly the sexual problems of women and questioning the gender-role expectations. The female protagonists in their writings evince sufficient vigor and courage to question the oppressive role of society, religion and culture. Each and every family has to face problems to the economical conditions. Sometimes she has to do hard work for the better satisfaction of the family. The family members have to face the various problems when there are new inventions in the society. When we consider the research that has been carried on in this area of family and gender the experts suggest that it is the roles that an individual is assigned within the frame work of family that decides their inequality. These roles are socially and culturally driven not only in India but also in the west. By subverting the hierarchies in a family and giving the females the power to rule does not initiate a valid solution to the problem. Therefore in almost all these above discussed cases men have set themselves and the family free of the gender stereotypes of patriarchal role within the family. Women certainly have taken the centre stage in almost all the narratives of Anita Desai but through her male characters the writer tries to review the conventional stereotyped notions and places gender roles at a equal level. Responsibility is always a collective effort and is one of the most essential ingredients of a
happy household. Therefore whether it is a male or a female, the problems need a peaceful and permanent solution and if the family comprises of individuals it is these individuals who are to take up the challenges that the family confronts. The distributions of power in the family have to be balanced a scheme which equalizes the power, position and status of every individual. When efforts are made to reach out to people by leaving and coming out of one’s comfort zone and create space for each other family flourishes and the individuals who constitute it get a better life. A woman cannot be herself in modern society. It is an exclusive male society, with laws made by men and with prosecutors and judges who assess feminine conduct from a masculine standpoint. A mother in modern society has undergone a lot of suffering inflicted by masculine community. Finally, she expires after she has done her duty by propagating the race. We come to know the history of human evolution is a witness that women have been mortified. Women have been viewed worldwide as an incarnation of sin, adversity, dishonor and indignity. During the Roman period issues of honour, shame and sexual purity were of key concern. Several statesmen, Philosophers, thinkers and literary writers of repute such as, Cicero, Seneca, Tacitus, Horace and Juvenal are on record to have discussed these issues. Seneca considered the lack of feminine chastity as the prime sin of his time, Juvenal recommended wives be restricted in the house in order to be kept chaste and in Cicero stated that sexual contravention of a woman brought disgrace to the entire family and ancestry. In many European countries women were burnt to death for committing adultery, unmarried pregnant British women were confined to lunatic asylums. The idea of honour is of a primary significance in communal societies because the ignominious behavior of a woman can bring shame, dishonor and reflects upon the other members of the community. Honour for men is connected with women’s behavior because they are seen as the property of the family and the community. They are not independent human beings. Men also think of women as an extension of themselves. When women violate these standards, this is a direct blow to the man’s sense of identity. Even Aristotle, the great philosopher, considered women as subordinate by social necessity and inferior to man both physically and mentally. But he did not approve of beating or killing the woman for adultery. Suppression, cruelty, and commoditization of
women have been a world-wide phenomenon, since times immemorial. The most dominant weapon that men exert over women is the idea of honour. Women, prior to her marriage, as a daughter and a sister, represents the honour of her father and brother. After her marriage, as a wife, she represents the honour of her husband and as a mother; she symbolizes the honour of her sons. Mulk Raj Anand's *Gauri* shows a concerned understanding of gender oppression in the household and society. It presents one of those rare fictional instances of an expectant mother rejecting’ her husband's home prepared to bring up her child herself. It raises questions about the possibilities of single parenthood and validates that such decisions lead to female empowerment. It is in fact Anand's only novel with woman's predicament as central. Gauri is the submissive wife of a peasant in a Punjab village. The drought in the village, and the suspicions her husband holds about her trigger off the crisis in her life. When, Gauri tells him she is expecting a child, Panchi's fears both about prospective fatherhood and about how he would feed yet another mouth, rise to the surface. In a fit of rage he turns Gauri out, cruelly telling her to go home to be cared for by her mother. Unlike Rukmini who accepts her daughter's return, Gauri is betrayed by her mother who sells her to Jai Ram Das a banker, because a married daughter rejected by her husband can only be considered a burden. With the money Lakshmi reclaims her mortgaged house and her cow. The betrayed daughters as well as the unmotherly Lakshmi are victims of an oppressive socioeconomic system from which no escape seems possible. Gauri has to face several trials to maintain her integrity resisting Batra's advances and her employment in Mahindra's hospital also widens her perception and strengthens her will for independence. When she returns to Panchi, he is bewildered by the change in her. No longer was she... the shy gentle cow that she had been ...she seemed alert and dignified, her movements full of strength (P 271). Gauri's refusal to have the midwife attend her delivery is also a rejection of the traditional village norms. As she tries to make the villagers aware of sanitation, education, health care, the threatened men folk again convince Panchi about his wife's infidelity and raise questions' about the child's legitimacy. By now, Gauri's desire for autonomy leads her to reject her husband and household. Instead of meekly submitting to his abuse, Gauri announces she will leave the house and go back to work in Mahindra's
hospital. Economic self-sufficiency would concretize her claims to independence. Her face shone, from the pressure of her stricken heart transfigured from the gentle cow's acquiescent visage of the time when she had arrived in Panchi's house, to that of a woman with a will of her own (p 272). Gauri the expectant mother decides that she must control her life and wants to live for the unborn child; "the woman who is banished becomes the woman who herself rejects the narrow world of subjections and fears that enslave Panchi". In her capacity as would-be mother and as nurse she extends the role of nurturer, like Rukmini. The traditional, self-abnegating mother is described in Anand's The Village, She had a great soul, how she accommodated herself to everyone and everything, in spite of her iron will. How she bent that iron will to the service of others, day and night without any gain for herself. For she desire neither clothes nor delicacies of any kind. She was satisfied, so long as she could provide these for others (p 125). Mulk Raj Anand portrays Gauri as active agent resisting self negation. Unlike the other women who have to limit their protests within the framework of society Gauri sheds her narrow domestic coils and emerges with a fresh lease of life. Narayan's Savitri is unaware of her destination when she sets out, and she returns to the claims of her 'mother' role; Gauri is surer of her goal—she would live for her yet unborn child and to nurse the ailing in the hospital. Closing the door on this world of narrow orthodoxy she walks out with renewed hope. Anand modifies the Ramayana myth to which there are several allusions in the novel. Like Sita, Gauri's chastity is suspect, she is turned out by her husband but she rejects the passive suffering of mythical figures and acts decisively: I am not Sita that the earth will open up and swallow me. I shall just go out and be forgotten of him...She waved her head to forget Sita and thought of the road to town...Rhythms of love for the unborn babe urged her on though she still sobbed' (p 284). Gauri then feels responsible for her child, and is strengthened enough to take conscious decisions about motherhoods. Commenting on the novel in his interview with Fisher, Anand has remarked on his slow and conscious preparation for the change in Gauri. Sudden revolt would not be possible in Indian life. I didn't want to show anything alien to her consciousness. But the growth of consciousness in Gauri from innocence to experience is a very important purpose of that novel. This
consciousness which affects Gauri's perception of herself and her society and leads her to a life of independence opens up potential possibilities of the mother role. In all the novels analyzed, motherhood has been such an oppressive institution that the mother-child relation has never been explored as a fulfilling relationship. Only Gauri seems to be strengthened with the unborn baby. Of course the novel does not deal with the situational problems of Gauri's mothering. Anand enunciates a new myth, but the character's consciousness is not clearly revealed to the reader. Offering new roles, shattering old icons is not easy and almost incredible. Can a joyful sense of childbearing and maternity be reconstructed without capitulating to ideology that reduces woman to a maternal essence? Not till in a non-alienated society woman can define motherhood and the conditions of mothering for herself. As Rajan observes, Gauri as the sufferer is more credible than Gauri the autonomous woman who remains more an abstraction. It is not only Gauri but also Anand who is confronting the feminine icon to fragment and recreate it with difficulty. Gauri points to woman's working consciousness and her confrontation against a male-dominated, tradition-oriented society. The methods of delineation and attempts at interpretation vary in complexity. Gauri escapes from the patriarchal household strengthened by her imminent motherhood demolishing the myth of the mother in the home. Mulk Raj Anand’s eminence and outstanding contribution as a novelist is undeniable fact. He is a celebrity in Indian fictional creed. Mulk Raj Anand terms his humanistic philosophy as existential expressionism. There is no iota of suspicion to claim that Mulk Raj Anand has been rated as one of the distinguished and high ranking writers in Indian English fictional horizon. Mulk Raj Anand creates the main characters from humanity background which identified with higher class people of the society. His range of subjects is varied and his contribution to Indian writing is immense. Most of the critics acknowledge that Anand is an artist of universal recognition. Mulk Raj Anand is the most conspicuously committed writes perhaps the best word for it is the, plainest. It is propaganda writing. He is committed to superimpose social commitment on his craftsmanship in the sense that he is committed to dig out the social evils of the rotten society frankly. He is brutally frank demonstrating social evils and the solutions for the social evils” Anand has utilized the form
of the novel as a weapon for the social change. The aim of the novel for Anand is to effect a change, He Protests the inequities and injustices of the socio-economic order. These aspects are reflected in his novel Gauri. The novel is unique among Anand’s works because the protagonist is a woman, a victim of the social injustice. Mulk Raj Anand has woven the story around Laxmi’s daughter, Gauri. She is a virtuous, amiable, gentle, meek, submissive and beautiful lady. Panchi, a young man resides with his guardians, uncle Mola Ram and aunt Kesarao. Panchi perceives the beauty of Gauri proposes and wedded her. Gauri is destined to remain with her husband, Panchi, in his house. She steps into the web of realistic life brimmed with complexities and atrocities. When his uncle Mola Ram is away, Kesaro launches a mission of poisoning the mind of Panchi against Gauri. Gradually Panchi’s devotion on Gauri vanishes. Panchi reflects miasmic, toxic words of Kesaro in his mind that Gauri is being with young men like Raj guru, the son of subedar and blames her going home without the dupatta on her forehead. Panchi launches the chapter of slapping her. Gauri innocently receives slapping of her husband out of affection. One day a quarrel explodes with blows between Panchi and his uncle, Mola Ram which drives him out along with Gauri out of barn. Rafique Chacha shelters a part of his barn for them. But Kesaro is like a stray dog visits Panchi at the new barn and unceasingly pours venomous words in to the ears of Panchi: Our house would break up with the coming of an inauspicious girl. Gauri overhears noxious, mephitic words of Kesaro, suddenly assumes the adventurous role of Kanaka Durga and drags Kesaro by holding her hair, throws out of the barn. The rebellious spirit dawns in her mind which Anand anticipates from Indian woman. One day Gauri reveals startling news that they are going to have another mouth to feed. For any genuine husband this will be glorious news. But venomous words of Kesaro echo in his mind, he shouts and kicks at her: Go, go, and get out of my sight. Go to your mother, the whore….” She fell at the feet, begged with hands, joined before her forehead, do not send me away. Her innocence is evidenced here. But Panchi indiscriminately kicks her. She realizes that she should protect her womb, strides towards her home. Her uncle in connivance with her mother tries to sell, Gauri to Seth who attempts to seduce her, but she protests... She suffers from fever. So she was shifted to Dr. Mahindra’s
Nursing home. Meanwhile Panchi realizes his foolish act digests Amur’s foul game. There is a fight between Panchi and Amur’s supporters in which Panchi gets injured. Gauri, as an innocent ideal wife still loves her husband and wishes to rerun to him with the assistance of Adam Sing, Gauri returns to her husband and renders dedicated service to Panchi with which he recovers from injury. Gauri represents traditional Indian wife. Neena Arora states that “Transformation of Gauri from a gentle Cow to a lady with iron determination is not abrupt or incredible. Anand proceeds to show the traces of Gauri’s passive revolution gradually”. Her rebellious spirit echoed in her words: Patience! Patience –low long can I on being patient against the nagging of that of that woman and your shoe beatings on her behalf”. After Panchi’s recovery, Kesaro, the satanic progeny visits the barn of Panchi where he forbids her entry. Then Kesaro accesses villagers and proclaims that a prostitute entered our village. The delinquent propaganda, abhorrent canvassing and gossip of the villagers torture Panchi mentally and demands Gauri: Tel me the truth, itch? … What is the proof of your purity? Then he starts kicking her. The mental obsession of Panchi leads him to act violently and cruelly against Gauri. Gauri experiences various forms of tortures mentally, cognitively, psychologically and corporally. She determines to leave him. Beating has become regular phenomenon, once she dauntlessly reacts to Panchi’s regular rhythmic beating: If I am a curse upon you, I will go away… I will not come back… And if you strike me again, I will hit you back. She strides straight away strides towards Dr. Mahindra’s hospital, perhaps out of affection for the unborn babe urged her on. Anand tried to focus a rebellious spirit against the ill-treatment of Indian women represented by Gauri. Mulk Raj Anand projects the woes of Indian women and down-trodden section in India. Atrocities of men towards their wives had been in the mind of Anand for a pretty long time”. Mulk Raj Anand contemplates that how long theses atrocities, including injustice on Indian women continue to last. He longs for a permanent solution. Majority of the Indian village women are still martyrs to the conventions of our society in which they are born. The conventions of our society are cruel to woman’. It appears that Anand sympathizes with hapless, alienated and tortured Indian women at the hands of husbands or mothers-in-law. Legislation has been made but in vain, since down- trodden and oppressed
women have been exploited by rich male domination. Anand’s greatest contribution towards the evils of male chauvinism and the society’s ambivalent approach with regard to woman and inspires the Indian woman to face the challenge by courageously working for her emancipation which alone can redeem the society from the failure of communication between man and woman. Anand projected Gauri as rebellious spirit of Indian woman for every woman should rebel against the atrocities of men and their domination. Mulk Raj Anand is not averse to dons of the mantle of a revolutionary to usher in a radical change in the Indian social order. In almost of all his novels Anand plays a role of social critic and opts for a lasting solution. The woman has to play the role of mother, wife, housekeeper as well as lover also. But these female characters have to pay attention to the rule of the different section of the society. Frailty will damage the whole life of the female character. So it will be leads to the feeling of frustration as well as anger in the mind of the females. This condition led to the rise of feelings of frustration, anger, and unfulfillment among feminists. The examination and analysis of the contexts and divergences of the literatures of different peoples of the world was a term coined by Goethe which was of all nations and peoples, and which, by a reciprocal exchange of ideas, mediates between nations and helps to enrich the spirit of man. Philosopher-novelist Raja Rao has been termed as the most brilliant master of Indian writing in English. When Raja Rao’s first novel Kanthapura was published in 1938, the “profound simplicity of a classic” broke new grounds in the history of Indian English writing, offering a wonderful paradigm of the synthesis of the cross-cultural experience. It was through this novel that Indian English literature had established its credentials all over the world, which at that period of time had some sharp misnomers concerning the impact of multiculturalists. The nature of the process of interpretation becomes central to negotiating cultural boundaries of the changing landscape. Raja Rao helped to recover the various traditional activities of the society. Raja Rao’s ‘Kanthapura’ was the novel where the villagers have their own culture and tradition. In this novel the character Achakka who narrates the whole story. There are such type of rituals in that village relates to the social and cultural background. The main character Moorthy who is the real hero that indulged in the movement. All the events
relate to the villager’s involvement with the freedom movement and an extremely lifelike presentation of the struggle for independence. Raja Rao had the faith that Moorthy had the good qualities within himself relates to the tradition. Raja Rao expressed his views which are very popular in the literature about the events in the novel. He says that there is only one village where all the villagers remain united forever even though they have to face many hurdles. There are so many people who have the good virtuous qualities within themselves. The important character Waterfall Venkamma says, “Oh! This widow has now begun to live openly with her men.”(p.99). These are the good qualities that acquired by the characters. The culture of those villagers mingles with past and present which signifies the good relationship in between all villagers. Raja Rao created useful language for giving the direction to the each and every character of the novel. By using the sensible dialogues the write makes the atmosphere clear and enthusiastic. The gestures that made very effective to the events in the novel. The writer says that there must be authentic language that creates the spirit in the mind of the writers. The write should have certain thought which conveys various shades. There should be the languages which have the intellectuality. There should be the mingling of the fact and fiction. There are many shades of color in Kanthapura that the views are relates to the qualitative structure. The opening paragraphs of Kanthapura give information about the various types of preparations within the villagers. That time the character like Achakka says that the villagers have known to the past traditions of Kanthapura. The writer says that the characters of his novel have so many virtues within themselves. They have so many visual and the verbal as sites of identities as well as useful cultural dialogues.

The protagonist Moorthy is introduced by the narrator Achakka in familiar terms: “Corner house Narasamma’s son Moorthy-our Moorthy as we always called him”. Moorthy also used a good language for the villagers who are peasants of Kanthapura. When Moorthy entered into the untouchable’s house before being imprisoned as a revolutionary is an important step for enlightenment. Again here there is a combination of polarities and this is the “mystical and the practical”, where there is a confrontation of the past and the present when Rachanna’s wife invites him into her house: “Come and sit inside, learned one, since you are one of us, for the sun is hot outside’ and
Moorthy, who had never entered a Pariah’s house…. thinks this is something new, and with one foot to the back and one foot to the fore, he stands trembling and undecided, and then suddenly hurries up the steps and crosses the threshold and squats on the earthen floor…” Moorthy becomes a participant in the act of a spatial consciousness communicated through this use of a cultural experience. Waterfall Venkamma says, “I want my daughter to go to her husband’s house, soon. Tuesday will be the nuptial day, and you are all welcome, sisters, and the invitation will be sent on to you.” (p.119) . The main character Moorthy becomes more powerful because of only the helping hand of the villagers. He tries his level best to look after the various problems of the people of Kanthapura. In the novel of Raja Rao there was powerful development of the plot that depends on the reality and truth. “In this ongoing lifelong preoccupation with the phenomenon of ‘being’ and ‘knowing,’ literary activity for Raja Rao remains a part of an infinitely larger sadhana.” His character works fully relates to the events that happened in his life. For the true events in the novel there was a scarification of the characters. Moorthy offers a vision of reconstruction and of integration of the possibilities and impossibilities of the philosophic whole and closing his eyes tighter, he slips back into the fold less sheath of the Soul…and sends out rays of love to the east, rays of love to the west… And when he opens them to look around, a great blue radiance seems to fill the whole earth, and dazzled, he rises up and falls prostrate before the god, chanting Sankar’s ‘Sivoham, Sivoham, I am Siva.I am Siva. Siva am I.’ This variability in interpretation integrates certain terms such as taste or essence and sound, which reconcile theories of linguistic expressionism with emotional nuances. In Kanthapura, we encounter a unique process of projection of thought movements, evoking the quintessential spirit and discourse of folk tales. In the translation of patterns, there are correspondences between macrocosm and microcosm, linking the gross and the subtle, with deep sense perceptions and emotive states. We can see the instrumentality of the suggested power of the word and meaning by use of figures of speech like rupaka, upama, together with atisayokti. Now when you turned round the potters’ Street and walked across the Temple square, the first house you saw was the nine beamed house of Patel Range Gowda, combined with the abiding presence of the great river Himavathy: The slow—moving
carts begin to grind and to rumble, and then the long harsh monotony of the carts’ axles through the darkness. The noise suddenly dies into the night and the soft hiss of the Himavathy rises in the air”. There is the beautiful atmosphere in the novel relates to the poetry and lyric. The description of the rainy season as well as natural incidents has shown by the writer very clearly. He very minutely used the language which shines the brightness of the various trees in the nature. The writer mentions the religious attitude of the people of the village Kanthapura who thinks that god is the savior of the people. Reading this parable like tale is a recollection and recreation of “not only myth but ‘social transactions’ rendered authentic in terms of art by the villagers patois, their sing song …” The writer pointed out the bonding relates to the social and cultural from the old days. He has given many connections to the literary culture. Raja Rao mingled different type of idioms and colorful language for the characters of the village. His romantic iconography enfolds a scholarship whose range and reach is inexplicable. There is a narrative strategy as well as plurality in voice. Raja Rao’s novels are profound explorations of the interaction of the two contrasting civilizations from the standpoint of a follower of society. It would be safe to assert that the writer has accomplished to justify the wisdom of traditional to the society. 

**Kanthapura** is Raja Rao's first exploration of the nature of India and examines the maternal principle which permeates Indian consciousness. It is the story of a small village in south India caught in the maelstrom of the freedom struggle but Rao moves inevitably from realism to symbolism. Lingamma says, “Touch it, Moorthappa, touch it only as though it was offered to the gods, and we shall be sanctified.”(p.76). The village Kanthapura is a microcosm of India. The organic village community nurtures the villagers and they live with implicit faith in their goddess Kenchamma. Legend and history effectively intertwine the Ramayana myth with the political situation. The story unfolds through the involved consciousness of Acchakka, the narrator, therefore projecting a consistent female vision. The narrator's idiom is colloquial and the rambling language is characteristic of an old grandmother telling ‘the sad tale of her village. The conscious female voice is in keeping with the pervading ideology of the mother in the novel: Kenchamma, the mother-goddess, Narsamma and Rangamma the village mothers and the mother-country symbolized as Sita in
the grip of Ravana to be saved by Rama. The village is hallowed by the living presence of goddess Kenchamma. The legend which explains her presence here has a close parallel to numerous other legends in the puranas. To protect the village from a demon the sage Tripura brought the goddess Kenchamma from heaven. She fought against so many devils and gets victory on them to secure the village Kanthapura. In a land where all women are 'mothers', motherhood seems infused in the cultural texture of the novel. The goddess-mother, the earth-mother and the biological-mother are synthesized in a complex matrix. Kenchamma Goddess provides everything to the villagers. She is able to give various remedies for each and every disease. Goddess of the village always pays attention to trouble of the villagers. She brings happiness and prosperity in their lives. The mother-goddess is capable of miracles and of active participation in the village life. Kenchamma, who is also earth-mother, mother of the river Himavathy, presides over the first seasonal ploughing of the fields. Kenchamma through the darkness of the sanctuary opens her eyes wide and she smiles on you such a smile such as you have never before beheld, you know what that means. This simple faith, absolute credulity in the mother who protects and nurtures the villagers seems no exaggeration. This protector or nurturer figure is an inextricable part of the functional life of Kanthapura. Marriage, funeral, sickness, death, ploughing, harvesting, arrests, release—all are watched over by Kenchamma. Narsamma said, “You are a grown up boy, Moorthy, and if you don’t marry now, you will take to evil ways.”(p.37) there may be smallpox or influenza around but a vow to the goddess would cure the villagers of disease by the next morning. When the women in the village are being mobilized by Rangamma the new nationalistic fervor is blended wholly with deep-rooted religious faith. We shall fight the police for Kenchamma sake and if the rapture of devotion is in you, the lathi will grow as soft as butter and as supple as a silken thread. When Moorthy is imprisoned, the villagers assure each other: The Goddess will free him. She will appear before the judges and free him. While Indian women are being mobilized to free the mother country, let us draw attention to one individual mother in the novel and examine her predicament. Narsamma, Moorthy's mother is a conservative widow with "an air of ascetic holiness". She had borne eleven children, five of which died, and of the remaining six
Moorthy is the only son, therefore the most precious. She dreams of him being a sub-collector, and marrying a girl from a good family. He was the only son and she would have liked to close her eyes with an ever-lit house and sons and grandsons that would-offer unfailing oblation to the manes (p 49). Narsamma nurses guilt about her son's pariah-mixing bringing evil to the village. Within the confines of conventional society, Narsamma has to reject her son, and suffer isolation. Alienated from Moorthy, she slowly kills herself in the process of self negation. From that day they never spoke to each other, Narsamma and Moorthy. He sat and ate his food by the kitchen threshold and she in the kitchen, and everyday saw that Narsamma was growing thin as a bamboo and shriveled like a banana bark (p 59). The resistance to the Gandhian movement by the orthodox Brahmin community culminates in severing the ties between Moorthy and his mother. Moorthy's sacrilegious ways lead to the excommunication of his family. Narsamma, who has her roots in the village, cannot accept this rejection from the community. "Oh! To have a son excommunicated! Oh! To have gone to Banaras and Rameshwaram and to Gaya and Gokurna and to have a son excommunicated! I wish I had closed my eyes with your father instead of living to see you polluted. Polluted! Go away you pariah" (P 53). For a woman too deeply rooted in convention, it is not possible for her to envision any life outside the functional village life. 

"What! Never go to the temple or to a sequel dinner? Oh!" moaned Narsamma (p 59). As she is not the figure of inspiration or nurturance Moorthy could have done with, Narasamma’s role in the novel is curtailed. This excommunication literally cuts her off from life, because that very night she walks out of the village gate, and dies on the river banks. For Moorthy, his mother's death is the crossing of the threshold of orthodox conventionalism. Her presence broadly allegorizes Moorthy's suspension between orthodoxy and socialism. The individual mother's death effects his whole hearted commitment to the salvation of the mother country. Narsamma said, “You are a grown up boy, Moorthy, and if you don’t marry now, you will take to evil ways.”(p.37) Narsamma the widowed mother had no control over her son, and loses any ideological identification with him. Her identity obliterated, she is as helpless as1 the childless widow Akkayya and when she cannot be glorified, Rao negates her role as mother: she dies as she cannot have a life outside
social conformity. The village mothers, headed by the widow Rangamma are mobilized as the Sevika Sangha. There comes regular cry of Rangamma’s mother, “Oh, sinners, sinners, to have this in our old age!” (p.86) they are inspired by tales of Lakshmi Bai of Jhansi and Kamaladevi and Sarojini Naidu and Annie Besant, all the heroic daughters who fight for the mother. They are the 'race of mothers’ who must awaken and participate in national regeneration. The benevolent mother Kenchamma, the enslaved mother Bharatha, the suffering mother Narsamma all form part of a tightly packed symbolic structure. Raja Rao very cleverly pay attention towards the end by using the correct symbol which is relates to the birth. Rajamma, who had an evil tongue, said, “May this Government be destroyed!” (p.98) Very clearly this birth symbol concretizes the nation in its birth thrives and the new mother is given shelter in Kenchamma temple the mother goddess and the mother country begin to synthesize in ideological glorification. The freedom struggle is building a thousand pillar temples and "when the temple is built, stone by stone, and, man by man we shall invoke the mother to reside with us in dream and in life. India then will live in a temple of our making” (p 164). M. K. Naik considers Kanthapura as unique in Indo- Anglian fiction which shows how "the new patriotic upsurge fused completely with traditional religious faith" and this is validated through effective use of the mother figure at functional, symbolic and religious levels. Nanjamma explains, “You have been to the city and you should know more than me. But tell me, my son, does Mahatma spin?”(p.19) Anita Desai very minutely gives the emotional world of the protagonist Maya who starts under an acute alienation. She is described to be almost totally deranged naturally required to be related by someone else. The writer says that the characters which created that totally on the verge of various achievements in their future plans. Her novels catch the bewilderment of the individual psyche confronted with the overbearing socio-cultural environment. Anita Desai gives more importance to the real happenings in the life of the characters. She emphasized the various insights which are found in the female characters. Her protagonist Maya has the same activities relates the insanity. Her artistic skill primarily lies in the delineation of the psychic conditions of the characters. She clearly expressed the views relates to her own experiences. A study of her novels reveals that she is interested in the
exploration of psychological states of her women characters. Anita Desai focused on the inner working of women and externalizes their passive reaction. She uses the fiction as a site for studying the role of women in society. A study of her novels reveals that she is interested in the exploration of psychological states of her women characters. She creates a space for the mother outside the home holds different implications as well as explores the psyche of a woman. She very cleverly placed the womanhood is in a fictional perspective. The woman is both mother and wife and the woman in her consciousness explores their state of mind. The novel Cry, the Peacock emphasized various types of images of women characters that are totally well skilled by the novelist. The protagonist Maya is a young girl obsessed by a childhood prediction of disaster. The story unfolds that Maya's father without thinking much, married her off to his own lawyer friend Gautama who was a middle aged man. The marriage was never fruitful and slowly Maya turns into a psychopath whose emotional needs were seen to be collided with that of the extremely practical outlook of her husband. The climax of the story lies when Maya's attachment with her father further develops into an Electra complex. The main character Maya thinks about her childhood in her frustrated mind. These days gives relief in her mind as well as set her free from the various problems in her life. Her desire of killing her husband awakens her from own frustration as revenge. The writer fills the various thoughts of revenge in the mind of the main character. Although Maya married with the successful lawyer, she has taken all responsibilities upon herself. She feels that nobody in the world cares for her. Besides, her pet dog Toto's sudden death throws her completely off her balance and filled with despair. The writer makes the good relationship between nature and man in the novel. Anita Desai focused on the major themes like the importance of the nature. She gives the natural imagery which goes nearer to the qualities in female characters. She believes that it is investigation that the nature is used literally in certain literary genres. Her images have the feelings relates to the particular situations. Anita Desai emphasized the human condition and predicament. Through the images, Nature images in Cry, the Peacock explore the emotional world of Maya the protagonist, and travel down her psychology to unravel her distorted world. The images are poignant expressions of an extremely sensitive personality that
borders between neurosis and insanity. The first zoological imagery of Toto, Maya’s pet dog is used ‘as a structural device that is not only integral to the novelist but also to the theme. This animal image introduces the theme of alienation and the death motif as the primary indicators of Maya’s psychic disorder. Anita Desai says that restlessness was the main cause of predicament to the main character Maya. The writer uses botanical images relate to her barrenness. She notices that Leafless, the fine tracery on the naked neem trees revealed unsuspected, so far carefully concealed, nests, deserted by the birds....Down the street, the silk-cotton trees were the first to flower: their huge, scarlet blooms, thick petal, solid- padded then dropped to the asphalt and was squashed into soft, yellowish miasma, seemed animal rather than flowerage. The ‘silk –cotton trees’ with ‘huge blooms’ that are now ‘squashed into yellowish miasma’ suggest the painful reality of her aridity. The deployment of different images, intermittently is crucial in understanding the fact that Maya is self-conscious of the reality around her. When the pigeon’s nest in the verandah of her home is filled with babies, and the doves coo to mate, Maya is reminded of her loveless life and her childless condition. Her unfortunate plight is aggravated when she sees rats. She says, ‘Rats will suckle their young most tenderly. I know this as now I lived quite near one, with seven young ones nestling between their legs.’ The acceptance of barrenness and virginity is a sign of disaster. Her deranged mind is filled with thoughts of snakes that crawl to the lure of ‘chaste sweet white flowers. Lizards seem to crawl, beckoning her. She adds: Of the lizards, the lizards that come upon you, stalking you silently, upon clod, toes slipping their club like tongues in and out, in and out with an audible hiss and a death’s rattle, slowly moving up, closing in on you... rubbing their cold bellies upon yours rubbing and grinding. Later, when Gautama enquires about the giant lizards called Iguanas, Maya exclaims, ‘Iguanas!’ my blood ran cold, and I heard the slither of its dragging tail even now, in white daylight. ‘Get off, Get off! I will tell you, Get off.’ these images capture the predatory sensibility in Maya spontaneously and unconsciously. Maya is so shocked at the unpleasantness of the slimy creatures that she detests any animal, even her pet cat for a moment. Yet, her mind continuously churns up revolting images that provide testimony to her sordid state. Maya realizes that her quest for a fruitful life would not
materialize. Both of them are poles apart in sensibilities. She is like ‘the beds of petunias…sentimental irresolute flowers,’ while Gautama resembles ‘the blossoms of the lemon tree. Maya identifies herself with the peacocks that keep ‘pacing the rocks at night- peacocks searching for mates, peacocks tearing themselves to bleeding shreds in the act of love, peacocks screaming with- agony at the death on love’. Gautama is unresponsive to her desperate calls for intimacy. She recalls how lonely she had felt even in her own home. She recalls, ‘I was caged in this room that I had hated –severe, without even the grace of symmetry’ (p.85-86). Marriage too does not provide a solution to her loveless life. The resulting chaos in her mind is suffocating and the external images succinctly associate with the mounting pressure that is beyond endurance. The albino astrologer’s prediction of the imminent death of either Gautama or herself draws Maya into the quagmire of the need to live or die. While she contemplates death, she ironically decides to murder Gautama, the root cause of her unfulfilled life. The astrologer’s warning works on her imbalanced mind and she constantly engages in deciding how to execute the crime, justifying the need to act at the first opportunity. The fissure generated by the emotional and intellectual alienation between partners need culmination and the sapless existence of the couple is finally resolved: He had no contact with the world, on with me. What would it matter to him if he died and lost even the possibility of contact? What would it matter to him? It was I, I who screamed with the peacocks, screamed at the sight of the rain clouds, screamed at their disappearance, screamed in mute horror. Anita Desai exploits the ravages of nature and the botanical images to heighten the malicious influence of Maya on Gautama. In the meantime, Maya’s father, to take complete rest, decides on a European tour and asks the couple to accompany him. Gautama decides to move to his own house for a few days instead. At the railway station Maya sees cages of ‘laboratory’ monkeys bound for Bombay. Their pitiable sight is unbearable and is symbolic of her despicable situation: And one that I saw was perfectly still and quiet…. Its bow was lined with foreboding and the suffering of a tragic calamity, and its hands, folded across its thin belly, waited to accept it. Then it spied something on the platform beside it ….It was only a monkey-nut shell, empty. A small whimper broke from the animal…then was silent again, waiting. Maya is agitated because the
monkeys are thirsty and hungry and there is ‘not even a bowl of water for them’. In Gautama’s home Maya finds relief in the company of her mother-in-law and Nila, her sister-in-law. Yet, she cannot restrain the thoughts of murder that keep her engaged ‘relentless as a well-aimed arrow’. She finally decides to kill Gautama without further delay. She says: Storms I had known before. Rain storms, thunder-storms, dust-storms….But this waiting with not a rumble of thunder, not a whirl of wind to mark the beginning of the end. And it was the end that I waited for. The beginning had begun long ago, was even forgotten…. I had waited too long – another day would be one too many. When the dust-storm finally approaches, Maya believes ‘the time came for annihilation’. She knows that the time for ‘release and liberty’ has arrived: Ah, storm, storm, wonderful, infidel storm, blow, blow! I cried and ran and ran on and on from room to room, laughing as maniac laugh once the world gives them up and surrenders them to their freedom…. Frightened? No! I ran from the thought, laughing. Oh no, what need for fright…. It is only relief I promise you, you shall see – I swear – survive… As the evening approaches, Maya asks Gautama to accompany her to the roof instead of walking down the garden. As they keep talking, Maya realizes that it is ‘Poor Gautama, poor dear Gautama who was so intense and yet had never lived, and never would’. She makes him pause at the parapet edge and when Gautama makes a casual gesture in front of her as they talk, she pushes him ‘to the very bottom’ screaming ‘Gautama!’ in fury. The death of Gautama is a rude shock to the families. When asked about the reason for the act, Maya justifies by saying that ‘it was an accident’. She feels no remorse and moves about with merriment. She has avenged the wrong done to her. Maya’s unpredictable behavior is watched suspiciously by Nila. A month after Gautama’s death, the three move into Maya’s home. One day, Nila and her mother hear ‘the patter of a child’s laughter cascading up and down the scales of some new delight – a brilliant peacock’s feather perhaps? Then it stopped, suddenly they heard a different voice calling…calling out in great dread’. Maya’s mother-in-law rushes to the balcony, and in an effort to stop Maya from any untoward action disappears with her ‘into the dark quiet’ (p.184). The reason for Maya’s neurosis is the prediction by the albino astrologer of the death either of her or her husband
within four years of their marriage. It is apt to quote K. Meera Bai who rightly
observes: “The opening of the novel wherein Maya is shown to be washing
her eyes in order to wash off the sight of Toto’s dead body gives a glimpse of
Maya’s obsessive compulsive neurosis.” The frightening words of the
prediction ring in her ears and unnerve her. She is so haunted by the prophecy
that she begins to think of death of either of them. Maya's marriage with
Gautama, a man, double of her age, takes place out of her desire to please her
father. She is forced to live in Gautama's house and bear the tortures of her
husband and in-laws. She compares her mental condition with the birds and
creepers, leaves and clouds of dust. At several places Anita Desai uses the
symbol of peacock to show the anguish of Maya. Maya's position is like a
trapped bird. She cannot escape from her present. Her childlessness adds to
her miseries. Gautama is pragmatic, unromantic, and unsentimental and
believes in 'detachment' on every count. Maya on the other hand, is a highly
sensitive, gifted with poetic imagination and a neurotic sensibility. The death
of Toto which upsets Maya is nothing to Gautama. This is suggestive of the
lack of any possible emotional communication between them. Communication
gap between husband and wife is felt throughout the novel Maya and Gautama
disagree with each other even over trifles. Although their marriage has been a
complete failure, they continue to be together, leading a mechanical life. Maya
herself reflects upon her marriage which has become a misalliance: It was
discouraging to reflect as how much in our marriage was based upon nobility
neither forced upon us from outside, and, therefore, neither true nor lasting. It
was broken repeatedly, and repeatedly the pieces were picked up and put
together again. Unable to establish a rapport with her husband and to find a
meaning in her 'arid existence', Maya remains throughout an utterly lonely
creature in this helpless and indifferent world. Sudhakar T. Sali in his book
titled Anita Desai’s Female Protagonists quotes: “The incompatibility of
caracter stands revealed-Gautama who touches without feeling and Maya
who feels even without touching.” Thus Maya's unique temperament, her
peculiar relationship with her father, her unfulfilling matrimonial ties, Toto's
death, the astrologer's prophecy, her childlessness, push her slowly and surely
to a state of mental disorder. Father - daughter relationship is the leitmotif of
the novel. Maya suffers from father fixation. Her neurosis is the result of her
love - wish which she transfers from her father to her husband and which remains unfulfilled. She hopes to prolong the relation with her father in the same spirit as it used to be, as she clearly perceives that Gautama will not play the father for her. Her neurosis is further heightened by her awareness of her horoscope and the macabre prediction of the albino astrologer, which leads to her killing Gautama and her committing suicide. In spite of her neurosis, Maya commands sympathy of the readers because she reminds one of Nora of A Doll's Houses. Maya's marriage with Gautama was more or less a marriage of convenience. Her marriage was only serves to highlight her total involvement with her father. She constantly thinks of him and unconsciously searches him in her husband. However, it is a fact that her helplessness and an intense longing for love are the root cause of her trouble. Besides, her childhood world of fantasies and adult world of realities clash, and create imbalance in her life. She expresses her agony with the help of the imagery of withered flowers. Desai explores the turbulent emotional world of the neurotic protagonists, Maya, who smarts under an acute alienation, stemming from marital discord, and verges on a curious insanity. The lifeless roses and carnations on her dressing table "belonging to yesterday, corpses of today," are very much like her desires. Maya's desire of sexual union is clearly perceptible in her contemplation and exultation on seeing the male and female papaya trees in the garden. Maya finds herself spiritually ruined, and out of frustration she condemns Gautama to death and burdened with death haunted by self-contempt, self-accusation, and self-hate and drags herself into complete darkness of the world of the insane. As the very title suggests, *Cry, the Peacock* is about Maya's cries for love and understanding in her loveless marriage with Gautama. Desai's protagonists are highly sensitive and terribly bewildered by the burden of living helplessly in the society with absurd realities. Therefore, her fictional world is full of imperfection and unfulfillment, hankering and helplessness, agony and anger, struggle and surrender. She is essentially a novelist of existential concerns. The peacock's cry is symbolic of Maya's agonized cry for love and life of involvement. Names of the characters in the novel are also symbolic. Gautama, as his name suggests believes in philosophy of detachment. Gautama is a dry type of matter of - fact person who shuns all sentimentiality. On the other hand, Maya,
as her name suggests, is too much in love with life. She delighted herself in the world of sounds, senses, movements, odors, colors, tunes. It is marked by “sensuous richness, a high-strung sensitiveness and for the sound of words. Thus, Maya and Gautama stand poles apart in their attitude to life. Anita Desai has employed many dance images in this novel. The first powerful dance image is that of the 'Kathakali' dancer. It was the mad demon of Kathakali ballets, masked, with heavy skirts swirling, feet stamping, eyes shooting beams of fire. It was a phantom colors, rose out of realms of silence into one of thunderous drumming. The image of cabaret dance obtains a truly remarkable importance when placed side by side with that of the bear dance changing the frenzy of Maya's sub consciousness into a contemporary reality. These cabaret dance and bear dance indirectly present the cruel exploitation in the society. Another dance image in the novel is the familiar dance of Shiva which mythological signifies the dance of death. In this novel, it is "a symbol of liberation" a way out of the embarrassing existentialist predicament in which Maya finds herself. The unforgettable dance image of the peacocks figured in chapter three and later on referred to in chapter six, part II, of this novel, is in fact the most pungent of all the images. In fact, lovelorn ecstatic cry of the peacock runs parallel to the main thread of the story. The cry which in auspiciously suggests the ecstasy of life has the finality of death. Gautama, through a father-substitute for Maya, is also her lover who wretchedly fails not only to feel the intensity of her anguished soul, and thus when she commits suicide in the end she, in a way, symbolically substantiates the agonized cry of the peacock. The novel focuses on the clear study of the psychology of the main character Maya. Her moods, observations, dilemmas and abnormality are conveyed effectively by Desai. Her fears, insecurity, strange behavior, loneliness, and sufferings indicate how Desai has succeeded in portraying her female protagonist Maya making her one of the most enigmatic characters in his novel. Anita Desai's main concern in writing too is the quest of truth. She writes, "Writing to me is a process of discovering the truth — the truth that is nine-tenths of the iceberg that lies submerged beneath one-tenth visible portion we call reality. Writing is my way of plunging to the depths and exploring this underlying truth. All my writing is an effort to discover, to underline and convey the true significance of things." Anita Desai says, "My
novels don't have themes at least not till they are finished, published or read, do I see any theme. While writing, I follow my instinct, I follow flashes of insight, I veer away from or even fight anything that threatens to distort or destroy this insight, and somehow come to the end and look back to see the pattern of footprints on the sand." Anita Desai is a modernist who shares some common features with other prominent writers of our times. She emphasis on the spiritual image of man whose relation to his universe. The telescopic self of the hero, operates through physical objects which serve as the catalyst, leading him on to hallucinations and dreams, expressed through a succession of image scenes. The method of ironic juxtaposition is applied for a heightened expression of feeling. The plot moves with the modulations of memory. The hero becomes a wanderer through space and time. These novels are psychological dramas, surfacing an inner conflict, through aesthetic objectivity. The poet novelist mirrors himself in the theme, and at the same time remains detached, till he is able to produce a spiritual self-image. This intrinsic relationship between all animate and inanimate objects becomes the sole subject of the lyrical novelist. For Anita Desai too "writing is not an act of deliberation, reason, and 'choice. It is a matter of instinct, silence and waiting. It is the movement of the wing one tries to capture not the bird. That is, it is the image that matters, the symbol, the myth, the feat of associating them, of relating them, of constructing with them. The novel describes an event which reveals the inherent qualities of the protagonists and yet the reader is not told anything about their identities. In other words, the death of a pet is all that the novel reveals in the beginning at a point of least supposition, and ends on a point where the reader feels that he knows all about Maya and Gautam, and hence he is not shocked by the end. The interior monologue, the conversation between Maya and Gautam, the hallucinations of Maya, are all detailed psychological analyses of the innermost self of Maya, and though chronologically we feel that time has moved, Desai's deft presentational sequencing patterns it all in flash backs and dramatic modes of soliloquy, giving us the impression of a life story. As Prof. Maini says, 

*Cry the Peacock* is a story rendered through the consciousness of Maya and in her own agonized idiom. Although in the beginning the description is impersonal and uninvolved, gradually the implied reader is lead to understand her dilemma
and by the time the novel reaches its climax the reader is totally wrapped up in her argument. The first person narrations, full of rhetorical questions, are direct addresses to the reader, inviting his judgment on events. As a result the reader feels drawn towards Maya. Why should I love him? I wish I did not! If it were not for me, why should I suffer? There never lived a bird that did not know a storm, a stone, a wound. And I, an adult thinking woman, had no more right to happiness than I had been taught by Gautam, to regard as a privilege.' (Cry the Peacock, pp. 201-2) The implied author's role is to create the contrasting world of sensitive Maya and practical Gautam. Anita Desai consciously filters information so that towards the end Maya's version seems fully justified and wins the whole-hearted sympathy of the reader, or to use Booth's phrase, the reader is caught in the trap of Maya's 'suffering consciousness'. If woman who is childless that also on the side of a particular woman. She also has ability to give support to her husband. All such events relates to her chastity. Premchand tries to develop the character Suman with all the good qualities. Suman also pays very clearly attention to her chastity. She wants to remain always away from sinful activity but fate is responsible for her sinful activity. Premchand creates some incidents that maintain the good qualities within the main character. By knowing the reader also remains on the side of Suman. She tried her level best to maintain her purity in her downfall. But she does not remain aloof from punishment. Suman has to pay too much for her sins which committed by her. If society comes to know about the woman’s sins then nobody pays attention towards her. She does not respected by society. There is some soft corner to her when she fully repented as well as fully changed herself. For Suman to achieve even partial redemption in Premchand’s eyes, however, she will have to pay for her mistake for the rest of her life there is no real forgiveness, no way back to respectable society. His view, according to Pandey, is that a woman having once fallen could, unlike fallen men, not be fully taken back into society. That she had truly repented and completely changed her ways did not matter. This is somewhat of an understatement. First she is married to an older man who subsequently throws her out. Nowhere to go she seeks refuge with friends who also turn her out to save their honor. After being lured into becoming a prostitute she is rescued by the would-be reformer Vitthaldas and allowed to live in a widow’s ashram.
After knowing the truth, Suman has to leave the society. In the novel, ‘Sevasadan’ Suman does not get permission to live in respectable society. She tried her level best to secure by orphanage. She thinks that its great opportunity for her repents. She is mentally as well as physically punished by Premchand. Sadan, Shanta and Subadhra all comment on the results at various times. Sadan seeing her at the river says that she had changed dramatically, no long flowing hair no laughing rosy lips no sparkling eyes. Shanta asked about the playful days as well as always smiling eyes of Suman. At the end of the novel, Subadhra taken aback at seeing Suman with her head shorn and simply attired also comments that she no longer had her smiling eyes and laughing smile. It can, of course, be argued that not all the views expressed in the novel are those of Premchand himself. It is also possible to see Premchand in different characters at different times for example in Padam Singh with his compassionate attitude towards the prostitutes, and in Suman when she exposes the hypocrisy of the Hindu Jati but whilst the novel can be viewed as polyphonic at this level, there is never any real challenge to Premchand’s views as author. In the final analysis it is Premchand who decides on the solution to the problems of both Suman and the courtesans. And it is Premchand as author who expels them from the city and places them where they are allowed little or no contact with respectable society. That Premchand’s solution is not an effective one to the given similarity of the subject matter in the two novels it is interesting. Other main characters try to comment on the sinful activities of Suman. Sadan very minutely criticizes her behavior which is shameful. When she reaches near the river, Suman behaves very badly with other characters. She lost her all chastity as well as charm which was earlier. The dialogues which spoken by her would be neatly and clearly made by Premchand. So this novel became very famous among the readers. Premchand filled full hypocrisy in the character Suman. He tries to maintain various types of solutions to the deep problems of some character. He also makes some places for them and respectful atmosphere in the society. Such type of solutions does not become powerful as well as effective to the subject matter. Krishna Chandra tells Gajadhar that he does not think to leave her forever. Premchand expressed his views relates to the virtuous women by using the correct language for the characters. He gives detailed events about
the suffering of females and they are ready to anything for good happening in their lives. They always obey the orders given by their husbands and also try to maintain good relationship with family members. Premchand also expressed his views about the women who indulged in sinful activities unfortunately. One minor character gives guideline to Gajadhar that if he rudely behave with Suman then it will be a bad reputation to his family. Premchand tries to support such females by creating the main character like Suman. Because society will again took them into consideration like other females in the society. Whereas the Hindi version of the book took everyone by storm when it came out and was universally acclaimed, the first edition selling out within a year, Sevasadan achieved no great success. There was nothing new in an account of the life and the problems of prostitutes. Throughout the two versions of the novel there are slight differences of vocabulary which lead to subtle differences in the portrayal of characters. In this novel Premchand creates so many events that are real happened in the society. The character like Suman, Shanta has powerful languages that make various changes in the society. From the title of this novel, the reader gets various reformative happening in the society. So that Premchand’s novel gets success in Hindi literature. There are some powerful happening in the life of character that changes the whole life. The people of society come close to the account of their life and the problems of such women who indulged in bad activity like prostitution. Suman who is bold and beautiful likes satisfactory life but Shanta who is innocent and polite. Such difference makes such type of different activities of those characters. Suman purposely accepted such type of bad activity which leads to the downfall of her. Her bold nature has to pay a big amount to the future life. Suman has soft corner in her mind but endless pleasure takes her towards the sinful activity. Lust for wealth as well as satisfaction makes her blind so that not a single family member gives respect to her. She deliberately tries to attract men and makes trap for them. Subadhra having visited Suman at Sevasadan is about to leave when a group of girls sings a song. Far more important difference is found in the final parts of the conversation between the two women. Subadhra asked permission from Suman to leave that place that Suman gives a lower response as like a servant to his master. This is reflected in Padam Singh’s conversation with Baja Nath,
regarding the dancing girls for Sadan’s wedding. Padam Singh likens the fact that if people did not eat meat, there would be no need to slaughter goats to the demand for prostitutes. The attack on prostitutes and the courtesan cultures of the pre-colonial period became another way of condemning the supposed decadence and sexual lewdness. Premchand will explain the object and relevance of literary works of Hindi writers in relation to the women predicament. His works shows that woman is frustrated socially and psychologically. She pines for liberty, status as well as pleasure. But she remains aloof from these expectations. After so many struggles, she gets anything like man. For these expectations she went through many predicaments in her life. Woman’s predicament arises when she runs after liberty, status as well as desires and thus frustration by society, family and fellow beings. As they don’t gain what they expect, they became failures and frustrated being and they meet the end. Woman propagated by the various social reformists. The women who indulged in bad activity that began to be viewed as a source of disease and corruption rather than refinement and artistic skill. In the presence of prostitutes in the most frequented and populous quarters of cities was seen as among the principal causes for the ruin and demoralization among innocent, affluent young men. Eye contact with prostitutes was regarded as the reason for a decline in the virtues of respectable, homely women. Sevasadan of Premchand depicts both of these problems in his portrayal of Suman and Sadan. There are so many people who adopted resolutions against dances by prostitutes during marriages and social ceremonies. There were proposals to remove courtesans from the city center. Arguments and values of modernity, civilization, cleanliness and purity were selectively appropriated by the various people. The prostitute was displaced in terms of moral ethics to confine to a zone. All these issues finds in this novel. This question sees as both literal and metaphorical. The desire to move the courtesans out of the city results from the disappearance of the traditional distance between the courtesan and the respectable woman in terms of physical proximity. There should be the private space of the houses of respectable women. As Gajadhar Prasad were forced to live in areas of cities where prostitutes openly conducted their business. Suman thus lives opposite Bholibai exposed to her immoral influence and seduced by her lavish lifestyle
something. Premchand gives details of happenings nearby the place of Suman. Though Suman from middle class family, she has to pay for her sinful activity. The writer develops some events which focuses that the person who comes in contact with Suman that cannot escape from her trap. These sinful activities of the main characters lead her to the downfall. Already Suman was married woman although for the greediness of wealth such bad deed done by her. She also excuses for the girls who are born in the houses of prostitutes. Such types of families definitely are degrading by the respectable parents of the middle class society. If such girl from respected family left the house then there is no excuse as well as soft corner from family members and society. After marriage Suman decided to lead a life of evilness and it was a mistake done by her purposely. Parents always have the good feelings on the side of their children. They do not want that their children have to choose bad path in their life. Premchand very clearly points out that the girls like Suman who does not pay attention to the chastity as well as degradation of the family. Suman appreciates the education because of buva Husain paid special attention to her and taught her with love and care. She seizes the chance to develop her skills in dancing, singing and poetry. The description of her singing lessons in particular reveals that she is not only someone who has a good voice, but who also loves classical music and has a real desire to learn to sing well. This is particularly evident in her questioning of her ustad and in her pesterling to sing scales for her. As many young girls would be entranced by the beautiful clothes, the jewelry and lifestyle. She also enjoys the company of the other girls whom she develops a special relationship. But fundamentally she remains the same generous, humorous, warm-hearted and pragmatic. She realizes, of course, that there is a price to pay for her lifestyle, in terms of her personal relationships with men. She gives advice to other women, never be under the delusion that anyone will love you truly. Lovers will never remain constant because you do not deserve constancy. Suman who deliberately choose the bad path and indulged deeply in this profession says that she was unlucky by birth. She is going to make comments about her fate. She thinks the fate is responsible for her downfall. But it is her own fault that for acquiring satisfaction as well as the wealth, she deliberately turns towards the sinful activity. She never shies for acquiring such profession and ready to accept the
low status given by the society. Suman does not divert her mind from such bad activity. She always remains constant by her nature. She knows that she has to pay a big price for bad life style. She established a close relationship with unknown persons for gaining a large amount. She gives guidelines to other characters in the novel that nobody has deep love towards women. Females used as a tool for entertainment. Male does not remain constant in their love. Although perhaps not what she would have chosen, it has been rich and eventful and has given her pleasure and a measure of fulfillment. Her attitude is one of resignation and acceptance rather than cynicism. Already Suman grew up in a comfortable home with loving parents. Being educated and beautiful, she was not always contented with her life. So that she is described by Premchand that Suman, grew up to be beautiful and arrogant but Shanta was innocent and polite. Suman expected to be treated better than those around her. If similar saris were bought for both sisters, Suman would sulk. Shanta was content with whatever came her way. Her father’s imprisonment forces her and her mother and sister to live off an uncle’s charity. The uncle, Umanath, unable to pay the dowry required for a suitable husband for her, becomes desperate in his desire to rid himself of this burden. Such attitudes of Suman arise as a major barrier before her after marriage. Suman understandably feels sorry for herself and at this point the reader begins to sympathize with her to some extent. Even Sadiq is unusually charitable towards her saying; her only failings are vanity and love of display. She tries for a short time to cook and even began to find some joy in it but when her husband Gajadhar criticizes her for spending too much money she gives up. Nevertheless she retains her arrogance and sense of superiority and cannot accept her lot in life. Premchand describes her attitude towards the women who are her neighbors. Suman would look down on them and try to avoid meeting them. She Thought of these women buy new ornaments and new clothes. She had not learnt the moral lesson nor acquired the religious education that plants the seeds of contentment in one’s mind. Her discontentment leads her to flirt with the young men who pass her house on their way home. Even if Suman was busy, glimpses of her could be caught through the curtain. Her innocent heart received endless pleasure from this kind of flirting. She played these games not out of wickedness, but to show off
the luster of her beauty, to win over the hearts of others. But her naives are shown in her attitude towards the courtesan Bholibai who lives in great style opposite her humble dwelling. She also slowly realizes that no matter how much she considered bholi to be beneath her, bholi was much better off. Suman then develops a conflict in her attitudes. She is superior to Bholibai as a chaste woman. She is envious of Bholi’s status and lifestyle. She tries her hand at piety, but it is not a genuine religious feeling, but rather, a desire for recognition and respect. It becomes apparent that Bholibai is accorded a respect both in religious circles and in public life which Suman herself can never hope to receive. She becomes even more resentful. Her meeting and subsequent friendship with Subadhra and Padam Singh provides her with a model of respectable society, but Suman is eaten up by her desire for nice things and her envy of people who have a higher status than she does. For Suman life simply isn’t fair! At Padam Singh’s holy party we again see the vanity and envy in Suman when she compares herself with Bholibai. Suman says, “She is dark; I am fair. She is plump; I am slender.” After examining herself in the full-length mirrors she comes to the conclusion that if she had the same clothes and jewelry. She would be far more attractive than Bholibai and her voice is better too. Fetching the way men are bewitched by Bholibai she is extremely envious, not just of this, but of Bholibai’s freedom as well. It would appear, therefore, that at some level. She is already considering the idea of becoming a courtesan. Firstly she is thrown out by her husband and turned away by Padam Singh. She is presented with little other choice. The moment of truth arrives; however, she again finds it difficult to decide what is most important to her. She genuinely prides herself on her chastity and has severe misgivings when she approaches Bholi’s door. Even as Bholi persuades Suman to stay with her, she is reluctant because she possessed the natural human aversion to wrong-doing, but as soon as she sees herself in the mirror dressed in a new sari her old vanity reemerges and triumphs over her doubts. Suman stood in front of the mirror. It seemed as if the idol of some beauty stood before her. Suman had never realized she was so beautiful. Shame-free pride had made her lotus-blossom face bloom and there was something absolutely intoxicating about her eyes. For Suman however, the grass on the
other side is always greener. As a courtesan she finds the comfort she was seeking, but discovers that the respect she thought went with it is really only an illusion. Consolation comes in the form of Sadan, Padam Singh's nephew, who falls under her spell. It is here, for the first time, that Suman shows herself in a different light. Although in love with Sadan, she now considers other people before herself. Out of respect for Subadhra and Padam Singh, she denies herself the happiness of a relationship with him, and we subsequently see her behave with considerable courage and dignity when she returns the bracelet that Sadan has stolen for her to Padam Singh. In her conversations with her would-be rescuer Alladas we see that she is intelligent and articulate and quick to see through the hypocrisy. Alladas is nothing if not persistent however, and he manages to make her see things differently. She had thought of pleasure and respect were the prime objectives in life. She realized for the first time that happiness was born out of contentment, and respect out of service. When Suman is about to leave for the widows’ ashram, we see another side of her as she gets back at her clients by playing a series of tricks on them. Premchand cannot develop his characters consistently over any length of time. His touch becomes uncertain and the action and reaction of characters cease to be in keeping with their personality as depicted in the early part of the story. After entering the widow’s ashram she undergoes a complete character transplant. Gone is the arrogant, vain, shallow Suman and in her place a paragon of virtue. Alladas describes the transformation thus: It seems as if she is trying to repent for all of her sins. She is ready and willing to do any work. Most of the women sleep all day, but Suman cleans out their rooms for them. She has been teaching a few of the widows to sew, and some have been learning how to sing from her. She has also started reading and well, only god knows what she feels, but she seems a completely changed woman. He could see the heaviness in her gait and the lines of despair on her face. When later she moves in with Sadan and Shanta, she fears little better. Although now happy to work and serve them, she still craves recognition for her efforts, and the lack of it makes her life unbearable. Despite the transformation she has undergone in certain ways, Premchand makes it clear that she still craves the respect and recognition that led to her downfall. Suman was, by nature, a
naughty and proud woman. All her life she had lived like a queen. In her husband’s home, even when she endured hardships, she was still queen. In the ashram everybody listened to her and gives her more respect those other characters. Premchand clearly noted that Suman tries her level best to transform her activities. When she faces various problems in her life, Premchand gives various solutions before her. But Suman has the naughty and proud nature. She has the opinion to lead a life of satisfactory life like higher class woman. Her solution to this, just as when she was put in the position of having to face her sister Shanta, is to attempt to drown herself. When Gajadhar saves her for the second time and offers her the chance to work in the orphanage she undergoes yet another transformation that wonderful feelings of faith and devotion dawned in her heart and she hadn’t in her wildest dreams believed that she would be given such a great opportunity to serve. Suman has many incarnations and by the end, notwithstanding certain contradictions, becomes an almost totally different character. Suman sees it as a glass half empty. She regretting that she could not have lived as a respectable woman. She is able to look back at her life with some degree of fulfillment and satisfaction. She manages to achieve independence, self reliance, self-respect and an inner composure. Suman, although she has escaped the worst degradation that could have been her lot, is still a sad and pathetic character who is never destined to be happy. Suman gratitude speaks more of her loneliness and isolation. Her need of satisfaction connects to the real world. She has, in fact, found the respect born out of service even to the point of glowing articles about her in the newspaper, but she has not found the happiness born out of contentment. She achieves this contentment because she is someone who has the courage to change the things. Suman can change the serenity to bear the things she cannot change and the wisdom to know the difference. However she does concede didactic novels, whether their purpose is obvious or implied, do help in removing social evils that they condemn. Premchand made his views on didacticism very clear. It is the practice of some contemporary writers to frame a plot in order to prove a particular point. Premchand enjoyed so many events in his novel ‘Sevasadan’. He wanted to point out the various drawbacks of society through the characters which focused in his novel. The writer wanted to show the dos and don’ts before the
readers. He emphasized on the bad activities like bribes as well as corruption in the society. He also wanted to attack on the sinful activities that done by the male as well as female characters. Suman, the heroine of the novel, indulged in sinful deed which is not accepted by the society. So the chastity of the heroine has been ruined by her bad appearance. No doubt Premchand emphasized on the ample good qualities of the main heroine but such virtuous character turns towards sinful deed purposely. There is sympathy created around the character but fortune plays important role which leads towards the downfall. It is clearly reflected in Sevasadan. Therefore it is no surprise that Premchand enjoyed writing this novel, as he mentioned to nigam. In it he is able to express, through various characters, all his own criticisms of society’s ills. Premchand has found the kind of subject that suits him best. It will henceforth be his individual distinction to write stories that expose and attack the dishonesty, the corruption, the injustice and the hypocrisy prevalent in the society. His purpose in writing the novel is also an attack on the social disgrace of prostitution. Suman does not retain her chastity and she operates within a code of honor which understands and respects. It sympathies are very much with the individual who has suffered misfortune and risen above it rather than with efforts to reform the ills of society in general. The social system allows the buying and selling of girls. He is full of sympathy for the plight of individual victims. He did not, however, sympathize indiscriminately with fallen women. For him she was not only a whore but also depraved. She conducts herself inappropriately with own clients. His view is that, there are three kinds of women: the virtuous, the depraved and whores. Speaking of virtuous women he says that they are women who live their whole lives within four walls and put up with all kinds of affliction. Similarly, the writer sees the distinction between respectable women and prostitutes, as confirming the division of space into public and private, that the social structure of his time rested upon, and that he did not question. Women belong to the internal activity; she must not be mixed up with those who belong to the external activity. Although the assigning of men purely to the public space is not entirely correct, as men were able to inhabit the public space and the private space. She says that the woman who indulged in sinful activity is able to participate in the social life. The woman who deeply indulged in sinful deeds
also wants to join the social activities but the society does not give permission to them. After so many ideal works, the society will give permission to such character to remain intact with the people. Always Premchand has the attitude towards the fallen women character. By that time Premchand focused on such activity as well as the status of women in society. There are so many changes had taken place which was clearly reflected in Premchand’s attitude. The virtuous women are always dutiful as well as obedient. They are victims, incapable of defending themselves because they are devoted to the overriding ideals of obedience, fidelity and self-sacrifice. She says that she was into bringing about a change of heart among their oppressors. This is very much the stance Premchand himself seems to take in his fiction. His fiction always created as supreme the idealized self effecting virtuous woman. If his heroines are led astray initially, they reform themselves by the end of the narrative and do nothing to disturb the image of the ideal woman. This ideal is clearly reflected in the views expressed by the character Vitthaldas in Sevasadan. In his conversation with Suman he says that it is the true duty of women to remain firm in tragedy and to endure hardship. In the final analysis, it is clearly a conservative ideal that Premchand upholds for women. They are the perpetual givers. The takers among them remain the counter-ideal. One of these counter-models of womanhood was the so-called apparently modern woman against whom Premchand betrays a particular prejudice. Premchand’s minor characters also plays important role for development of the main plot. The character like Miss Kanti also has the moral qualities within herself. Premchand created the visible image of woman who pines for love and affection. He did portray women who were not the ideal they offered him in new subject matter from which to hang an old attitude. It is with women who have gentleness, are long-suffering, and who practice self-denial that Premchand has his heart. He takes them through many sufferings as wives, widows, prostitutes; he disguises them as virtuous women but whatever their identity they are generally put there to draw the reader’s pity and to plead for a reform. Premchand’s heroines are often hemmed in by social circumstances that are weighted against them. They are deprived of their individual faces. Premchand has such type of attitude toward women. They are firmness in their work and for women service is ideal, pleasure for oneself the counter-
ideal. The image of woman as a selfless giver the ideal and the one who demands or takes is a shallow character and the counter-ideal. And she acknowledges that whilst he has a good grasp of the social problems concerning women, the solutions and reforms advocated by him are relatively mild and are not a shock to prevailing attitudes. Subadra is clearly one of these women, but one who has not quite fulfilled her role since she is unable to have children. That this is viewed as a failure on her part is evident when Premchand says of Padam Singh, he didn’t have the same love for Subadhra anymore. Suman like other virtuous woman have firmness in her work. She always did her work for pleasure which seems as an ideal woman. Premchand tries to make such events that are very ideal as well as virtuous happenings in the life of the main character Suman. She acknowledges various current problems to women but Premchand gives various solutions to that problems. According to Premchand there are so many females who play important role and duty as mother and wife. Suman obeys the orders given by her husband even though she hurt by Padam Singh on many occasions. Subadhra always gives support to her husband. So Padam Singh also comes to know that the childless woman have such confidence that she can be the source of peace and happiness. Redefining novel and its function, he observes: Main upanyas ko manav charitra ka chitra samjhta hoon. Manav-charitra par prakash dalna aur uske rahasya ko kholna hi upanyas ka mool tantrva hai…Usi bhanti, sab admiyon ke charitron men bhi bahut kuch Samantha hote hue kuch vibinnataen hote hain. Its principal attribute lies in its ability to throw light on human character and unveil its secrets…Similarly despite many similarities, human characters have some dis-similarities. The primary function of novel thus is to show all similarities and dissimilarities, commonalities and difference and above all similarity in difference. The principal contribution of Premchand to the Hindi novel is “idealistic realism”. He divides his contemporary writers into two groups of realists and idealists. According to Premchand realistic novelists “try to present characters realistically as they are. They are not concerned if the consequences of worthy and unworthy conduct are good or bad.” (Upanyas, Kuch Vichar p-51) Their characters end their given roles by showing their merits and demerits as they are. Since in the real world, the result of good and bad is not always good or bad, and is often
opposite, so good people suffer and are often insulted. Their goodness breeds opposite results, whereas villainous human beings prosper, become popular and renowned. Their evil acts bring about opposite results. This is a strange rule of nature. The realist is fastened to the fetters of experience. The world is full of evil characters and the characters of even very good people have some or the other stains on them, so realism is a naked portrait of our weaknesses, contradictions and cruelties. Premchand opposes the presentation of stark realism in literature. He believes that its excess can have a negative impact on the readers. His opinion is that realism makes us pessimist and we lose faith in human characters, for we begin to see the world around us permeated by evil. Indubitably, realism is appropriate for drawing attention to evil practices in society without which it is possible that we might exaggerate the evil and show it in darker light than it is. However when realism crosses the limits of propriety it becomes intolerable. Moreover, human nature has another quality that of “the presentation of pettiness, cunningness and deceit, that permeate it, does not please it. It wants to fly to a world, at least for some time where it is free from perverted feelings and thoughts. It wants to forget that it is imprisoned by anxieties and tensions; it wants to see such lively sensitive and kind creatures as are free from acrimony and opposition, intrigues and conspiracies. Human beings think that if they have to deal with the same kind of characters in the fictitious narratives as they see in life, then why they should read such books.” (Upanyakas, Kuch Vichar p-51) Suggesting the merits and demerits of idealism, he believes that the idealist novelist introduces us to such characters whose hearts are pious, who are free from selfishness and lust and are saintly by nature. Though such characters are not practical in the ways of the world and they are easily deceived because of their simplicity, yet human beings fed up with knavish cunningness, seek unique pleasure by seeing such simple yet unpragmatic characters. If realism opens our eyes, idealism transports us to a charming place. However, the attributes of idealism make us aware of the suspicion that we might tend to portray such characters as mere idols of ideals. He remarks that “it is not difficult to imagine a God, but it is difficult to infuse life in that God.” (Upanyakas, Kuch Vichar p-52) Premchand combines idealism and realism and coins a new term ‘idealistic realism’. All his works except Nirmala and Godan represent idealistic realism
kind of works. He avers: Isliye vahi upanyas uchh koti ke samjhe jate hain jahan yatartha aur adarsh ka samavesh ho. Use aap aadarshonmukh yatharthavad kah sakte hain. Aadarsh ko sajeev banane ke liye hi yatartha ka upyg hona chahiye, aur achhe upanyas ki yahi vishesta hai. (“Upanyas”, Kuch Vichar p-52) Therefore good novels are those as combine realism and idealism in them. You may term it as idealistic realism. Realism should be used to concretize an idea and that is the attribute of a good novel. Premchand considers characterization too to be very important and has specific views regarding it. According to him, “the greatest quality of a novelist is the creation of such characters as would enchant their readers with their noble behavior and thoughts. The novel bereft of this attribute is worthless.” (Upanyas, Kuch Vichar p-52) It is not necessary that the characters should be free from blemishes to sublimate or to idealize characters. Even the great men can have some weaknesses, and there is no harm in portraying their weaknesses in order to enrich their character. These weaknesses make that character a human being. A character free from all weaknesses would become a God and we would fail to associate ourselves with him or to understand him. Focusing on characterization, Premchand proposes that characters should have a positive influence on the readers. The job of a literary writer is not to amuse his readers; this is the job of Bhat's jugglers, jesters and jokers. The seat of literature is much higher than this. It acts as a guide, and thereby it awakens our humanness. It is a transmitter of virtuous disposition in us and widens our perception. In fact, only this should be his objective. To achieve this end, it is necessary that his characters are positive and they do not succumb to temptations. They should rather defeat and support passions without being trapped in their claws, and therefore set out on the march of victory. According to Premchand, characterization has to be very skillfully handled by the novelist. The more clear, profound and developed the portrayal of characters, the greater influence, “will it have on the readers. Just as we do not become familiar with the mentality of a person by just casting a glance at him; the secrets of his personality are revealed gradually as we become intimate. Similarly the characters of a novel too are not imagined in entirety; but they develop gradually.” (“Upanyas Ka Vishay”, Kuch Vichar p-69) This growth is so confidential and unclear that the reader does not perceive any change. If
any character remains the same in the end of the novel as he or she was in the
beginning – no growth of its strength-intelligence and emotions takes place;
then it is an unsuccessful character. Premchand is of the view that the highest
ideal of literature is when it is created for serving art. He observes: Kala ke
liye kala ke siddhant par Kisi Ko apatti nahin ho sakti. No one would object to
the principle of ‘Art for Art’s sake’. Only that literature would last which is
dependent on the original tendencies of men. Love and jealousy, anger and
greed, affection and separation, sorrow and shame all these are our original
tendencies. It is the prime objective of literature to show their splendor.
Without objective it is not possible to create. Premchand believes in ‘Art for
Art’s Sake’, and is against literature propagating certain social, political and
religious beliefs. But a realistic assessment of the situation makes him take a
practical point of view. He elaborates: Kewal aajkal parashitiyan itni teevra
gati se badal rahin hain, itne naye Vichar paida ho rahe hain ki kadachit ab koi
lekhak sahiya ka Aadarsh ko dhyan men rakh hi nahin sakta. Yeh bahut
mushkil hai ki lekhak par in parashitiyan ka asar Na pade – Vah unse andolit
Na ho. Yahi karna hai ki aajkal Bharatvarsha ke hi nahin, Europe ke bade
vidvan bhi rachana dwara Kisi ‘vaad’ ka prachar kar rahe hain. Ve iske
parvah nahin karte ki iske unki rachana jeavit rahegi aye nahin, apni mat ki
pushi karna hi unka hyena hai, iske sivay unhen koi ichha nahin. (Upayyas,
“Kuch Vichar” p- 54) However situation is too rapidly changing and so many
new ideas come into existence that no writer can keep the ideals of literature in
his mind. Author can no longer remain unaffected or un-influenced by these
changes and situations. Thus not only in India but also in Europe even great
scholars is publicizing one or the other ideology. They do not care if their
works would live or die because of it. They do not have any other desire but to
propagate their ideology. Citing great literary works of literature and
defending works that propagate specific ideology, Premchand observes:
Magar yeh kyon kar maan liya jaaye ki jo upanyas kisi Vichar ke prachar ke
liye likha jaata hai, uska mahatva kshanik hota hai? Aaj bhi Shaw, Wells aadi
bade lekhakon ke granth prachar hi ke udeshya se likhe ja rahe hain.
(‘Upayyas’, “Kuch Vichar” p-54) But why should we think that the novel
based on certain ideology, has some temporary interest? Hugo’s Le Miserable
and novels of Tolstoy and Dickens, despite being concerned with certain ideas
is works of literature having immense literary significance. They have not lost their charm even today. The works by contemporary writers such as Shaw and Wells among others too are written with an objective of propagating specific ideas. The works that represent the principle of ‘Art for Life’s Sake’ whose today Premchand avers “are more viable than the ones representing the principle ‘Art for Art’s Sake’. The age of ‘Art for Art’s Sake’, is when the nation is prosperous and well to do.” (Upانyas, Kuch Vichar p-54) Premchand questions as to how is it possible that we are not alarmed when we find ourselves shackled with various political and social limitations and all around us we observe pathetic pictures of sorrow, poverty and the lament of adversity? The novelist should exercise caution that his ideas are expressed indirectly and they do not become a barrier in the naturalness of the work; or else the novel would become uninteresting. Premchand finds the scope of the subject-matter of a novel is as broad as that of characterization. It is related to their actions and ideas, their divinity and savagery and their sublimation and fall. The principal subject of their novel is the diverse form of their disposition and their growth in diverse conditions. Creativity and sharp observation, according to Premchand, are indispensable for a good novelist. He observes: Usmen aur chahe jitney abhav hon.; par kalpana Shakti ki prakharta anivarya hai. Agar usmen yeh Shakti maujoord hai to Vah aise kitne hi drishyon, dashaon aur manobhavon ka chitran kar sakta hai jinka use paratyaksh anubhav nahin hai. Agar is Shakti ki kami hai, to chahe usne kitna hi deshotan kyon Na kiya ho, Vah kitna hi vidvan kyon Na ho, uske anubahav ka kshetra kitna hi kyon Na ho, uski rachna men sarasta nahin a sakti. (“Upanyas ka Vishay”, Kuch Vichar p-65) He might be deficient in several matters; but sharp observation is inevitable. With this ability he can describe various scenes, situations and dispositions of which he has no direct experience. Without this ability his works will lack grace and refinement even if he is a globe trotter, a scholar having a vast experience of life. He insists on a lively and impressive creative style of delineation by the novelist that should not be mere jugglery of words eluding the readers to believing that the work contains a deep hidden motive. Though writer’s dealing in ostentations of words might achieve temporary popularity, but the masses provide a seat of honour only to those novels whose distinctness is not their obtuseness but their simplicity.
Though he does not object to the inclusion of specific incidents in a story for creating interest, he puts certain conditions for the same. He remarks: Lekin shart yeh hai ki pratyek ghatna asli dhanche se nikat sambandh rakhti ho. Itna hi nahin balki usmen is tarah ghul-mil gai ho ki katha ka avashayak ang ban jaaye anyatha upanyas ki dasha us ghar ki si ho jayegi jiske har ek hisse alag-alag hon. (“Upaynas ka Vishay”, Kuch Vichar p-66) But the condition is that every incident should be closely associated with the basic structure. Not only that but it should be intricately woven so as it becomes an important part of the story, or else the condition of the novel will be similar to a house whose every part is unconnected. According to Premchand, everything in the world is fit for becoming a subject of a novel. But, “the significance of a subject and its depth too play an important role in the success of a novel. He finds the most important quality of a successful novelist to be to succeed in raising the same emotions in his readers that exists in his characters.” (Upaynas ka Vishay, Kuch Vichar p-67) The readers should forget that they are reading a novel; a feeling of intimacy should be created between them. He emphasizes more on the dependence on presentation of significant conversations in a novel rather than the descriptions provided by the novelist. He presumes that the novel will be more beautiful with the abundant presentation of conversations and less descriptions by the writer. But the conversations should be customary. Every sentence should throw light on the mentality and the nature of the character. The conversations should be entirely natural, appropriate to the situation, simple and brief. He not only had comprehensive understanding of the contemporary taste of the readers but also had foresight about the change that would take place and the qualities with which the future novelists would have to equip themselves with. Like a prophet of novel, he foretells: Bhavishya unhin Upayason ka hai, jo anubhuti par khade hon. Iska aashay yah hai ki Bhavishya men upayanas men kalpana kam, satya adhik hoga, hamare charitra kalpit na honge. Kisi had tak to ab bhi aisa hota hai, par babuda ham paristhitiyon ka aisa kram bandhate hai ki ant swabhaavik hone par bhi Vah hota hai. Jo ham chahte hain. Lekin Bhavishya men pathak is swang se santusht na hoga. (“Upaynas ka Vishay”, Kuch Vichar p-72) The future is of the works that are based on experience. It suggests that the future novels will have less imagination and more truth. Our characters will not be imaginary but will be
based on the lives of the individuals. To some extent it is so even at present but very often we create such a series of situations that the conclusion, though natural is of the type we wished. The more skilfully we make pretence of naturalness, the more successful we are. But in future the reader shall not be content with this pretence. The Hindi novel which had no specific direction up to now finds a meaningful and definite direction with the arrival of Premchand. He zealously discusses each and every point meticulously and leaves nothing to speculation. Thus Premchand through his views regarding the novel drafts a blueprint for the future novel in Hindi which he himself adheres to and also guides his contemporaries and successors. The new spirit of realism in literature lent a powerful stimulus to the creativity of the writers of fiction. The age demanded that one of the chief factors of interest in any fictitious image of life should be its resemblance to truth. Premchand and the other eminent writers of the age imibe realism as an important element in their work. Thus, the objective of art in this age is the study and the depiction of reality. _Sevasadan_ is the first principal novel by Premchand in which the novelist has raised the issues concerning women in the Indian society along with several other associated social issues such as the custom of dowry, mismatched marriage and prostitution. His basic preoccupation has been the reformation and rehabilitation of the prostitutes in the society. The inability of Daroga Krishnachandra, an honest police-officer and the father of Suman to manage a good dowry for his daughter, leads to her mismatched marriage with Gajadhar, a thirty years old clerk earning a meager salary of fifteen rupees per month. Inspite of the best efforts from both sides differences soon crop up, their marriage ends on the rocks and with the consequence Suman ending up into prostitution. Vithaldas, a zealous social reformer, meets Suman and urges her to give up the sinful profession and begin a dignified life but fails to specify precisely the dignified occupation. Suman exposes the hollowness and the hypocrisy of the society that pushes innocent women to this profession. Ultimately she gives up this sinful life and joins a vidhwa-ashram, an institution supported by several donors and social reformers. Though Suman accepts a dignified life the stigma of her past sticks to her. Thus, the marriage of her sister Shanta fails to solemnize as her past is revealed to her in-laws. Emphasizing the disastrous influence of social morality on the fate of women,
Ram Darash Mishra observes: ‘Sevasadan’ men nari jeevan ki pratarna ka roop aur bhayankar ho utthata hai jab Vah apni samagra pavitrata, sundarta aur gundharmita ke bavjood apne parivarvalon ke doshon ke karan thukra di jaati hai…Vyaktitva ki itni badi avmanna kitni bhayankar hai, ghatak hai. *(Hindi Upaynas: Ek Antaryatra p- 40-1)*. The deception of the life of the women acquires a sinister form in ‘Sevasadan’ when she is rejected in spite of all her chastity, beauty and virtues just because of the faults of her family members…How dangerous, how fatal is such a huge unrecognition of individuality. Premchand has very subtly exposed the contradictions of the Indian society wherein on one hand it forces an honest police-officer, Krishnachandra to accepting bribe and pushing a virtuous women like Suman to prostitution while on the other hand considers Shanta who is beautiful and chaste to be condemned and ignored just because of being the daughter of Krishnachandra and the sister of Suman. The society with its contradictions, weaknesses and worn out values of life comes alive in *Sevasadan*. The root cause of all is economic impoverishment. Though the plot of ‘Sevasadan’ is well arranged, yet critics have observed some discrepancies in it. From the beginning of the story to the incident of Suman giving up her home and husband is very systematically presented. But the later incidents are not beautifully presented. The description of Suman’s stay at Dalmandi is drily presented. Premchand has devoted a large part of the novel to Suman’s introduction to life of prostitution and the social and psychological conditions responsible for it. Then he immediately diverts the story to a reformation mode. If he wanted to bring such a swift change in Suman, then he should not have spent such a large part of the novel to the incident of Suman’s introduction to prostitution. The proceedings in the municipality, the debates and the motions passed among others though associated with the issue of prostitution, are not properly connected with the main story of Suman. Nanaddulare Vajpai observes: Yadi municipality ke ye sare vrutant Suman ki kahani se aur adhik sanshlist sambandh rakh pate to upanyas ki katha adhik samanvit aur arthpurna hoti. *(Premchand: Sahityik Vivechan p.15)* The plot of the novel would have been better balanced and meaningful if the details of the municipality had been better synthesized with the story of Suman. Suman’s story of giving up prostitution and joining a vidhwa-ashram is brief. But
another objectionable matter is that the latter part of the novel presents not the story of the chief protagonist Suman but that of her sister Shanta. Probably the novelist had nothing significant to add to the story of Suman after her joining the vidhwa-ashram. Shanta becomes the protagonist in the latter second half of the novel. Premchand fails to establish a proper connection of the two that would provide a smooth flow to the novel. Thus the story of Suman, the action in the municipality and the story of Shanta appear scattered. The strings connecting the three different stories are very weak. Suman, Gajadhar, Shanta, Sadan, and Padamsinh are the main characters of the novel. The faint sketch of Suman’s portrait provided in the beginning of the novel is quite effective. The novelist delineates: Badi ladki Suman sundar, chanchal aur abhimani thi; choti Shanta bholi, gambhir, sushil thi. Suman doosron se badhkar rehna chahti thi. Yadi bazaar se dono baheno ke liye ek hi prakar ki sadiyan aatin to Suman mooh Fula leti thi. Shanta ko jo kuch bhi mil jaata, usi se prasann raheti. (Sevasadan p. 5) The older girl Suman was beautiful, playful and proud; while the younger one Shanta was credulous, serious and cultured. Suman always wanted to outdo others in every matter. Suman would become haughty if similar sarees for both of them were brought from the market. Shanta would be content with whatever she got. Thus the novelist has through their behavior portrayed the individual personality of the two sister’s right from their childhood. Premchand has, at several instances attempted the psychological delineation of Suman’s behavior, though it was not important to do so. The character should get an opportunity to open up on its own. There is no need of comments. Suman’s psychological reactions to the prostitute ‘Bholi’ living in her neighborhood are delineated at length by the novelist. The change in her approach towards her from divestment to her gradual tilt towards her and ultimately her willingness even to live with her is the consequence of the impact of the social reaction on her. Thus, the character of Suman is an individual and also depicts progress in the sphere of characterization. In the earlier works the characters had no individuality and were just types representing some social class. The novelist has also succeeded in portraying the grey areas of personality from the earlier entirely black or white. The other characters of the novel Gajadhar, Krishnachandra and Padamsinh are all realistic characters with a mingling of their weaknesses and strengths.
Gajadhar, the husband of Suman, is a typical middle-class character. The flaws like being hot tempered and demanding as a husband, presented in his character are not his but of the contemporary age and its economic conditions. Within his limited resources he is unable to fulfill the desires of his wife. Thus he turns Suman out of his house and even repents later for his deeds. Probably his renunciation and becoming an ascetic is atonement for his actions. The novelist has utilized the services of Gajadhar in providing solace and solution to the other distressed characters. By the end of the novel he is a social reformer and represents the idealism of the novelist. Thus, through the character of Gajadhar, the novelist comes true to the theoretical conception of ideal characterization as presented in his views on the novel form in his essay 

*Kuch Vichar. Sevasadan* is a milestone regarding socio-economic and cultural ideology from its earlier works. Earlier too the novelist have dealt with the issue of prostitution but the treatment by Premchand is different. He touches the very core of the issue and exposes the causes that lead women to prostitution. He empathizes with the prostitutes and considers them to be the victims of the perversions prevalent in society. He considers the custom of dowry and mismatched marriages among others as the social factors that create a breeding ground for this social evil. Earlier the characters of prostitutes were presented as inherently evil. Premchand for the first time provides a human touch to this fallen class and considers them sympathetically. He has focused more on the social and economic conditions that lead women of good families to this sinful profession. Thus the novelist suggests that shifting the brothels away from the city is not the proper solution. The main issue is of economic emancipation of the prostitutes after giving up their sinful life and merging them in the mainstream of society. Several characters in the novel attempt to provide a practical solution to this issue but fail to do so. The only way that seems viable to the novelist is that social service organizations can function in the eradication of this evil only by the generous donations of the rich citizens of the town. The language of the novelist is simple and intelligible barring the two chapters where Premchand has exhibited his knowledge of Urdu. The Muslim characters are depicted speaking fluent Urdu just on the pretext of naturalness but causing inconvenience to the Hindi readers and also creating an odd environment in
the novel. The novel very well fits into the definition of ‘idealistic realism’ provided by the novelist. The concerned issues are presented realistically and an idealistic solution too is attempted. Though the first work of the novelist, it is as a form superior to most of his other later works. The novelist’s journey from Sevasadan to Godan depicts the several issues and conditions that plagued the pre-independence Indian society. From the minutest incident of the family to the significant social and national issues find place in his works. His sharp observation analyzed the nation and the society from various perspectives and also attempted to understand the ambiguous human nature.

The plots of Sevasadan, Gaban and Nirmala are more organized as they present issues concerning either a single family or a particular single class. Thus, the plot begins with an individual or a particular incident and the other related incidents becoming complementary and nurturing the main plot. All these three works contain a single theme. Karmabhoomi too takes up several issues simultaneously from Hindu-Muslim unity, to the struggle of the peasants and the downtrodden and the rural and urban poor. Godan contains several tales having independent existence clubbed into one and it becomes difficult to identify the main from the rest. It should not be forgotten that Godan represents the diverse class’s present in the Indian society from the farmer, laborer, zamindar, capitalist, urban and rural along with their issues and concerns. The novel also introduces the awakening among the masses and suggesting revolution to be imminent. Thus it is not possible to organize the plot similar to the manner of the works having only one main plot and limited sub-plots. Rather the novelist deserves praise that in spite of dealing with several important issues and challenges of the Indian society in one work, he has attempted to strike an appropriate balance and connection between them.

The protagonists of Mrudula Garg and Maitreyi Pushpa faced the cycle of violence as a daughter, a sister, a wife, a mother, a partner, or a single woman in her life time. Mannu wants an escape from the monotonous routine. Performing the roles of a good and obedient daughter-in-law, presentable wife and hostess to her husband’s friends, and finally acting out the role of a good mother to the children, tires her. She loses her personal identity and is identified by the many roles she acts out, which she greatly dislikes and detests. The typical Indian male attitude and in fact the general attitude the
world over considers children as the mother’s responsibility. The father does his part of the duty by working for the family. Even if she is a working woman, the major part of the onus is borne by the mother. Mahesh is the modern man who is highly individualistic and independent. He does not like anybody’s interference. This attitude is suitable for his professional life. The same cannot be applied to his personal relationship as well. He fails to understand that his wife needs his attention and concern. For Mahesh, marriage is nothing beyond the fulfillment of a social obligation. He wants a house-keeper who can look after his needs cook, take care of the house, etc. in order to match his social status, he needs an educated woman. In the relationship between Mannu and Mahesh, love exists only at the physical level. Mannu does not find any sexual gratification as she is not involved in the sexual encounters. It is Mahesh who derives pleasure from the act. Mannu becomes a passive entity surrendering her body to the husband. She records her experiences but does not talk about it. Sex is an activity that is not supposed to give pleasure, arouse curiosity or the desire for experiences in a woman. For men sexual encounters represent access to power, a series of encounters and experiences which build up a sense of the individual’s power in having control over women’s bodies. Sexual experience in women’s novels represents access to knowledge rather than power. Sexual experience becomes the way in which a woman finds out about herself. Mannu tries to get rid of her loneliness and meaningless existence through her extra-marital relationship with Richard. Her affair with Richard is a process of knowing herself. She makes an attempt to understand her needs and desires. Like many married couples who are dissatisfied with their life, Mannu and Mahesh fail to developed love and understanding in their relationship. The essential ingredients of a successful marriage are missing in their life. Mannu is aware of the absence of love in her relationship with her husband. Being new to the family, she hopes to find it slowly, but despite her best efforts, she fails miserably. But experience makes her stronger and she faces life boldly. Mannu realizes the futility of her existence. This is not what she had asked for in marriage. She makes many attempts to renew her faith in the marriage set up, but in the end wants to break free from all this. She traces to divert her attention to other things. She engages herself with a theatre group still; she has
a lot of free time on her hands, and wants to make good use of it. Mannu tries, but does not succeed in coming out of the constraints of motherhood. Despite finding her duties as daughter-in-law, wife and mother repetitive and monotonous, she cannot altogether shun her responsibilities, especially her children. She takes utmost caution that the children do not suffer on any account. Leaving behind all her yearnings and ambitions, she settles down to her task of nurturing her children. The child is left completely to the care of the mother. Though very easily Mahesh sheds his fatherly responsibilities, Mannu cannot do the same. Out of her motherly affection and responsibility, she is left alone to take care of the sick child. When Mahesh plans to go on a vacation, Mannu also desires to go along with him. Mahesh refuses to take her along; instead he asks her to go to Delhi to her parents. In Maitreyi Pushpa’s novel, Alma lay unconscious in the room of Santoley. She refused food and water also and cursed her fate again and again. Her destiny was not written on her brow but on the slopes and curves of her body. Her beautiful body was busy forgoing an ugly future. The bahu of Santoley informs her about the beauty parlor. Alma does not give any response to her. But this woman speaks in the style and language of the high castes. She presses her to eat, it’s as though she is feeding a lamb for slaughter. This woman does not feel a fellow human being pain. Living with dacoits, her vision has blunted. And to Alma every face in this house seems like Beta Singh’s face. This kotha is the meeting place of dacoits. Here pleading and deaths are nothing new. Bappa used to fret, is the government running its writ or has it made over all its responsibilities to dacoits, murderers and the police. This is the way it has always been for the kabutaras. This was the way it was for Bappa, kabutara. Durjan had groaned after saying this. Alma couldn’t think further. Her drained body and the waves of pain rising from within her become an unbearable compound. Its shocks threaten to knock her mind out. The kajjas have always said that kabutaris and kabutaras are criminal tribes. They were responsible for all types of robberies. That in numerous villages they have carried out robberies with lathis and guns that the goons derive pleasure from these things. How Alma to tell them that what they do is very little? An account will be settled only when they take away their girls also with hands and feet tied. If Alma had wished she could have sprung on the woman like a tigress and spent
her last drops of strength. But now she had given up the intention to fight also. Better to quiet like an animal for the slaughter than to keep alive by resisting and finally getting ready for destruction. For a moment she kept staring at her and then pressed her chin into her knee. A face without motion, stony eyes and the woman pulled Alma by the hair. Then she slapped Alma on the cheek four or five times and said, “I’ve set the likes of you in the jungle. The beauty parlor woman doesn’t have time to waste. She’s in a hurry. Go have your facial done and look sharp about it!” (P.359). She forgets her womanhood and commended like man. It was no big deal for Santoley to hurl this stubborn girl before Shriram Shastri in his room. It had happened many times. When girls kidnapped from the villages were bent on spoiling the fun by weeping and crying and falling at their feet. Santoley used the unerring weapon he had in his possession to break their stupid pride. His special talent lay in ripping off at stroke every shred of clothing from a girl’s body. This muscular man grabbed the neck of Alma’s kurta and dragged her over to Shriram Shastri. Santoley’s bahu turned the radio on full blast. The radio was particularly useful on such occasions. The sound the medium wave band would smother the girl’s screams and cries. At night time the doors were so tightly closed that even a current of air couldn’t enter. Flung on the ground, every bit of Alma’s clothing was in ribbons, body unveiled. Under the pretext of searching, Surajbhan had already had his feel and measure of every inch of this body. His friend Parasram had run his hand over every pore of it. Nakedness is felt acutely only the first time, not each time every woman knows this. Alma was made to stand and knew that the standing naked body looked more naked. When the parts meant to be hidden were laid bare and Alma was looking straight ahead. On Shriram Shastri’s face was Beta Singh’s face, Surajbhan’s face, Parasram’s face. All the faces became one. And looking out from behind them all, her father’s face! Santoley went away after performing his job, walking away on practiced feet with a practiced gait. He had been performing this ritual for years. Shriram Shastri sat with closed eyes on his cot, like a sage. Santoley’s bahu was bent on raising a mountain of true, sincere favors so that she would never be thrown out of here. She had reached the stage where beauty held no meaning for her, where only the facilities and comforts of life spelt real prestige. Shriram Shastri opened his brooding eyes. The taut body of
a naked girl and bold eyes that kept the cloak of shame and modesty wrapped
tight round her on guard resistant. But this girl was not keen on even the
pretence of Purdhah! Her openness unnerved Shriram. A sad laugh broke out
of him. What would the poor woman know? She believes that for a man the
pleasure of woman is equal to a hundred pleasures. The pleasures of power
have ravaged Shriram Shastri. The beauty of this helpless, kidnapped girl
doesn't have the capacity to ease his pain. This month perhaps, his resignation
at the very thought the room reels. He feels giddy and the chief minister is
beyond his control! He wants to call Santoley. No, that cold will understand
neither the enigma of this girl's disgust and stubbornness, nor his problems.
He will visit the punishment for both on the girl, while he wants no noise, no
lamentations. He has lost his manhood. A naked woman right in front of him
and he is like a stone. He called for Santoley's bahu and said, “Give her some
clothes, Bhauji.” He went out of the room and Santoley’s bahu’s eyes popped
with disbelief. She was not really bothered about Alma, so did not give her
clothes and went off scuffing her feet. After some time Santoley’s bahu says to
Alma not to pay attention towards Santoley who gives suffered great pain.
Women pay for the sins of men and they cannot do anything. The world’s
beauties will come here at a sign from him, but these beauties will pull the rug
from under his feet and set up shop for themselves. Alma sat quiet like animal
gazing at another world spinning before her eyes. After eating Alma washed
and bathed. Cleaning away the dirt and impurity of all these days she felt
fresh. Now by wearing new sari and some pieces of jewellery, she was
standing in front of a full length mirror. Alma tries to recognize herself
looking into the mirror. Alma had all along thought of jewels as things to deck
oneself with, but in the scuffle with Surajbhan the meaning of the pendants in
her ears changed though nothing came of it. Her father’s bullet-ridden face
comes dancing in the maze of her gaze. Rana’s face comes, his face when he
had stepped out of the house, freeing his hand from hers. In her transparent
sari, Alma looks naked and sculpted and the beauty parlor woman has done
her job well. Now she is looking at Beta Singh and the shadow of the police
Daroga flits across. Her joy is rising and her body is quickening when she
goes forward. The world in the eye of her heart has spread round her. She
thinks in simple and clear terms that this road will have to be crossed. Even if
she runs off where will she run to? Again the same dangerous hands will come
up and strip her all over again. Each man has the same hunger. Alma had
heard the story of the hare and lion from Bappa, about how when his time
came the hare had walked up to the lion all by himself. And she also had heard
the story of Padmini who went to Sultan on her own. But with the hare went
its wits and with Padmini went the feeling of revenge. Suddenly Alma was
frightened of own self and she has sworn to walk the path of death to the very
limits of destruction. Step by step Alma is advancing towards Shriram Shastri
who is watching her, a girl like the radiance on a bow glinting in the sun like
the tide on a river. His gaze doesn’t lift from her body and his heart wilts at the
sight of a naked girl. The dacoit had gone from within him who got his
pleasure from conquering a woman screaming with pains. Alma was gazing
round her like a caged bird. Women kill their lovers with just this innocent
look. All the vim and elan of Shriram Shastri, all the dreams that he had
nursed from youth of having a woman like a friend, went cold. Whether
Alma’s look hardened or fear flickered in her mind, he wanted to call for
Santoley. But dacoit that he had been all these years, he kept his poise. She
wouldn’t spring at him for just looking and had to feel provoked. In Alma’s
eyes there was neither shame nor fear, neither disgust nor fire. Her next move
was unknown. Shriram, a man who, till the age of forty-five had freely
snatched the pleasures of sexual intercourse. The sweater Santoley had
stripped her like Dushaasan; he wouldn’t have the nerve to unveil Alma.
Perhaps veils are present only in the mind whether due to fear or his guilt,
every rough move seemed banned to him. That he would be in such situation
with a woman, he had never imagined. The Shriram Shastri, who drew
strength from the barrel of a gun, was now standing around, impotent. Alma
probably knows the rarest of rare postures designed to make the man fall flat
on his face. In her eyes images from memory are raising a storm. She will
murder neither Rana nor herself; her Atma. The dacoit would not brook any
abridgement of his pleasure. This was why perhaps she had thrust the end of
her sari into her mouth. If she tightened the end of her sari round this man’s
neck he won’t draw another breath. Her effort will succeed and her surrender
will not be in vain. Alert like a trained soldier Alma’s gaze was on the
doorkeeper within her. Alma simmered in frustration and her anger increased
manifold. But now she was not to waste a drop of this anger. Those bereft of anger have nothing to call their own and mercy, kindness and compassion are the privileges of those with rage. Alma is now waiting for her chance and began preparing for the next attack. She employed and made use of the weaker sentiments. Laughter, smiles, love, faith and things like that one after other. And Shriram Shastri was still now not swaying to her tune and beats her brow in futile anger. A Kabutari can cut a man down at the slightest provocation. If she would followed just the simple rule Shriram Shastri would have been dispatched to the next world by now. The man, who begins thinking, holding a dagger in his hands, will be killed himself. Shriram Shastri does not keep her off himself even as she looks for chances everyday to finish him off. The speech and ways that her father had taught her, the cold practical rules of living and surviving he had taught her, began being of use here. Alma adopted a strategy of silence. Shriram Shastri was not so naïve as to gift herself respect for free. The hopes of freedom do not die easy but Alma could not be free. Her daily routine was linked to Shriram Shastri who would give her papers to read. Talking with Alma on inter-community matters, he gathered such inside information about the difficulties of the outcast sects that he had little regret dismissing the help given by run of the mill journalist types like the PA. That day three legislators came to his house to meet him. Shriram Shastri, who usually kept Alma hidden, went so high spirited that he brought her out to meet the legislators. He introduced her as Alma Shastri. This name sounded strange to her ears. Dheeraj, who had taught her the first lessons in love and compassion, had gone away. She told the story of Dheeraj to Shriram Shastri but he informed about the ruin of such boy. For two nights in succession Alma has been having dreams. When her dream broke, she wants to cry with full throat but she cannot do such activity. If she does, she is not able to disclose the real reason of her sorrow. The poison worm of sorrow keeps stinging her within and she stays drinking in the pain either with closed lips. Alma’s head is covered with the palla of her sari. For her everything is strange who never seen before but somehow familiar. That man there in a spotless kurta and dhoti that must be Sarman Mukhia. Each man in the basti is walking fast and leading the way. Each woman is walking in step with Alma, looking at her carefully. When Santoley gives information about the tragic death of Shriram
Shastri, Alma’s face went pale. The bullets were bursting in her heart and she gave a full throated cry. The chief Minister and the governor have come together and come up to Alma. They expressed that a girl like Alma gave the direction in politics to Shriram Shastri. This expression of sympathy was printed in the papers as well as broadcast over the radio and recorded for Doordarshan. Alma agonized by this sympathy and the peoples as well as party leaders watched the cremation ceremony. Alma has selected this historic crematorium for the last rites of the state minister Shriram Shastri. All the women characters meet the human Predicament. Gauri, the protagonist of Mulk Raj Anand as a perfect example of the typical Indian woman who looks forward for a happy life. Very soon, trouble starts brewing between Gauri and mother-in-law. With immense patience, she puts up with all the humiliations, misery and ill-treatment. Gauri, though belonging to the working class succeeds in breaking free from the traditional bondages. The women characters have been skillfully delineated by Raja Rao. Ratna is a child widow who has been powerfully influenced by modern ideas and who does not regard being a woman as a matter of shame and inferiority. Achakka is revealed by her manner of narration and her comments on persons and events. Her function is representative and her strength lies in being anonymous. Narsamma is the old widow, orthodox and conservative. She has a great love for her son and she has high hopes of a brilliant career for him. She is not wicked and crooked but only orthodox. Rangamma is educated woman who well acquainted with the day-to-day developments elsewhere. She is a lady who is deferent, soft voiced and gentle – gestured. Raja Rao deals with the philosophical detachment of the protagonist. He is concerned with dry facts and renders his philosophical speculations through dull prose. Anita Desai ably explores the turbulent emotional world of the neurotic protagonist Maya who starts under an acute alienation stemming from material discord and verges on a curious insanity. Maya is described to be almost totally deranged naturally required to be related by someone else. According to Anita Desai, alienation is more related to the emotional and mental moods and attitudes of the characters than to their spiritual, moral or ethical temperaments. In Prem Chand’s novels we see the cracks appearing in the system. Suman blames the dual standards of society
and accuses Munshi Abulwaja, Seth Chimanlal and pt.Dinanath of leading a double life of ruling the society in the day time and of sleeping with her in the cover of darkness. The changing concepts of morality have not only revolutionized our attitudes to the prostitutes who are now seen as victims of the socio-economic forces. Mrudula Garg’s Mannu married modern woman has an extra-marital relationship as a part of the process of their growing up and exploring her own personality. Though involved with extra-marital relationship, Mannu does not ever think of leaving her husband or her family. Women in modern times do not like to be compared with others. They feel satisfied when they are recognized for their worth and abilities. Maitreyi Pushpa emphasis the real picture of Alma, woman of primitive race named Kabutari who breaks the polite mask of well-bred society. By the portrayal of Alma, Maitreyi Pushpa showed the predicament of such women who belongs to the Kabutari race. Even women from such races are used as a doll of entertainment for the polite people of the society. Thus Alma becomes the prey of the well-bred society. In this way the women predicament studied in detail from Indo-Anglian and Hindi writer’s selected novels as women’s frustration in Nature, in society, in family and self as well. Ram Singh, her father is a hypocrite and Alma was under mortgage. Pain gives her freedom and time laid out the roads. Wild tracks surrounded by stillness, she threw shame overboard and the modesties and got going or she would have got finished. Dheeraj letter has made it clear that he was not able to break ties with her. Rana left her ran away but he agonized over his rights over Alma. In this way the protagonists of many Indo-Anglians are alienated from Family, Society, Nature and Self.